REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE FACT SHEET

Türkiye

September 2026

Developments in Syria following December 2024 have led to an increase in voluntary returns to Syria, with 723,000 refugees returning by August 2026 from Türkiye, which hosts one of the largest refugee populations globally.

UNHCR supports the national asylum procedures and works in coordination with diverse stakeholders, including government institutions, local authorities, and civil society, in advancing refugee protection, inclusion, access to solutions, including voluntary return.

Responsibility-sharing to enhance access to social services remains crucial, with an increasing need for diversified and flexible funding for the refugee response, as well as other solutions, such as resettlement and complementary pathways.

POPULATION STATISTICS

Syrians under temporary protection	**2.21 million***
Refugees and asylum-seekers under international protection	**127,293****

Top countries of origin**

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Syrian Arab Republic	2,214,440	Iraq	36,931
Afghanistan	22,677	Afghanistan	31,717
Iraq	19,458	Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	1,378

** Official figure as of September 2026, published on www.goc.gov.tr*
*** UNHCR mid-year Statistical Report 2026. Number of Syrian refugees updated monthly in accordance with the statistics published by the Presidency of Migration Management (PMM).*

BRIEF HISTORY: UNHCR'S PRESENCE IN TÜRKIYE

Since the formal endorsement of presence in Türkiye by the Office of Prime Minister in 1960, UNHCR has been working relentlessly with the government and people of Türkiye.

Over the decades UNHCR and Türkiye have responded to a series of humanitarian crises, including the arrival of refugees and asylum-seekers from Iran in 1979, from Iraq in 1988, from Bosnia in 1993, from Kosovo* in 1999, and finally from Syria in 2011, prompting a massive scale-up of UNHCR's operations.

This new era of cooperation between UNHCR and Türkiye was marked by key milestones, including the adoption of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection in 2013 and the inauguration of the Directorate General of Migration Management (now Presidency of Migration Management) in 2014.

A Host Country Agreement, signed in 2016, further formalized the relationship.

UNHCR and Türkiye also worked hand-in-hand during several humanitarian crises, including the Marmara earthquake in 1999, Van earthquake in 2011, COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and the recent Hatay and Kahramanmaraş earthquake in 2023.

*References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

In southeast Türkiye, UNHCR monitors voluntary returns along border crossings and addresses the needs of over **1.14 million** refugees through legal advice, cash assistance, protection monitoring.

In northwest Türkiye, predominantly in urban areas of the Marmara region, UNHCR, in cooperation with partners, municipalities, and refugee-led organizations (RLOs), facilitates access to services, works to increase self-reliance, and promotes social cohesion for over 588,000 refugees. UNHCR's support includes legal counselling for apprehended individuals along the western land borders and monitoring voluntary returns in provinces and at international Airports.

In the Aegean and West Mediterranean region, UNHCR facilitates access to rights and services for 153,000 refugees, mainly in urban settings, while providing assistance and referrals of people intercepted or rescued at sea borders through its partners. UNHCR also monitors voluntary return.

In Central and Eastern Anatolia as well as along the Black Sea region, UNHCR supports access to rights and services for 332,000 refugees and monitors voluntary returns in provinces and Esenboğa Airport in Ankara.



"For a student, even the smallest support can make all the difference, making it possible to continue our education."

Neriman is a Syrian refugee student living in Türkiye, studying Optical and Acoustics Engineering at Gaziantep University. Born in Aleppo, Syria, she moved to Türkiye with her family at the age of seven after the war began. Since then, Gaziantep has become the city where she grew up, studied, and started building her future. UNHCR provides cash grants to refugee and asylum-seeker students like her, to help them realize their full potential.

Read more here.

