

Turkey

October 2018

Almost 3.6 million Syrian refugees registered as of 31 October, according to the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM). Almost 96 per cent of Syrian refugees live in urban and peri-urban areas while the other four per cent live in 13 Temporary Accommodation Centres (TACs) operated by DGMM.

As of 31 October, almost **13,660 resettlement submissions** (almost 70 per cent Syrians and 30 per cent refugees of other nationalities) of refugee cases were made to resettlement countries, and **7,335 refugees departed on resettlement** (over 90 per cent Syrians and almost 10 per cent refugees of other nationalities).

As of end of October, **641,630 Syrian students were enrolled in formal education** with an enrolment rate of over 62 per cent. In addition, **over 20,700 Syrian students were enrolled in higher education** programmes in Turkey.

Update on Achievements



Families leaving the Akçakale TAC to move to urban areas. Photo: UNHCR / E. Gürel

Alternatives to Camps: In addition to the five temporary accommodation centres (TACs) closed in September, DGMM closed **the Akçakale TAC in Şanlıurfa** in October. UNHCR supported the relocation of residents, who were given the option of relocating to another TAC identified by DGMM or to urban areas. Over 90 per cent of the TAC residents decided to relocate to urban areas. Meanwhile, UNHCR supported DGMM's plan to decongest an additional three TACs (Oncupinar and Elbeyli, the two TACs of Kilis province, and Turkoglu, the only TAC of Kahramanmaraş province), where residents were offered the option to relocate to urban areas or stay in the TACs. DGMM and UNHCR are working together to support relocated TAC residents settle in urban areas and have developed a methodology to help accelerate registration in the provinces of relocation.

Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP): On 9 October, the **Country Planning Workshop for the 3RP 2019 – 2020** took place with the participation of various stakeholders, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Vice Presidency, DGMM, 3RP partners and donor representatives. The MFA Director General of Consular Affairs delivered a speech underlining the importance of the 3RP for continued responsibility sharing, and the representative of DGMM delivered a presentation on the legal framework, procedures, and recent developments, including closure of TACs. The 3RP brings together 34 non-

governmental organizations and 12 United Nations (UN) agencies to support the Turkish authorities' implementation of the national asylum framework.

Promoting Access to and the Provision of Protection

Support to registration, verification and development of national asylum system: After **phasing out from mandate Refugee Status Determination (RSD) processing**, UNHCR continued individual case processing for resettlement purposes in close consultation with DGMM and conducted various capacity-development activities within the framework of the Reinforcement of Turkey's Asylum System Project. These included, amongst other activities, trainings for 17 DGMM and PDMM staff of Decision Centres and Mobile Decision Units on refugee law and interviewing techniques, four active RSD trainings, including observing RSD interviews and attending case discussions, and three on the job training for PDMM staff.

Strengthening 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): UNHCR has been cooperating with Şanlıurfa Governorate and Provincial Directorates of Family, Labour and Social Services (PDoFLSS) on the **Refugee Counselling Call Centre (RCC)**; a call centre with eight operators where complex queries are referred to three social service centres (SSCs). In October, the call centre received over 1,000 calls and recorded a 100 per cent answering rate. The RCC referred almost 300 cases to SSCs, over 88 per cent of which were followed up by SSCs. In order to make the RCC more efficient, the Governor has decided to assign RCC focal points within each state institution and facilitate the recruitment of RCC staff members to follow-up on current cases and prior referrals.

Social cohesion: As part of the **annual participatory assessment**, a team composed of DGMM and UNHCR staff conducted assessments on social cohesion in Denizli. The assessment included focus group discussions (FGDs) and semi-structured interviews with refugees and local community leaders in the province, including 55 individuals (22 female and 33 male) from Afghanistan, Iran, and Syria. The preliminary findings of the assessments were presented at the Provincial coordination meeting to inform local authorities and provide possible solutions based on the proposals received from refugee and local communities. Participants encouraged DGMM and UNHCR to embark upon activities that contribute to social cohesion, primarily by targeting misperceptions, which are seen as the main cause of tensions in Denizli.

