

TÜRKİYE 2021 Operational Highlights



- Türkiye is home to the world's largest refugee population, 3.6 million of whom are Syrian under temporary protection and over 330,000 are international protection beneficiaries or applicants.
- Over 98% of refugees in Türkiye live among the host community and less than 2% in Temporary Accommodation Centres operated by the Presidency of Migration Management (PMM).
- Türkiye'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 supports PMM in the implementation of the Law and Temporary Protective Regulation.
- UNHCR implements its activities combining support to public institutions for inclusion and quality service delivery for persons under temporary and international protection as well as the host community, while undertaking its role in assisting refugees in need and promoting self-reliance and social cohesion.
- UNHCR leads a coordinated and principled refugee response through the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) for the Syria situation and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework process (UNSDCF).
- In 2021, UNHCR continued to work through the COVID-19 pandemic providing direct assistance to vulnerable refugee and host community populations while maintaining its support to public institutions through the provision of human resources and material and technical support. UNHCR also worked closely with municipalities and local authorities to strengthen community mobilisation and promote social cohesion.

UNHCR Türkiye COVID-19 Response

In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to pose significant challenges to an already complex operation in Türkiye. Additional needs and priorities emerged, and operating modalities were adapted to a constantly evolving situation. In close cooperation with measures adopted by the Government of Türkiye to respond to the pandemic, UNHCR focused on COVID-19 emergency cash assistance, communicating to communities on pandemic-related regulations and procedures, access to vaccination schemes, and advocating for information dissemination in multiple languages as well as distribution of hygiene materials in communities across the country.

COVID-19 Cash Assistance

The 2021 round of COVID-19 cash assistance was conducted, in close coordination with PMM, benefitting some 72,000 households (315,300 individuals).



72,000
households reached



315,300
individuals reached

The cash assistance of 1,100 TRY per household, an amount which corresponds to the one-off assistance scheme by Türkiye for vulnerable citizens, was transferred through the Turkish Postal Service (PTT). Given the volatile economic conditions in Türkiye which caused a sudden spike in the price of essential items significantly affecting the vulnerable population, including refugees, UNHCR provided 1,100 TRY twice to those beneficiaries. For this assistance, UNHCR processed 85,000 households and 85% of them collected the cash. The remaining 15% of beneficiaries did not collect their cash cards for various reasons which will be determined during a post-distribution monitoring exercise in 2022. The top five provinces with the highest targeting and collection numbers were İstanbul, Gaziantep, Bursa, Hatay and Mersin.

COVID-19 Vaccination

UNHCR conducted a [survey](#) with 1,200 refugees in 49 provinces, reflecting the demographic pattern, to monitor refugees' access to vaccination in Türkiye. It took place over two rounds in July and September. Key findings showed that over 72% of respondents were vaccinated at least once by end of September and the vaccination rate of the refugee population, including its geographical variants, largely corresponded with the general vaccination trend in Türkiye. The survey also showed that 3% of respondents had expressed an unwillingness to be vaccinated. Survey recommendations were to continue outreach and information dissemination as a priority to motivate unvaccinated refugees, to provide practical support to refugees where needed to facilitate access to vaccination, and to boost UNHCR's online communication channels with additional content.



To increase refugees' access to information, UNHCR, with UN agencies in the inter-agency Emergency and Response Preparedness working group, translated sections of the Ministry of Health website on vaccinations and vaccination processes in languages pertinent to refugees in Türkiye, and worked with the Ministry of Health to increase foreign language versions on its website. According to the [Inter-agency Protection Needs Assessment](#), refugees reported they are widely informed about the vaccination process.

Distribution of Materials

Hygiene kits and in-kind assistance were delivered by UNHCR to local authorities and partners who distributed them to the population in need. UNHCR also provided personal protective equipment to authorities across the country to contribute to their protection while carrying out their duties.

In 2021, for example, UNHCR provided:



Close to **107,000** refugee and host community households received hygiene kits, hygiene products and masks in the southeast region of Türkiye including local authorities, municipalities and NGOs.

UNHCR also supported officials at the borders with masks and sanitizers to carry out their duties and respond to basic needs of persons in a safe manner.

Protection

In 2021, UNHCR continued to advocate for the admission of persons in need of international protection, their access to fair and efficient national protection procedures and to promote procedural standards and safeguards by working in close partnership with PMM, the Turkish Coast Guard and Land Forces, the Gendarmerie General Command, the Ministry of Justice, and the Union of Turkish Bar Associations (UTBA). Cooperation with PMM to support national registration and international protection procedures remained a priority.