Key Priorities

- UNHCR supports and advocates for refugees' **access to fair and efficient asylum procedures** and adequate standards and safeguards by working with its main counterpart, PMM, and provincial directorates of Migration Management (PDMMs), under the Ministry of Interior. UNHCR also collaborates with the Union of Turkish Bar Associations (UTBA) to expand access to legal assistance by refugees.
- UNHCR works with PMM to **strengthen capacity** for voluntary returns processing, **support for vulnerable refugees**, access to legal aid during the return process, **ensure protection standards** and uphold accountability. UNHCR has enhanced its voluntary returns monitoring in 22 provinces, six land border crossing points, and three airports. Several other locations will be covered through remote interviewing in near future.
- To **strengthen access to protection services**, Protection Desks, supported by UNHCR and situated at 50 PDMMs, continue to engage in identification and referral of people with specific needs. UNHCR also works with partners to provide counselling to refugees and asylum-seekers on services. UNHCR continues to liaise with UN agencies and other partners to address the unmet needs in this area.
- UNHCR conducts **resettlement processing** of the most vulnerable refugees. From January to August 2026, some 2,742 resettlement submissions were made, and 1,149 refugees departed to third countries, including Australia, Canada, Ireland, Finland and the United Kingdom. UNHCR also supports refugees in pursuing complementary pathways to third countries - for work or study opportunities or to reunite with family members.
- UNHCR provides support to refugee university students through DAFI scholarships and higher education cash grants. As of August 2026, UNHCR provided **1,224** students with financial support: 731 through higher education cash grant and 493 with DAFI scholarship directly paid by UNHCR and YTB. Moreover, more than **1,000** refugee learners actively benefiting from the learning opportunities from the UNHCR - Coursera Social Impact Programme. Moreover, UNHCR advocates with various actors to address challenges faced by refugees in accessing jobs. UNHCR is also exploring collaboration through the UNHCR – IFC Joint Initiative to create sustainable economic opportunities for refugees through the private sector.
- UNHCR **engages with the private sector** on funding and partnerships to provide assistance and long-term livelihood opportunities to refugees.
- In cooperation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and other partners, UNHCR works towards greater social cohesion between the refugee and host communities through sports for protection activities.
- Public institutions, civil society and the UN Country Team (UNCT) are engaged in the refugee response aligned with the Global Compact on Refugees and produce good practices (Learn more: Global website).

Working with Partners

- In 2026, UNHCR has **partnership agreements** with eight partners, including two government institutions, one union of Bar Associations, and five local NGOs. Moreover, UNHCR has signed grant agreements with twelve refugee-led organizations (RLOs) and Community-based Organizations (CBOs).
- UNHCR works with authorities, public institutions, the UN Country Team, civil society, donors, humanitarian and development actors, the private sector, international financial institutions, academia, media, as well as refugees and the host community to promote refugee inclusion, find solutions, and foster social cohesion.
- **UNHCR co-leads the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan**, the regional coordination platform for the Syrian refugee response, and chairs its Protection and Basic Needs sectors and the Information Management working group. Within the scope of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, UNHCR co-chairs the results group on International Protection and Migration. UN Agencies also work together on a **UN Common Pledge**.

Statelessness

- Türkiye is a party to the 1954 UN Convention on Statelessness. According to TurkStat figures, there are 420 stateless individuals residing in Türkiye as of 2024.

UNHCR Presence in Türkiye

Staff:

230 National Staff
16 International Staff

Offices:

1 Country Office in Ankara
1 Field Office in Istanbul
1 Sub Office in Gaziantep
6 Field units in Ankara, Izmir, Gaziantep, Adana, Şanlıurfa, and Van
1 Resettlement hub in Ankara

Financial information (as of 31 August 2026)

Financial requirements in 2026

$ 210 M



Funded 46%
$ 96.16 M

Funding gap 54%
$ 113.84 M

UNHCR is grateful for the support from our top government donors:
Australia | Belgium | Canada | Denmark | European Union | Finland | France | Germany | Iceland | Ireland | Japan | Luxembourg | Netherlands (Kingdom of the) | Norway | Republic of Korea | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | Türkiye| United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | United States of America
UNHCR is also grateful for the generous contributions from the private sector and individuals.