Engaging at the local level (municipalities, governor offices, imams, and mukhtars): DGMM and UNHCR organized a workshop on **international protection and the role of municipalities in the protection response**. Fifty-nine municipality staff from municipalities in 26 provinces across Turkey along with eight DGMM/PDMM, two WALD (World Academy for Local Democracy), and 13 UNHCR staff from Ankara and field offices participated in the workshop. The workshop included sessions to strengthen participants' knowledge on the concepts and the principles of international protection, and panels on social protection, community engagement, access to livelihoods, and social cohesion, specifically with regards to negative perceptions of refugees. The panel discussions highlighted the need for a higher-level meeting between the municipalities to improve the coordination and collaboration amongst themselves and with other actors.



The 'Municipal Coordination Platform Meeting within the Context of Refugees' organized by UNHCR and WALD brought together government officials, municipalities and civil society engaged in the refugee response in İstanbul. Photo: UNHCR

WALD and UNHCR organized the second **Municipal Coordination Platform** with over 100 participants from municipalities in İstanbul, Kocaeli, and Bursa, as well as representatives from universities, civil society organizations, city councils, provincial directorates, and Governorship of İstanbul. In the meeting, participants shared good municipal practices among each other and, with the moderation of WALD and UNHCR, local administrations' leaders and representatives adopted a declaration containing a set of guiding principles and methods for local administrations in working with refugees. This declaration will serve as a reference document for the signatory municipalities in their engagement with the refugees.

UNHCR facilitated a workshop in Tarsus on international protection and temporary protection to raise awareness among **mukhtars** and foster their role on social cohesion. The workshop was co-hosted by the Sub-Governorate of Tarsus, and included, among others, 42 mukhtars from Mersin, PDMM, PDoFLSS, and several District Directorates. Mukhtars shared their concerns over social cohesion and refugee integration, especially on misperceptions among local community members about refugees. They also shared their proposed solutions to address these challenges; for instance, by highlighting the need for awareness-raising activities to target both refugee and host community members.

Education: As part of UNHCR's **DAFI** (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) global higher education scholarship programme, UNHCR held four student workshops (one each in Gaziantep, Malatya, İstanbul and Ankara) hosting approximately 120 DAFI scholars. One of the most successful sessions in the workshop centred on providing information and skills that would help support students' transition from study to work, specifically by showing students how to draft a resume, how to apply for a job, and giving tips on how to conduct a successful interview.



UNHCR DAFI Scholarship holders gathered during a workshop organized by YTB and UNHCR in Ankara. Scholarship holders in their final year of study received certificates celebrating their success from YTB Vice President Sayit Yusuf and UNHCR Turkey Representative Katharina Lump. Photo: UNHCR

Promoting and Preparing Durable Solutions for Refugees

Resettlement: So far in 2018, **DGMM referred over 40,840 individuals** to UNHCR for resettlement consideration, all Syrians under temporary protection). UNHCR conducted 112 missions outside of Ankara to interview refugees for resettlement consideration in 2018. In October, DGMM indicated that they would begin to refer conditional refugees under international protection to UNHCR in December.

Self-reliance and livelihoods support: With the participation of MoFLSS experts, and employment and market agents, UNHCR conducted its **annual participatory assessment** on livelihood and access to job market through FGDs and semi-structured interviews in eight provinces. The assessment facilitated a better understanding of the capacities, qualification and skills sets, as well as barriers that affect the employability of women and men from refugee communities. Moreover, it assisted in gaining insight into the issue of child labour and the active role that communities may play in disseminating information related to work permit regulations, as well as training and job opportunities in the private sector.

Cross-cutting Support

Communication with communities: As part of its communication and information dissemination activities on the verification of Syrian nationals, DGMM and UNHCR finalized a four-part animated video series on the verification exercise. The explanatory videos cover the key facts of verification – why, where and how Syrians can be verified – and they were shared on UNHCR and DGMM's digital channels. The verification exercise is carried out jointly by DGMM and UNHCR since the end of 2016, and consists of updating and completing the initial registration information of Syrians under temporary protection.



Find out more about the verification of Syrian nationals by watching the short video series at the below link:

<https://help.unhcr.org/turkey/information-for-syrians/verification-of-syrian-nationals-under-temporary-protection/videos/>

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