UNHCR supported the registration of persons in need of international protection by working with PMM and its provincial directorates (PDMMs) with [bilingual support staff and ongoing technical assistance](#). In 2021, UNHCR supported 63 PDMMs which registered 88% of the international protection applications in 2021. UNHCR observed registration procedures and practices through [registration missions](#) in 39 provinces and found that support provided to PDMMs helped to shorten the waiting period for registration of new arrivals. UNHCR also organized three mobile decision missions and seven on-the-job visits on international protection status determination. UNHCR provided feedback and recommendations to PMM for improvement, and suggested interventions on individual cases at the central level, thus strengthening the relationship between the two entities leading to a stronger rapport and higher level of trust.

[Capacity development activities](#) such as trainings, workshops, field missions and study visits served to support Türkiye's national asylum system. UNHCR and PMM trained 572 PMM and PDMM staff, caseworkers and interpreters working in international protection, on interviewing techniques and adjudication and decision drafting. Psychosocial support personnel working at removal centres and voluntary return counsellors, as well as protection desk interviewers and staff were also trained on protection and legislation and helped to increase the technical expertise of staff for greater compliance with international principles and the national legal framework.



UNHCR also provided technical support to PMM to improve its [online appointment system](#) to update the data of persons under temporary and international protection. UNHCR introduced additional security features to the system, strengthening its integrity and reducing complaints received from users. A pooling system was introduced in 12 provinces to collect data appointment requests in a common pool thus facilitating the scheduling process and addressing bottlenecks in appointment slots. UNHCR also prepared information materials to increase awareness about the online platform and held consultations for the creation of a management and monitoring tool to assess a nationwide appointment and referral system which would enable the tracking of registration capacity and consistent referral of the applicants to different locations.

In 2021, UNHCR supported PMM with [Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#). UNHCR organized specific trainings on refugee status determination, COI and on-the-job trainings for 476 PMM and PDMM staff, as well as COI trainings in the context of international protection for 88 lawyers. UNHCR translated 40 COI documents on various countries and shared them with PMM along with weekly COI updates, monthly bulletins on selected countries and Afghan-specific weekly updates. These measures increased PMM's COI capacity and eased caseworkers' access to up-to-date and reliable sources. UNHCR also organized a workshop on border procedures in relation to international protection, and both UNHCR and PMM organized a virtual study visit to Germany to observe practices on registration, referral mechanisms and quality assurance.



UNHCR supported the quality assurance system by reviewing cases of asylum decisions issued by PDMMs. In 2021, the [Quality Assurance Board](#), serving as a central monitoring and oversight mechanism, conducted desk reviews of 81 cases with the collaboration of PMM and UNHCR and assessed the procedural and substantial elements of international protection status determination in light of international standards and provided feedback to practitioners and decision-makers to enhance the efficiency of the system.

In cooperation with PMM's humanitarian residence working group, UNHCR conducted a workshop and on-the-job-visits to observe and discuss the practices of application, interview, decision and referral mechanisms of PDMMs related to the [humanitarian residence permit](#).

With PMM's Department of Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking, UNHCR delivered eight trainings on human trafficking and the international protection nexus and interviewing techniques. PMM and PDMM staff benefitted from 25 [on-the-job trainings](#) to observe gaps and challenges in the identification and protection of victims of human trafficking and identify good practices to promote harmonized practices across PDMMs. The trainings were preceded by a survey on human trafficking and procedures applied upon identification of victims of human trafficking by PDMMs in 81 provinces to further identify good practices, gaps and challenges, so that findings could be reflected in standard operation procedures. UNHCR also supported PMM in drafting interview forms and shared a comprehensive booklet to serve as a guide for interviewing.

Access to Legal Protection, Information and Legal Assistance

In cooperation with the Union of Turkish Bar Associations (UTBA), through 22 bar associations, UNHCR supported close to **2,800 legal aid applications** for Syrians covering attorney fees, notary expenses, translation, and transportation costs. Legal assistance, as well as information on national procedures, rights and obligations, appeal mechanisms, matters of civil law, and the protection of women and children, was provided to close to **5,000 Syrians and 250 international protection applicants and status holders** through four legal clinics in Şanlıurfa, Gaziantep, Hatay and Kilis.

UNHCR trained members of the bar associations on various topics including refugee law, international and temporary protection procedures, rights and procedural safeguards for refugees and asylum seekers, and protection mechanisms. UNHCR also trained **6,800 legal service providers** on specific topics including asylum procedures and subject matters falling under administrative and civil law.

