

# TURKEY

December 2018

## Key Figures as of 31 December 2018

**4 million**

Refugees and asylum-seekers in Turkey, including over 3.6 million Syrian nationals and close to 400,000 registered refugees and asylum-seekers of other nationalities

**16,040**

Refugees submitted for resettlement consideration to 18 different countries in 2018

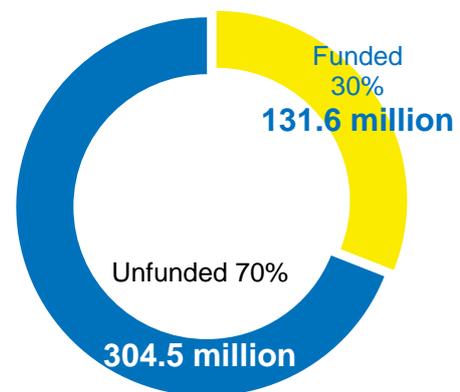
**3,310**

Turkish lawyers trained on refugee-specific rights and regulations jointly by UNHCR and the Union of Turkish Bar Associations in 2018

## Funding as of 31 December 2018

**USD 436.1 million**

requested for UNHCR operations in Turkey



## Update on the key developments in December 2018

To mark the affirmation of the **Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)** by the UN General Assembly in New York on 17 December, the Foreign Minister of Turkey, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu shared a video message in which he underlined the importance Turkey attaches to the Global Compact on refugees with respect to solidarity and responsibility sharing and Turkey's commitment to support its implementation.

Ms. Fatma Şahin, the Mayor of Gaziantep and President of the Union of Municipalities of Turkey, on 18-19 December 2018, participated in the **High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges** as a panellist in the opening session. She provided an outline of the engagement of Turkish municipalities in the refugee response, underlining the need for support to and solidarity with cities hosting refugees.

UNHCR supported the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) in its **Alternatives to Camps** initiative by decongesting three Temporary Accommodation Centers (TACs), Öncüpınar and Elbeyli in Kilis and Türkoğlu in Kahramanmaraş. Residents were offered the option either to stay in the TACs or to relocate to urban areas. Some 35 per cent of residents chose to relocate and benefited from a full relocation package to cover transportation, rent and cater for the winter needs of the families.

## Promote access to and support the provision of protection

### Access to legal counselling and legal assistance

In cooperation with the **Union of Turkish Bar Associations (UTBA)**, an automation system was developed and piloted at the end of 2018 for bar associations to refer potential legal aid cases to a commission in charge of approving whether or not to cover the legal fees in these cases. In December, some 96 legal aid cases were submitted by 11 bar associations through the automation system for the commission's vetting. The legal aid appointments concerned the drafting of petitions, applications to administrative courts, to civil and criminal courts of peace, to first instance civil courts, and to the Constitutional Court, as well as written or in-person counselling. The majority of the appointments concerned the cases of Syrian nationals, followed by Afghans, Iranians and Iraqis. It is expected that in 2019 all 18 bar associations, trained in the system, will start actively using the automation system to submit legal aid cases for approval of support.

In December, the **Şanlıurfa Legal Clinic** provided legal counselling to over 60 individuals on international protection and temporary protection procedures, access to rights and civil matters, the beneficiaries were also referred to the Şanlıurfa Bar Association for legal aid and supported with the drafting of petitions. During the reporting period, the clinic conducted four information sessions for 116 individuals from refugee communities and 20 NGO staff on the legal framework concerning refugees, rights and obligations of refugees in public life, and enuresis psycho-education for parents.

### Support to registration, verification and development of the national asylum system

In Antalya, a two-day **workshop on civil legal matters** was organized jointly by the Ministry of Justice and UNHCR for selected judges, academics, representatives of the Directorate General for Migration Management, the Directorate General of Civil Registration and Citizenship Affairs, the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS), Ankara Bar Association and the Association for Solidarity with Asylum-Seekers and Migrants (ASAM). Following various presentations on procedures pertaining to birth, death, marriage, divorce and custody cases, the participants shared their field observations and discussed gaps and challenges encountered in the administrative and judicial proceedings in civil law matters. The participants proposed solutions, including the setting up a civil registry database for foreigners, and obtaining clear thematic instruction from the Ministry of Justice on the laws applicable to temporary and international protection beneficiaries and applicants.

