

TURKEY

January 2021

Key Figures (as of 31 January 2021)

4 million

Refugees and asylum-seekers in Turkey including over 3.6 million Syrian nationals and close to 320,000 international protection status holders and asylum-seekers of other nationalities. Over 98% of Syrian refugees live across Turkey in 81 provinces.

315

Refugees departed for resettlement in January, 79 per cent of whom are Syrians. UNHCR provided 465 submissions for resettlement consideration in the first month of 2021.

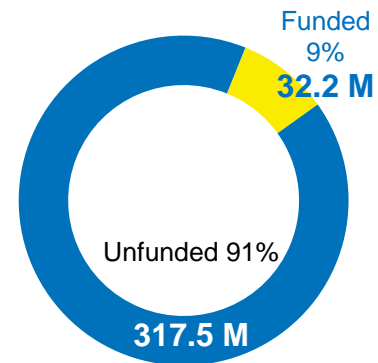
86,300

Households received one off COVID-19 emergency cash payments by end of January.

Funding (as of 27 January 2021)

USD 349.7 million

requested for UNHCR operations in Turkey



Key Developments in January 2021

UNHCR continues to carry out the one-off **COVID-19 Emergency Cash Assistance** in cooperation with DGMM and through the service provider PTT. By the end of January, UNHCR had reached close to 86,300 households with cash payments. UNHCR's initial target of 85,000 households has therefore been reached. Payments for identified beneficiaries within the COVID cash scheme will continue until end of March 2021.

The third round of **post-distribution monitoring** for the COVID-19 emergency cash, covering a sample of 545 households across the country was completed. The sample represents almost 60,000 beneficiary households who received their assistance between October and December 2020. As the post-distribution monitoring was being conducted, remunerators identified additional protection concerns which emerged from the interviews. UNHCR is following up on these issues and referring beneficiaries to relevant services.

In January, UNHCR provided 465 **resettlement** submissions to five countries; and close to 315 refugees departed for resettlement to six countries, including 30 refugees who departed for the Netherlands. This is the first departure to the Netherlands since the COVID-19 pandemic. Refugees were interviewed by UNHCR staff via remote processing modalities with the support of the Provincial Directorates of Migration Management in eight locations across the country.

Protection and National Asylum

UNHCR completed its 3.5-year project on the ‘[Reinforcement of Turkey’s National Asylum System](#)’ implemented in cooperation with DGMM through funding from the European Union. The nationwide project was a collaborative effort to support the technical capacity of DGMM in its institution-building efforts, to influence policy and practices, and to create a long-term impact on the overall asylum system through specific tools and mechanisms. Standard operating procedures (SOPs) and guiding documents and leaflets were produced during the process. UNHCR also established an e-learning platform with DGMM and uploaded some 40 modules to have a sustainable training mechanism within DGMM. The activities and products were presented during a virtual closing ceremony on 27 January with 60 participants from public institutions, bar associations, NGOs, academia, diplomatic missions and international organizations.

Together with DGMM, and as part of its joint cooperation in reinforcing Turkey’s national asylum system, numerous information materials were developed to increasing the awareness of refugees and asylum seekers and to support the capacity development of staff working at DGMM, Provincial Directorates of Migration Management (PDMMs) and other institutions working on national asylum processes across the country. The materials were printed and disseminated to PDMMs in the 81 provinces of Turkey and to relevant institutions. They include posters on access to legal aid and legislative references, information on rights and obligations, judiciary guides, country of origin information guides for DGMM and PDMMs, guides to obtaining an HES code, education and livelihoods flyers for unaccompanied and separated children and various other documents, posters and flyers and brochures.

A workshop on ‘[Border Procedures in the Context of International Protection](#)’ was held on 5–6 January with 42 participants including migration specialists from DGMM and its provincial directorates, lawyers from the Union of Turkish Bar Associations as well as staff from the General Command of Gendarmerie and the Directorate General of Security. The workshop provided an experience-sharing platform on asylum procedures at border crossings, national legal frameworks related to border trends and international protection applicants, as well as UNHCR’s 10-Point Plan in Action, the Global Compact on Refugees, and the European Union’s new Pact on Migration and Asylum. A rich discussion also ensued on Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on asylum procedures at the Turkish borders.

UNHCR Turkey facilitated a [virtual study visit](#) to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees in Germany (BAMF) on registration procedures, referral mechanisms and quality assurance in asylum proceedings for DGMM and PDMM staff in cooperation with the UNHCR Nuremberg Office. The study visit took place on 18-19 January and as with previous visits, it aimed to strengthen the capacity of DGMM staff on registration and referral of newly arrived asylum-seekers and quality assurance mechanisms embedded in refugee status determination (RSD) procedures. BAMF officials provided an overview of the registration and asylum procedures in Germany, a briefing on the roles and responsibilities of the Federal Office and explained the quality assurance system in place for assessing the quality of RSD decisions. Discussions and questions focused on monitoring, selection of interviews and decisions for quality assessment which would be applicable to the national quality assurance system in Turkey.

Protection and Social Cohesion

A workshop on [Orientation and Transition Programmes](#) was held on 25 January to provide a platform for institutions offering orientation briefings for foreigners in Turkey. Workshop participants included specialists from DGMM, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS), the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC), and academics engaged in the development of the programme modules, as well as UNHCR. The workshop focused on orientation programmes for women and children and programmes for unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) transitioning to adulthood. It reflected how different institutions are expanding their orientation programmes for foreigners under international and temporary protection and facilitating their social cohesion.