**5,250**

Refugees and asylum-seekers received legal assistance through legal clinics

**2,800**

Legal aid applications supported through bar associations

**6,800**

Legal service providers trained

Together with IOM, UNHCR provided technical support to PMM to **strengthen institutional capacities of removal centres** to enhance procedural safeguards for persons under administrative detention so they could access their rights, including legal aid, information, international protection procedures, services, and complaint mechanisms. In 2021, UNHCR trained over **60 removal centre and PDMM staff** on international protection, and organized a series of field visits, focus group discussions, roundtable meetings and workshops with around **100 removal centre officials, representatives of PMM and bar associations** where participants discussed needs and challenges and proposed solutions. UNHCR prepared **standard operating procedures** reflecting national and international standards on access to, and provision of, legal assistance from removal centres. PMM, UNHCR and IOM also worked together to improve existing information materials related to rights and obligations in removal centres.



UNHCR renewed its **protocol of cooperation with the Justice Academy of Türkiye** in September to strengthen access to justice for refugees and asylum seekers, and to increase the awareness and capacity of judges and prosecutors on international and temporary protection in administrative, civil and criminal law. Through the protocol, trainings, meetings, and roundtable discussions will be held in 2022, as well as mechanisms to access relevant materials, such as country of origin information, guidelines and existing jurisprudence. UNHCR also participated in a workshop organized by the **Ombudsman Institution of Türkiye** aimed at developing a training curriculum for the institution personnel.

Material Support to authorities



Over **16,000 hygiene kits, water, food packages, clothing and 31,000 masks** to respond to needs of vulnerable local and refugee communities were provided by UNHCR and distributed through local authorities and partners in Manisa, Muğla and İzmir in the Aegean region.

UNHCR delivered close to **52,500 humanitarian relief items** (thermal clothing, hygiene kits, diapers, food, water) and **46,400 humanitarian relief items** (water, food packs, blankets) to support Turkish authorities in responding to immediate humanitarian needs of persons rescued, intercepted, and apprehended at the eastern and western border areas respectively. UNHCR also supported the improvement of reception conditions at western borders by renovating accommodation spaces, water and sanitation facilities and supplying containers.

Social Cohesion

Together with national and local authorities, including mukhtars, municipalities and service providers, and by working closely with PMM in the implementation of the **National Strategy on Harmonization**, UNHCR brought refugees and the host community together to develop mutual understanding, respect, solidarity, and trust allowing all to live together as active members of society. In 2021:

- 24,000 refugees and 3,000 host community members participated in the social cohesion events.
- 5,800 people received conflict resolution training to help with social cohesion in the community.
- UNHCR and partners implemented 15 social cohesion projects.

The events strengthened engagement with refugee and host community opinion leaders through consultation sessions, focus-group discussions, and inter-cultural communication to strengthen social cohesion, change misperceptions against refugees and promote harmonious relations between the communities. Such events

included awareness-raising sessions with mukhtars and local authorities in İstanbul, meetings with local authorities in various provinces to discuss local solutions to foster social cohesion, policy messages delivered by PMM in meetings with private sector representatives to address misperceptions and promote access to the labour market, and conflict resolution trainings with mukhtars in the southeast region to promote peaceful dialogue between their communities.



In order to take stock of the UNHCR-PMM cooperation on social cohesion over the past years, [a joint findings report](#) was prepared with PMM involving findings from 2019 and 2020 activities. The report will be disseminated to PDMs and other public institutions to inform and influence policies and programs on social cohesion in line with the Strategy Document and National Action Plan on Harmonization.

UNHCR and PMM organized [Harmony in Economy](#) events in seven key cities to support the implementation of the national strategy on harmonization. The events brought state institutions and the private sector together to discuss problems and opportunities for people under international and temporary protection with regards to work. Stakeholders at the events highlighted the potential for refugees to contribute to the Turkish labour market and necessary conditions for realizing that.



UNHCR supported the [Syrians Barometer](#), an academic research study which measures the trends on perceptions of the host community and Syrian refugees towards each other. It offers the most comprehensive research conducted at a national scale and is widely used as a reference by a wide range of actors, including NGOs, state institutions and academia. One of the findings of the 2020 Syrians Barometer suggested that though there has been an increase in social distance between Syrians and the host community, particularly from the perspective of host community members, there is still a high level of social acceptance.

Cooperation with the Ministry of Family and Social Services

UNHCR collaborated closely with the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS) in Türkiye for the implementation of the national policy of inclusion of refugees in social protection mechanisms. This cooperation with, and support to, the Ministry remained a critical aspect of UNHCR's protection strategy.



