



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Turkey Country Brief August 2020

In Numbers

55,630 people assisted
In August 2020



US\$ 0.78 m distributed through value vouchers

US\$ 0.06 m distributed through cash for training

US\$38 million six-month net funding requirements
(October 2020 – March 2021)

Operational Context

Turkey hosts the highest number of refugees in the world, 4 million people, of which 3.6 million are from Syria. Around 60,690 refugees reside in 7 camps located in the country's south-east, while the majority live in cities and villages throughout the country. The Government of Turkey has demonstrated leadership and generosity in providing for the needs of these people. Since June 2014, a temporary protection regime has granted Syrians access to basic services such as healthcare and education. Refugees of other countries continue to benefit from International Protection status.

WFP re-established a presence in Turkey in 2012, in response to the Syria crisis. WFP Turkey's [Interim Country Strategic Plan](#) (ICSP 2020-2021) seeks to build on WFP's partnership with the Government of Turkey and other stakeholders to contribute to refugee households' ability to meet their basic needs, ensuring no vulnerable refugee is left behind. Considering the protracted refugee presence in Turkey, the ICSP includes longer-term activities including direct engagement in resilience programming that creates opportunities for refugees and host communities alike.



Population of Turkey:
83.2 million

2019 Human Development Index:
59 out of 189 (0.806)

Income Level: **Upper middle**

Poverty Rate: **28.7 percent** living below
the national poverty line (TUIK)

Operational Updates

- As of 31 August, 268,546 COVID-19 cases had been confirmed in Turkey. Of this number, 6,326 people have died and 243,839 have recovered. Government responses to the pandemic have varied across Turkey's 81 provinces. Due to the significant daily increase in positive cases, the 2020-2021 school year will begin through remote learning from 31 August. A gradual return to classrooms is planned for late September. WFP continues its operations, while making necessary adjustments to ensure compliance with COVID-19 safety measures as well as to mitigate any risk of transmission resulting from WFP activities.
- WFP continues to support refugees in six camps, through a monthly e-voucher payment of TRY 100 (USD 14) per person. These payments reached 54,243 people in the August transfer. As of 31 August, no COVID-19 cases had been confirmed officially in the camps.
- Under the cash-for-training component of the *Mutfakta Umut Var* (MUV)/Kitchen of Hope project, the first cohort is continuing its on-the-job training at an assigned restaurant, cafe or soup kitchen. Each of the 131 students receives a cash transfer entitlement of up to TRY 2,324 (USD 317) per month, based on the number of working days. In August, four participants received job offers for regular work from restaurants or soup kitchens once their MUV training is complete. While all 177 participants in the first cohort completed the vocational training, 25 participants postponed their on-the-job training to October due to COVID-19.
- The second cohort of 190 participants (99 Syrians and 91 Turkish) is now receiving vocational training on culinary skills. Each participant also receives a monthly stipend of TRY 750 (USD 102) as an incentive to remain in the course as well as mitigate any loss of income resulting from their participation, before moving on to the practical training component.
- In August, the soup kitchen project – a COVID-19 mitigation measure and project adaptation sponsored by WFP, the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and IOM – continued to prepare and provide 11,500 hot meals per day for vulnerable refugees and Turkish nationals in seven provinces.

Interim Country Strategic Plan (2020-2021)

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
225 m	168 m
2020 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (October 2020 – March 2021)
189 m	38 m

Strategic Result 8: Sharing of knowledge, expertise and technology strengthen global partnership support to country efforts to achieve the SDGs

Strategic Outcome #1: Enhance partnerships to support refugees and vulnerable populations, affected by prolonged refugee presence in Turkey to equitably access basic needs assistance and labour market opportunities.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activities:

- Strengthen partnerships with national institutions and partners to improve programme implementation.
- Provide technical support to Government and partners in assisting refugees living in Turkish communities.
- Provide technical support to Government and partners in assisting refugees living in camps in Turkey.
- Provide technical support to Government and partners in assisting refugees and vulnerable populations to equitably access labour market opportunities.
- Support Turkey to exchange knowledge, experience and technology with other countries through facilitation of South-South and triangular cooperation.
- Provide common services to partners, including UN agencies.

Monitoring

- The fifth cycle of the online social cohesion survey was completed in 2020 and is published [here](#). The report’s findings indicate that while there was an increase in social cohesion between the refugees and the host community in Turkey in the first three rounds (July 2017-January 2018), this sentiment of goodwill deteriorated in rounds 4 and 5 (February and June 2019), perhaps linked to the economic turmoil of 2018. The survey indicated that the host community does not believe the refugees are as vulnerable as the Turkish poor, however they do believe the international community should continue to support the refugees in Turkey. The report recommends that current and future programmes centring on social cohesion between refugees and the host community should include more one-on-one activities. As the data shows, closer personal contact reduces stereotypes and prejudice because it demystifies ‘the other.’
- WFP continues to monitor the state of the market nationwide. Statistics released by the Turkish Statistical Institute (Turkstat) show a minimum cost of living basket (MEB) of TRY 505 (USD 70) per person per month in a Turkish household. The average cost of a MEB increased by less than one percent monthly during the second quarter of 2020, according to the Institute. This rate of increase has been stable since December 2019. As a result of COVID-19, the number of people in the labour force fell by one million in April. The annual employment rate decreased from 46.1 percent in April 2019 to 41.1 percent in April 2020 before slightly improving to 41.4 percent in May 2020.

- In August, WFP, in cooperation with the WHO, released a report entitled ‘[COVID-19 Pandemic in Turkey: An assessment of readiness and impact on refugees living in-camp](#)’. Data was collected in two rounds: 25 - 29 April 2020, and 12 May - 10 June 2020. Between rounds 1 and 2, the fear of job loss and stress due to limited freedom of movement increased. Respondents became less worried about getting infected but their anxiety about their ability to support themselves and their families increased. More than two-thirds (68 percent) of households formerly employed off-camp had lost their jobs or suffered a reduction in earnings. In the second round of data collection, three out of four households (80 percent) indicated that the price of food had increased since March 2020. Perceptions about the prices of hygiene items remained stable at 54 percent between the two rounds. While a majority of the beneficiaries (89 percent) expressed satisfaction with the quality of the COVID-hygiene kits distributed by WFP, the satisfaction level as to the quantity made available was slightly lower (81 percent). Amongst other key findings in the second round, 65 percent of the residents stated that they were relying on less preferred but less expensive food. Forty-five percent had resorted to borrowing money, 29 percent were spending savings, 20 percent had sold household assets, and 18 percent were buying food on credit to meet basic needs. In the second round, knowledge level of both prevention measures and symptoms had increased.

Story Worth Telling

- [Read](#) how Aisha, from Syria, and Salih, who is Turkish, are doing MUV’s on-the-job training at a soup kitchen in Haliliye, Sanliurfa, a city in south-eastern Turkey.



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