Programme modules in the form of guides and training-of-trainer manuals were developed and printed to be distributed to PDMMs and relevant institutions. Several documents were also produced for women



Modules and training guides for the orientation of refugee women and children and the transition of UASC within Turkish society.

and children to facilitate their integration in Turkey. Documents were translated into five languages and disseminated to DGMM and PDMs in 81 provinces as well as other institutions. Furthermore, additional research was initiated to look into the integration of refugee children in schools in European countries as well as the transition to adulthood for UASC in European countries.

Overall, the orientation and transition programmes and documents are expected to contribute to the self-reliance of women and children in Turkey and provide them with the necessary briefing and skills for life in Turkey, including access to housing, rights and services, complaints mechanisms, and also an overview of socio-cultural life in Turkey. The transition programme for UASC is the first of its kind in Turkey and also helps to prepare the children for various life-skills following state protection.

Engaging at the Local Level

UNHCR cooperates with local authorities, municipalities and partners across the country to identify needs, provide material assistance and support refugee initiatives mobilising themselves and their communities. Distribution of material needs and hygiene kits to vulnerable populations continues across the country.

In January, UNHCR facilitated two meetings with 11 metropolitan and district municipalities from South-East Turkey, the Marmara and Aegean regions to discuss their engagement with the third round of the [Inter-Agency Protection Sector Needs Assessment](#). An introductory meeting provided an overview to municipal focal points on the background and objectives of the process, as well as the sampling, methodology and timeline. The other meeting, more technical in nature, was held with coordinators and interpreters of the municipality providing an opportunity to discuss details of the assessment questionnaire and probe any anticipated queries. Municipalities re-confirmed their participation and support to the process highlighting the importance of data collection, joint analysis and evidence-based programming at the local level.

The municipalities of Gaziosmanpaşa and Sultangazi in the Marmara region launched projects to support the [innovative and entrepreneurial project for women](#), which will be implemented by UNHCR partner Wald Academy through UNHCR's support. The project aims to provide refugee and Turkish women with necessary vocational skills in the culinary and textile sectors and facilitate their access to marketing opportunities, thus enhancing their skills and employability as well as promoting social cohesion with the host community. UNHCR was invited to the press launch of both projects in January.



The launch event of the innovative and entrepreneurial project for refugee and Turkish women in collaboration with Gaziosmanpaşa municipality and WALD Academy ©WALD.

Izmir Metropolitan Municipality developed a [Guide for Municipal Staff on Refugees](#) and a [Multi-Lingual City Guide for Refugees and Foreigners](#) through its cooperation with UNHCR in 2020. UNHCR is currently reviewing the documents and their translations into five languages. The [Guide for Municipal Staff on Refugees](#) aims to increase the awareness of municipal staff regarding International and Temporary Protection legislation and available services and referral mechanisms for International and Temporary Protection holders and applicants. The [Multi-Lingual City Guide for Refugees and Foreigners](#) includes information on city and municipal services, with feedback from refugee communities, and will be a living document to be published online and regularly updated. Printed materials will also be distributed to district municipalities and other relevant institutions to serve as a tool to advocate for inclusive service provision for refugees.

Self-Reliance and Education

In support of [self-reliance](#) and in response to difficult socio-economic conditions, UNHCR has been working through its partners to provide online vocational courses, Turkish language courses, soft skills online training and online entrepreneurship training. Given additional COVID-19 access restrictions, most of the training courses are being provided online. Nevertheless, some continue to take place in person such as cooking apprenticeship, service and hospitality, computer-based technology, dry cleaning and apparel and textiles. Towards the end of January, all the public education centres where the vocational training takes place were fully operational. So far in 2021, the vocational courses at the public education centres are benefitting 269 individuals, 85 per cent of whom are female.



The Directorate General of International Labour Force produced an information leaflet jointly with UNHCR and published it on the Ministry website. The leaflet is a one-pager entitled *Easy Work Permit Application* and shows the necessary steps for Syrians under Temporary Protection to apply for a work permit. It is currently available in Turkish.

The first [Higher Education working group](#) of 2021 was held on 27 January in coordination with the Higher Education Council (YÖK) and the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB). Participants discussed education priorities for 2021, including social cohesion in universities and sustainable ways to establish bonds between refugee and host community youth. The meeting also touched upon the impact of COVID-19 on academic success and mental health, improving online learning and ensuring refugees are considered in planning processes, as well as possible fee waivers which would potentially include all nationals with international protection status. Additionally, UNHCR and UNICEF jointly supported the organization of the [National Education working group](#) which also took place on 27 January, and where UNHCR led a discussion session on innovation in education.

On another note, [UNHCR's regular briefing with donors](#) took place on 29 January. It included an update on the COVID-19 vaccination and the 3RP launch. UNHCR presented its 2021 priorities in Turkey and the nature of its work with municipalities in Istanbul. The briefing was attended by representatives of 11 countries. The discussion revolved around the inclusion of refugees in the national COVID vaccination programme, future plans for the emergency COVID cash, voluntary returns as well as UNHCR's joint collaboration with DGMM.

Thanks to donors for their support to UNHCR Turkey in 2021

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LINKS

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