In October, [UNHCR and the Ministry of Family and Social Services signed a protocol of cooperation](#) to formalize the long-standing partnership between the two entities in protecting vulnerable groups in need of social services and assistance. The engagement covers services provided by the general directorates within the Ministry, including those focusing on family and community services, child protection, refugees with disabilities, elderly refugees, violence against women and gender-based violence.

UNHCR has cooperated with MoFSS and its social service centres over the years through logistical and personnel support. In 2021, UNHCR provided 342 personnel (including social workers, interpreters, project managers and auxiliary staff), vehicles and materials to 169 of the Ministry's social service institutions at the field level along with its general directorates at the central level. The support enabled MoFSS to make over 57,000 household visits and provide approximately 154,000 services, over half of the recipients being refugees.

Identification of, and support to, refugees with specific needs

Together with its partners, UNHCR identified and assessed over 218,000 people with specific needs under temporary and international protection, provided cash to 330,000 people and tailor-made assistance to 26,000 people. They were counselled for legal and physical protection needs, gender-based violence, child protection, medical cases and disability and referred to partners and service providers for further interventions. UNHCR also increased its cooperation and interaction with government and NGO partners through capacity development and inclusion of state actors in coordination mechanisms.

**218,000**

People with specific needs identified and assessed

**330,000**

People received cash for protection assistance

**26,000**

People received tailored support

The [national child protection sub-working group](#) was co-chaired by UNHCR and UNICEF and focused on increasing the capacity of the child protection sector. The sub-working group completed the national child protection case prioritization matrix in 2021 to ensure consistency in case management. UNHCR also co-chaired with UNFPA the [national gender-based violence \(GBV\) sub-working group](#), and with UNFPA, drafted a report on good practices of GBV prevention and risk mitigation and response in Türkiye which was published in December. Furthermore, a regional child protection and gender-based violence sub-working group was established in August covering the Aegean and Mediterranean regions and co-led by UNHCR with UNICEF and UNFPA.

To identify protection responses and solutions for children at risk, UNHCR and partner NGOs undertook **best interests procedures (BIP)** and conducted best interests assessments for 661 children. A UNHCR-led inter-agency best interests determination (BID) panel comprising UN and NGO representatives convened regularly to deliberate and decide on BIDs for 13 children. UNHCR also delivered **capacity building training and activities** for partner staff on BIPs, following the 2021 release of the UNHCR's Best Interests Procedure Guidelines.

**661**

best interests assessments conducted for children

**33,700**

people reached through 16 Days of Activism activities

**130,000**

GBV and MHPSS materials produced

UNHCR undertook awareness campaigns to combat GBV. During the **16 days of activism against gender-based violence campaign**, UNHCR and its 39 partners, including women and refugee-led organizations, conducted 151 activities reaching 33,706 individuals from Türkiye, Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and other nationalities from various age, gender, and diversity groups. The participants found commonalities in their experiences of gender inequality, identified power imbalances, and discussed solutions to combat both the root causes and the triggering factors of GBV. UNHCR also produced 130,000 materials focusing on GBV and mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS) for sharing with counterparts and partners across Türkiye.

Participatory Assessment



From October to December, UNHCR implemented its **2021 annual countrywide participatory assessment** as part of its commitment to Accountability to Affected People (AAP). The assessment was carried out in accordance with UNHCR's new results-based framework to inform its 2022 programming and strategic engagement and its advocacy interventions. The assessment exercise followed a participatory and inclusive methodology at all levels, utilizing multiple outreach means and a diversified community and partner representation. The participatory assessment implemented various structured community dialogue modalities, targeting diverse community groups and individuals to capture an up-to-date understanding of the most pressing protection risks faced by refugee communities, and the communities' capacities to respond to and cope with identified risks. UNHCR conducted 104 dedicated sessions (86 focus-group discussions and 18 semi-structured interviews) across four geographical zones: Marmara, Aegean, Central/Eastern Anatolia, and the southeast region of Türkiye, as well as at the central level. The sessions took place in 33 provinces across Türkiye with the participation of 624 persons. A report analysing the findings of the exercise is to be produced in 2022.

Communication with Communities

UNHCR's communication platforms remained to be a critical means of conveying information about COVID-19, as well as precautionary measures, vaccination campaigns, available services, government announcements and advisories, and how to reach out for help. Information is shared in Arabic, Farsi, English and Turkish.