## Strengthen access to quality services for refugees through public systems, and national and local institutions

### Cooperation with the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS)

The Şanlıurfa Governorate and Provincial Directorate of Family, Labour and Social Services are cooperating closely with UNHCR on a **Refugee Counselling Call Centre** with eight operators and a system whereby complex queries are referred to three Social service centers (SSCs). In December, the call centre received 2,385 calls with a 99 per cent answering rate, and referred over 715 cases to SSCs. To strengthen the linkages between the call centre and the SSCs, UNHCR organized capacity development activities for 14 SSC social workers involved in counselling individuals referred by the call centre. The training focussed on the legal framework, persons with specific needs and referral mechanisms, interviewing and counselling techniques, sexual and gender-based violence, working with Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Intersex refugees, livelihoods, education, and stress management.

### Social cohesion

The last round of DGMM and UNHCR's 2018 **participatory assessments** took place from 18 to 20 December in Mersin and Sakarya. This last round focused on interactions between refugee and host community members, and between refugees and service providers, including the host community's perceptions of refugees and the key challenges to and opportunities for social cohesion. The preliminary findings were presented at the Provincial Coordination Meetings, which bring together representatives from Mersin and Sakarya's Provincial Directorates of Migration Management, municipalities, bar associations, chambers of commerce, mufti, and other relevant actors, to inform their strategies and activities for 2019. Altogether, for the 2018 participatory assessments, DGMM and UNHCR jointly reached out to 450 persons of concern and, in separate sessions, 160 local community leaders in 10 provinces.

In addition, a number of **community support events** to foster social cohesion took place in December:

- The Amal Band, a multi-cultural youth band supported by Ankara Keçiören Municipality and UNHCR, gave its last concert in Mersin on 2 December. Nearly 250 participants from both refugee and host communities attended the concert.
- The Gaziantep Youth Committee, supported by ASAM and UNHCR, performed a play called "GÖÇ'erken" (While we migrate) to a packed Gaziantep municipal theatre. A total of 600 people attended the performance on the 20 and 28 December. The Committee used both Arabic and Turkish languages to produce a play that was very visual and moving. The play helped the Committee find talents among its members (Syrian, Iraqi and Turkish), be a role model to refugee children and develop positive relationships with the Turkish youth who joined them. The performance also had an impact on the refugees' families, who were very proud and touched. UNHCR also learnt that some family dynamics were changing progressively as a result of the play, especially regarding female performers and their freedom to participate in similar activities in the future. UNHCR will explore ways to continue to build on this experience with ASAM and the Youth Committee.



*Amal Band gave five concerts in different cities of Turkey.*

### Education

The Ministry of National Education and UNHCR jointly developed and produced **80,000 leaflets** in Arabic, English and Turkish on access to public education centers (PECs), to the language, vocational, hobby and general courses offered by PECs, as well as to the Open School (distance learning) services available in PECs. The leaflets were delivered to the Provincial Directorates of National Education in 81 provinces and will be distributed to refugees through PECs.

## Promote and prepare for durable solutions for refugees

### Self-reliance and livelihoods support

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) organized a **job fair** in İzmir on 6 December to mark the completion of FAO-UNHCR's joint three-month agricultural vocational training programme, which aimed to expand livelihoods opportunities in the agriculture sector for refugees and host community members. The job fair provided an opportunity for 130 trainees to meet with close to 20 potential private employers operating in the food, agriculture and livestock sectors, exchange contacts and discuss possible job placements. FAO and UNHCR will continue to work together in 2019 on similar agricultural vocational training programmes in different provinces.



Syrian women receiving agricultural vocational training. Photo: FAO

### Communication with communities



At the end of December, UNHCR Turkey launched a **Facebook page** to provide information, counselling and relevant news to refugees and asylum-seekers. The page named 'UNHCR Turkey Information Board' is available in Arabic, Farsi, Turkish and English and aims to serve as UNHCR's online bulletin board in an accessible, attractive and shareable format. The page will also enable comments and general queries to be received and responded to, thus enhancing UNHCR's two-way communication with the people it serves.

### December 2018

#### Thanks to donors for their support to UNHCR Turkey and their unrestricted and regional funds in 2018

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### LINKS

[Regional Portal - Syria Regional Refugee Response](#) | [Regional Portal - Mediterranean](#) | [UNHCR Turkey website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Services Advisor](#) | [UNHCR Help](#)