

# Turkey

September 2021

**Population:** Turkey is host to the **world's largest refugee population** since 2014. There are 3.6 million Syrians under temporary protection and over 330,000 refugees and asylum seekers under international protection. Afghan nationals have been the leading International Protection applicants in Turkey since 2019.

**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 co-leads with UNDP the **Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP)** coordinating partner support to Turkey's inclusive refugee response to address unmet needs and avoid duplication/gaps and chairs the Migration and International Protection Results Group of the Turkey 2021-25 UNSDCF.

## POPULATION OF CONCERN

Syrians under temporary protection **3.65 million**  
Refugees and asylum-seekers under international protection **330,000**

## TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

	Refugees	Asylum-seekers
Syria	3,641,370	Iraq 162,760
Iraq	4,565	Afghanistan 125,104
Afghanistan	4,219	Iran 24,300

Data source: UNHCR 2020 Annual 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 the hosting community 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, as well as treatment and vaccination. UNHCR formed an internal vaccine task force to advocate for inclusion of refugees in vaccination campaigns, to reach out to refugee communities by raising awareness and dissemination of information.

**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, 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

### 88,799 households

were reached through a COVID-19 Emergency Cash Assistance implemented in cooperation with DGMM through the service provider PTT. UNHCR carried out post-distribution monitoring exercises during the process to measure the effectiveness of the cash assistance and how it contributed to beneficiaries' needs.

### 5,900 refugees

were submitted for resettlement consideration so far in 2021 to 14 countries. Over 4,800 refugees departed for resettlement to 13 countries, 76% of whom were Syrian and 13% Afghan.

### 188,850 calls

were answered through the UNHCR counselling line in 2021, from an average of 75 provinces, most often enquiring about resettlement and financial assistance. Of these, close to 12,100 calls were answered through a dedicated GBV line.



### Sports bring people together and can help to build confidence and forge friendships

See [here](#) how refugee and Turkish children come together at a youth camp to play sports and have fun.

## 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; law enforcement, 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, specifically the Ministry of Family and Social Services and its social service centres; supports partners in identification, referral and response to refugees with specific needs; and provides cash for protection assistance.
- Resettlement and spontaneous voluntary return:** UNHCR processes cases of individuals with acute vulnerabilities and protection risks for resettlement and advocates for safe complementary pathways. UNHCR works with DGMM to enhance procedural safeguards for voluntary returns and access to accurate and updated information. In 2021, UNHCR observed voluntary return interviews of over 15,500 individuals in 14 provinces.
- Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance:** UNHCR cooperates with national authorities and partners to identify needs, facilitate access to employment and skills development; supports İŞKUR, the Turkish Employment Agency to strengthen job matching and access to refugee self-reliance prospects; and works with development actors for sustainable income generation through social entrepreneurship and cooperatives.
- Promoting social cohesion:** DGMM and UNHCR cooperate to enhance social cohesion and interventions in line with the National Strategy on Harmonisation and the National Plan of Action to encourage dialogue between refugees, the host community, public institutions and service providers. Social cohesion initiatives have been redesigned to reach refugee and the host community 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 multi-stakeholder 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 agencies, the private sector, and refugees and the host community. 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 2021 with an appeal of USD 1.04 billion. UNHCR leads the Protection and Basic Needs sectors.
- Following the 2019 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

### Personnel:

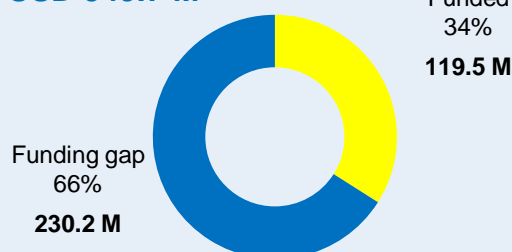
302 National staff  
 57 International staff

### Offices:

1 Country Office in Ankara  
 4 Field Offices: Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, Van  
 1 Sub Office in the south of Turkey covering Gaziantep, Sanliurfa and Hatay

## Financial information (September)

**USD 349.7 M**



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

Norway 80 M | Sweden 66.9 M | Netherlands 36.1 M | Denmark 34.6 M | Germany 26 M | France 20 M | Switzerland 16.4 M | Ireland 12.5 M | Belgium 11.9 M | Italy 10.7 M | Private donors

\*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 September):

USA | European Union | Germany | Japan | France | Republic of Korea | Norway | Google | Switzerland | Denmark | Finland | Sweden | Netherlands | Ireland | Belgium | Italy | Private donors