UNHCR Counselling Line

The **UNHCR Türkiye Counselling Line** received over 865,100 calls in 2021, an increase of 71% compared to received calls in 2020. Of the total received calls, around 324,600 were answered from 80 provinces with an answer rate of 74% for queued calls. The main line of inquiry was resettlement (54%) followed by financial assistance (23%). More than half the received calls were from Syrian nationals followed by Afghan (22%), Iranian (13%), and Iraqi nationals (10%). The calls were mostly received from İstanbul (18%) followed by Ankara (6%) and Gaziantep (5%). The highest number of calls was received in August 2021 due to developments in Afghanistan. The second highest number was in November 2021 when the second round of COVID-19 cash assistance kicked off. The lowest number of calls was in April/May 2021 due to lockdowns and long holidays.

Close to 40,400 calls in 2021 were received through the **GBV counselling line** for individuals at risk, or survivors of GBV, providing both a recorded message on reporting and supporting mechanisms and available support channels and services as well as GBV counselling through specialized operators. Out of these 40,400 calls, 16,600 individuals chose to be connected to an operator to listen to a message on reporting and support mechanisms, and over 7,200 of these individuals received GBV counselling.

In 2021, the Gaziantep counselling line was still operational and received 680 calls. The line was scheduled to close at the beginning of 2022 and all calls from then on would be directed to the UNHCR Türkiye Counselling Line.

324,600

calls answered in 2021

İstanbul, Ankara and Gaziantep
top three cities**Resettlement and financial assistance**

main topics of inquiry

Syrians, Afghans, Iranians

top three nationalities

UNHCR Türkiye Information Board

The UNHCR Türkiye Information Board on Facebook regularly published up-to-date information posts in Arabic, Farsi, Turkish and English through posters, announcements, videos and Q&As. The Facebook information page posted 155 items in 2021 reaching a combined total of almost 1.1 million people and had close to **90,000 followers** by the end of the year.

WhatsApp Communications Tree

The WhatsApp communication tree set up in 2020, facilitated rapid information-sharing between UNHCR and refugees reaching over 155,400 clicks in 2021. UNHCR also reached refugees through a **bulk SMS initiative** and close to 45,000 SMS were successfully sent in 2021 on various topics including COVID-19 related country measures, information about the Help page, anti-fraud messages, misinformation, and the dispelling of rumours.

UNHCR Help Page

The UNHCR Türkiye Help website provides refugees with information from registration and documentation to education and livelihoods in Arabic, Farsi, English and Turkish. Since its launch in August 2017 until the end of 2021, the Help website received over two million unique visitors, surpassing **one million in 2021** alone. Two new pages were launched on the UNHCR Türkiye Help website: a **COVID-19 vaccine page** which received over 260,000 page views; and a **GBV information page** which received close to 26,000 page views in 2021.

Services Advisor

Services Advisor is an inter-agency tool operated by UNHCR for persons under temporary and international protection in Türkiye to search for service providers in their areas. Partners constantly update their service availability in real time, including their modalities in accordance with COVID-19 measures. In 2021, Services Advisor was visited by close to 54,250 users and received **53,500 new users**.

Anti-Fraud

In February, UNHCR developed an **Anti-Fraud National Action Plan** encompassing sections on capacity-building, awareness-raising, policy, and updates on standard operating procedures, as well as communication strategies. UNHCR disseminated 20 anti-fraud community messages in Arabic and Farsi through its multiple communication channels to counter identified suspected exploitation schemes and organized fraud cases. The messages received a reach of close to 150,000 by end of 2021. UNHCR also received over 350 fraud allegations and followed up on cases through collaboration with UNHCR headquarters, partners, and government counterparts.

Durable Solutions

Access to Higher Education

**797**

Youth supported for tertiary education

**1,323**

Students received semester cash grants

supported 1,323 students of nationalities other than Syrian through semester cash grants in 2021 and continues to advocate for the waiver of higher education fees for students. UNHCR also supported 27 higher education

advisors who act as academic advisors to scholarship students. Higher Education advisors provided over 12,000 counselling sessions to both refugee and Turkish students in need.

Language and vocational training and life-long learning

- UNHCR worked with the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) to provide language, vocational and life-long training in 17 Public Education Centres (PECs). 4,600 Syrians benefitted from Turkish language courses and 2,000 from life-long learning classes.
- Through UNHCR's support to the 17 PECs and other institutions, 476 people under international protection participated in Turkish language and 79 in life-long learning classes.

Furthermore, UNHCR supported Education Informatics Network (known as the [EBA Support Centres](#)) which fall under the Ministry of National Education, and [Youth Centres](#) under the Ministry of Youth and Sports with computers and furniture across the country. These were delivered in 2021. Both EBA and youth centres continue to function as multi-purpose learning rooms.

