



Turkey: Refugee crisis

ECHO FACTSHEET

Facts & Figures

Official estimate of registered Syrian refugees in Turkey:

Over 2.5 million

Number of non-Syrian refugees inside Turkey (including Iraqi, Iranian, Afghan, Somali and other):

some 270 000

(UNHCR, November 2015)

EU humanitarian funding:

European Commission humanitarian funding for Turkey since the start of the crisis:

€71 million

Refugee Facility for Turkey:

€3 billion (2016-17)

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Key messages

- The overwhelming influx of Syrian and other refugees and migrants into Turkey has reached over 2.5 million registered Syrian refugees, making Turkey the largest host of refugees in the world.
- In the first two months of 2016 some 100 000 people have arrived through Turkey to Greece by sea.
- About 90% of Syrian refugees in Turkey remain outside of camp settings and live in urban and rural areas, with acutely limited access to basic services.
- UNHCR estimates that more than half of the Syrian refugees are children, out of the 400 000 remain out of school.
- The European Commission is supporting vulnerable refugees in Turkey who have fled violence in both Syria and Iraq, in particular refugees living outside of camps.
- The European Commission and its Member States are funding the "Refugee Facility for Turkey" which will provide €3 billion for humanitarian and development projects in 2016 and 2017.

Humanitarian situation and needs

Syrian and Iraqi Refugees

About 2.75 million refugees including Syrian, Iraqi and refugees of other nationalities have so far been registered in Turkey. Due to the constant escalation of violence in the neighbouring countries it is uncertain what the scale of refugee flows from Syria and Iraq to Turkey will be in 2016. In addition, over 850 000 arrivals by sea to Greece from Turkey were recorded in 2015, with over 100 000 new arrivals in the first two months of 2016 alone, the majority being Syrians.

The Government of Turkey currently hosts close to 270 000 refugees in 25 camps, with ongoing costs associated with health, education, food security and social and other services offered. It estimates that it has spent **over € 7 billion** since the beginning of the crisis. Despite enormous efforts from the government, local authorities and generosity from host communities, many of the **90% of Syrian refugees that live outside of camps** in urban and rural areas are often unaccounted for, and are surviving under very challenging circumstances. Access to information, registration and to public services, including education and healthcare, is acutely limited.

Many off-camp refugees live in poor conditions, with rents often causing great strain on their already depleted resources. The socio-economic and political impact, not only of the refugee presence, but of the on-going conflict in Syria and Iraq itself, has led to inter-communal tension in refugee hosting areas across the country, and increased movement of migrants and refugees alike – towards EU borders.

The European Union's Humanitarian Response

Funding

The total funding provided by the EU to Turkey in response to the Syria Crisis since the beginning of the crisis, including humanitarian aid as well as longer-term assistance, amounts to **€365 million**. Of this amount €71 is humanitarian funding. In addition, the EU has launched the **Refugee Facility for Turkey** – with €3 billion for projects to deliver efficient and complementary support to Syrian and other refugees and host communities in Turkey.

Since 2014 support has primarily focused on refugees living outside the camps, predominantly in south-east Turkey. The Commission has expanded its presence in the country to also ensure delivery of emergency assistance in those areas.

The European Commission is working closely with the Turkish authorities, UN agencies and other humanitarian actors to meet the urgent humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable among refugees:

- **Health sector:** especially physical rehabilitation/post-operative care for war wounded, and primary health care services in acutely under-served areas. In partnership with the World Health Organization, the Commission is supporting the training and integration of qualified Arabic-speaking Syrian doctors into the Turkish Healthcare system. Over 10% of EU humanitarian funding to date has contributed to this sector.



- **Paper or electronic vouchers:** enable the most vulnerable refugee families across the provinces of Hatay, Kilis, Gaziantep, Sanliurfa, Mardin, Diyarbakir and Batman with to buy basic food and non-food items. Over 45% of EU humanitarian funds has been allocated to such assistance..
- **Emergency household items including winterisation assistance:** especially for new arrivals and other vulnerable groups have also been a key area of assistance, constituting over 33% of EU humanitarian funds.
- **Education:** many Syrian children have not **received any education for the last years and are at risk of becoming a lost generation.** Through the **EU Children of Peace initiative**, UNICEF and INGOs have been allocated education in emergency funds from the Commission, enabling some 7000 Syrian children to access quality education. Programmes also include psychosocial support and social cohesion activities, payment of incentives to about 350 teachers, refurbishment of schools as well as transportation for children that live far away from the schools.

Refugee Stories

Aid agencies are increasingly using cash and vouchers to bring fast and effective relief to those in need. This allows beneficiaries such as Ashek to make their own choices of what they need most urgently, preserving their dignity while providing assistance quickly. "This e-card made a huge difference", said 72-year-old Ashek, who said the young children in the house often cried from hunger. "Before, we had nothing. We were pulled out from under the ground to the top of the sky!" "We were dead before," added Mariam. "This card has brought us back to life!"



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More than 80% of refugees in Turkey do not live in formal refugee camps but have found shelter in towns and villages. They are also in growing need to basic humanitarian assistance as their funds are running out after three years of war and few employment opportunities exist for refugees. Zakariya, 35, and his family are Turkmen and they fled to Kilis in August 2012. His daughter, Shamsa, aged 11, said, "I preferred living in Syria; it was our home. I had lots of friends there. The house we had was nicer – it was beautiful. I miss a lot of things about home - I miss my teachers, my friends at school, and school itself."

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With EU funding, Syrian refugee teachers, who had previously worked as volunteers without salary in schools in refugee camps and other locations, have been given monthly incentive payments as a result of a cooperation initiative between UNICEF, the Turkish Ministry of National Education, (MONE), the Disaster Management and Emergency Presidency (AFAD), and other national authorities. The teacher incentive scheme is also supported by donations from the EU Children of Peace Initiative.



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