Self-Reliance and Livelihoods

UNHCR works with its partners and with the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR), the Vocational Qualifications Authority (MYK) and the Directorate General for International Labour Force (DGoILF) of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security to support refugees and contribute to their socio-economic inclusion in Türkiye. UNHCR also collaborates with cooperatives and the private sector to support and facilitate refugees' employment.



In 2021, a [partnership was established with the World Bank](#) regarding the Social Enterprise Community of Practice (SECO) which entails the establishment of social enterprises and social cooperatives.

UNHCR supported İŞKUR in 2021 with staff and interpreters who provided counselling on access to jobs and registration to the İŞKUR database reaching over [19,000 individuals](#). Interpreters facilitated over [5,000 referrals](#) to İŞKUR on-the-job training programmes funded by the World Bank. UNHCR also supported İŞKUR with the development of a [job-matching software system](#) to strengthen public employment services to increase institutional capacity to match existing jobs with beneficiaries' skills and level of education. UNHCR continued to work with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security on the process of issuing work permits for refugees and supported the Vocational Qualifications Authority with information material.

The World Bank, DGoILF and UNHCR completed a [labour market assessment](#) to measure changes and trends in the Turkish labour market after the inclusion of the Syrian workforce. The assessment which began in 2020, will contribute to the policies of the Directorate General and other government counterparts to increase formal job opportunities for Syrian nationals and Turkish citizens.



With the Ministry of National Education, UNHCR supported PECs to increase access of refugees to vocational training. In 2021, eight PECs in Ankara, Bursa, Kayseri and Konya received equipment and technical vocational training. [Vocational training](#) on cooking apprenticeship, service and hospitality, computer-based technologies, dry cleaning, and textiles was provided through the centres, with UNHCR directly providing [incentives to 1,335 refugee trainees](#).

At the local level, UNHCR collaborated with municipalities in Ankara, İstanbul and Gaziantep to provide guidance on employment opportunities, language, soft-skills and vocational training and entrepreneurship support. In 2021, UNHCR reached almost [5,000 refugees and host community members](#). The municipalities also supported the employment process of beneficiaries.

In 2021, UNHCR supported [23 cooperatives](#) through its partners to receive in-kind assistance to purchase equipment and plan for targeted training on topics such as legal regulations, marketing, and business development.

Resettlement and Complementary Pathways

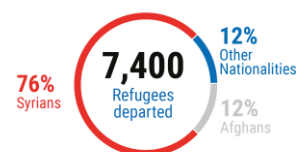
Resettlement remains an important durable solution for refugees with the most acute vulnerabilities and protection risks. UNHCR adapted the resettlement processes significantly in order to continue processing with as little interruption as possible, including instituting an all-electronic processing and remote interviewing modality with the cooperation of Turkish authorities at eight locations across Türkiye and in person once COVID-19 measures permitted. In 2021, just under [12,270 refugees were submitted for resettlement consideration](#) to 14 countries. Close to 7,400 refugees departed for resettlement to 13 countries, 76% of whom were Syrian, 12% Afghan and 12% from other nationalities.



12,270
Refugees submitted



14
Resettlement countries



Observing Voluntary Return to Syria through Interviews

**22,275**Voluntary return interviews
observed by UNHCR in 2021

In 2021, UNHCR observed the voluntary return interviews of 22,275 Syrians (over 17,200 families) in 16 provinces across Türkiye, including the southeast region, İstanbul, İzmir and Ankara. The total number of interviews observed by UNHCR since 2016 is 123,805 individuals (over 72,300 families). UNHCR coordinated with PDMs

maintaining a constant presence in the southeast region where more than 90% of the total interviews observed by UNHCR were undertaken.

The preferred border crossing points for return in December were reported to be Reyhanlı-Bab Al Hawa (with 44% of returnees), followed by Öncüpınar-Bab Al Salame (23%) and Akçakale-Tel Abyad (17%). Of those who indicated Reyhanlı-Bab Al Hawa as their preferred crossing point, 25% resided in İstanbul while 20% were residents of Hatay. The preferred destinations of return in 2021 were Aleppo and Idlib (with 36% of returnees) followed by Ar-Raqqa (10%) and Al Hasakeh (5%). Most returnees with whom UNHCR spoke, stated that the main reason for the decision to return to Syria was to reunite with family members, followed by the need to care for dependent family members. Furthermore, 140 families mentioned COVID-19 as a reason for return.

Inter-agency Coordination

UNHCR and UNDP launched the **2021-2022 3RP Türkiye Country Chapter** in February with a total appeal of USD 1.17 billion from 75 UN agencies and NGO partners. The launch hosted 200 representatives of government institutions, donors, UN agencies, and national and international NGOs. In 2021, UNHCR worked through the 3RP coordination mechanism, including sectoral and inter-sectoral coordination platform, mobilising traditional and non-traditional partners, international financial institutions, the private sector, development actors and donors, towards an all-refugee approach to the refugee response. UNHCR also worked closely with the UN Country Team to integrate issues concerning refugees in the UN Common Country Analysis, the UNSDCF strategy and the workplans of the various Results Groups under the UNSDCF. UNHCR chairs the Results Group on Migration, International Protection and Harmonization.



The **(3RP) High-Level National Consultation meeting on the mid-term review of the 3RP (2021-2022)** was held in November with the participation of 130 high-level representatives of public institutions, UN agencies, embassies, donors, international financial institutions, and national and international NGOs. The purpose of the High-Level Consultation meeting was to follow up on the progress achieved in 2021, validate planning assumptions and agree on implementation priorities for 2022 to appeal for strong international support to Türkiye's comprehensive refugee response.

Prior to the consultation meeting, UNHCR had organized **field consultations** in regions across Türkiye with officials and partners. The meetings focused on 3RP priorities for 2022 while touching upon registration challenges for international protection applicants, harmonization and outreach activities in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The session findings fed into the larger National Consultation meeting.

Türkiye and the Global Compact on Refugees

Türkiye was one of five co-conveners of the 2019 **Global Refugee Forum (GRF)** and has been an advocate for a full implementation of the **Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)**, underlining the importance of easing the burden on host countries through international responsibility-sharing. Through the umbrella of the UNSDCF, the Government and UN agencies work towards the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals, the GCR, and Türkiye's pledges at the GRF.

In 2021, UNHCR maintained the interest of various actors to the refugee response by **engaging with donors through regular briefings and missions** and coordinating with partners to achieve a whole of society approach enabling greater support to, and protection of, refugees. UNHCR mainstreamed the key pillars of the GCR into all aspects of its interventions.

In September, UNHCR Türkiye participated in a global online event on **Cities and their Contribution to the Global Compact on Refugees** organized by UNHCR Headquarters and the Global Task Force on Migration (GTFM) as a follow-up to the Gaziantep Municipal Forum in November 2019 and ahead of the High-Level Official's meeting in 2021. The event took stock of city pledges in support of the GCR and highlighted the critical contribution of municipalities in this respect. Turkish municipalities were well represented at the event, demonstrating Türkiye's progressive approach to refugee inclusion and support for the commitments of the GCR.

The **High-Level Officials Meeting (HLOM)** marking the half-way point between the first Global Refugee Forum held in 2019 and the one planned for 2023, took place in December. The HLOM with its preparatory and side events provided an opportunity for senior government officials and stakeholder representatives to look into the progress made in achieving the objectives of the GCR, including the pledges and contributions made and initiatives announced at the GRF. As a co-convenor of the Global Refugee Forum, Türkiye participated in the HLOM at various levels. This included a Joint Statement on behalf of GRF co-hosts and co-convenors at the opening session by the Head of the Turkish Permanent Mission in Geneva; panel participation by Metropolitan Mayor of Gaziantep and Chairperson of the Union of Municipalities of Türkiye during the Panel on Expanding Support through Responsibility-Sharing; a side event participation by Deputy Director General at the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and a plenary representation by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye.



UNHCR's High Commissioner visited Türkiye in early September. This was High Commissioner Filippo Grandi's fifth mission to Türkiye. In addition to a courtesy call with the President of the Republic of Türkiye and meetings with the Minister of Interior and Minister of Foreign Affairs in Ankara, the High Commissioner met with senior officials in Şanlıurfa and Gaziantep, and held exchanges with donors, UN agencies, partners and refugees. During the visit, the High Commissioner acknowledged the role of Türkiye in hosting the largest refugee population and held views and exchanges on the situations in Afghanistan and Syria, while expressing commitment for further advocacy to extend international solidarity.

Good Practices Portal

UNHCR works closely with the Government of Türkiye to follow up on pledges made at the Global Refugee Forum and update its good practices. In 2020, UNHCR launched a [data portal of good practices](#) on the refugee response by government institutions, local authorities, national and international organizations. The practices continue to be updated regularly in cooperation with public institutions and organizations. In 2021, a number of good practices were added to the portal in the line-up to the High-Level Officials Meeting in December.



Engagement with Municipalities and Universities

In 2021, UNHCR engaged with municipalities, universities, and cultural centres across its regions of operation and exchanged letters of cooperation to formalise engagement through various initiatives. Meetings and events provided an opportunity to establish linkages related to the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) underlining the role cities and municipalities play in its implementation. Agreements were made for example with:

- The Mayor of Gaziantep, where UNHCR provided raw materials resulting in the production of 1.5 million 3-layered surgical masks; and with Şanlıurfa Metropolitan Municipality for the production of face masks.
- Adiyaman Municipality, where UNHCR upgraded the mental health and psychosocial counselling room of the municipality's women's counselling centre and strengthened the capacity of the municipality community development centre.
- İskenderun Municipality, where a robotic coding laboratory was established with around 90 host community and refugee youth benefitting from robotic coding courses in 2021.
- İzmir Metropolitan Municipality, a multi-lingual city guide in six languages to serve foreigners living in İzmir, and a guide for municipal staff were developed and published on the municipality website. The guides offer extensive information on life in İzmir and services of the metropolitan municipality, rights of foreigners related to education, health, work permits and legal aid, and organizations providing support and assistance.
- Denizli Youth Academy through joint efforts of Denizli Metropolitan Municipality and City Council with UNHCR, offering young people opportunities for self-development while contributing to society collectively through socio-cultural activities, including skills development, youth empowerment and peer mentorship for both host and refugee youth.
- The Fourth Municipality Coordination Platform in İstanbul in February advocated for the positive impact of local governments on refugees' access to social protection and municipal services, and promoted partnerships between development agencies, donors, and municipalities to strengthen municipal social

protection infrastructures. The Fifth Municipality Coordination Platform meeting in December introduced the revised İstanbul Declaration which was done through a workshop in August with consultations of 20 municipalities across the Marmara region. The coordination platform meeting also held discussions on promoting social cohesion and facilitating access to livelihoods opportunities at the local level.

- UNHCR also signed agreements with the universities of Abdullah Gül, Gaziantep, Dokuz Eylül and Hatay Mustafa Kemal and İstanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (İKSV) to carry out youth activities and events.

Public Information/Communications

Over the course of 2021, UNHCR in Türkiye posted [over 600 tweets on Twitter](#), starting the year with around 14,000 followers. By the end of the year, the number of followers had increased by 20% to around [16,900 followers](#). UNHCR posted around [170 posts on its UNHCR Türkiye Facebook](#) page, with an average of 15 posts per month. The number of followers increased by 10%, from 43,500 to [47,600 followers](#).

Afghanistan Situation

When the situation in Afghanistan evolved in August, UNHCR was in close communication with the Turkish authorities to gain an understanding of population movements, by strengthening monitoring efforts and analysing trends at the borders. Through the meetings of UNHCR's Representative with high-level officials in Türkiye, close cooperation with, and support to, the authorities in implementation of the legal framework, especially in border areas and transit routes, was affirmed. UNHCR confirmed its continued efforts in Afghanistan and highlighted its ongoing advocacy for international solidarity towards humanitarian activities in Afghanistan and support to neighbouring countries and underlined the protection needs of Afghan nationals already in Türkiye.

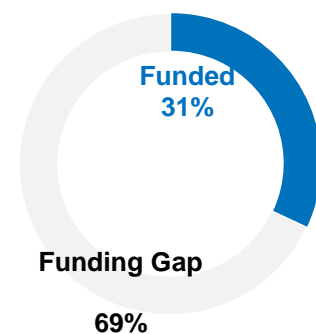
2022 Outlook

UNHCR will continue to work closely with the Turkish authorities and public institutions in support of an inclusive approach in the implementation of the national legal framework, particularly in key areas of registration and asylum procedures, access to legal aid, services to persons with specific needs, and enabling refugees' economic opportunities and their contributions to the host country. UNHCR remains equally committed to working with the authorities on social cohesion and harmonization mechanisms and will continue to align with the objectives and guiding principles of the 3RP and other national and development frameworks in support of a whole of society approach. In 2022, UNHCR will continue to pursue its key strategic directions, providing support to public institutions for inclusion and quality service delivery for refugees and the host community and in pursuing a catalytic role in assisting refugees in need and promoting self-reliance and social cohesion.

UNHCR Funding in 2021

USD 108.4 million

**Funding received for UNHCR operations in Türkiye,
out of USD 349.7 million requested in 2021**



UNHCR Türkiye thanks donors for their support in 2021

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LINKS

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