



Turkey: Refugee crisis

ECHO FACTSHEET

Facts & Figures

Official estimate of refugees in Turkey
(Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs):

Over 3 million

EU funding:

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

€588 million

Refugee Facility for Turkey:

€3 billion (2016-2017)



Photo Credit: J.Hogg/WFP

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Key messages

- The number of refugees in Turkey has reached over **3 million people**, making Turkey the host country with the largest refugee population in the world.
- About 90% of Syrian refugees in Turkey remain **outside of camp settings** with limited access to basic services. The European Commission is providing humanitarian assistance to vulnerable refugees, particularly to those living outside of camps.
- The European Union and its Members States are funding the "**Facility for Refugees in Turkey**" which provides **€3 billion** to address needs of refugees and host communities with humanitarian and development assistance in 2016 and 2017.
- The European Commission in partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP), the Turkish Red Crescent and Turkish government institutions is rolling out the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN), **a single card social assistance scheme that will allow up to 1 million refugees cover their basic daily needs. With an initial budget of €348 million**, this represents the biggest humanitarian project in the history of the European Commission.

Humanitarian situation and needs

About 3 million registered refugees are living in Turkey making it the largest host of refugees in the world, including Syrians, Iraqis, Afghan, Iranian, Somalian and other nationalities.

In January 2017, the Government of Turkey estimated that it has spent **over €11.4 billion** to provide assistance for refugees since the beginning of the Syria crisis. Out of the close to 2.8 million registered Syrian refugees in the country, some 260, 000 people are hosted in 26 camps run by the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency of Turkey (AFAD), where refugees have access to shelter, health, education food and social activities. **Despite these efforts from the government, local authorities and the generosity from host communities, 90% of Syrian refugees**, (over 2.5 million persons), as well as many refugees from other nationalities, **live outside the camps** under very challenging circumstances with depleted resources.

Registered refugees have, in principle, access to public services, including education and healthcare. However, for many, access to these basic facilities is often limited for various reasons, including problems in registering with local authorities and the language barrier.

The European Union's Humanitarian Response

The total humanitarian funding provided by the EU institutions to Turkey since the beginning of the crisis amounts to over **€588 million**.

In November 2015, the EU launched the [Facility for Refugees in Turkey](#) to deliver efficient and complementary support to Syrian and other refugees and host communities in close cooperation with Turkish authorities. The Facility provides a joint coordination mechanism for actions financed by the EU budget (1/3 of the funding) and national contributions made by the Member States (2/3 of the funding), designed to ensure that the needs of refugees and host communities are addressed in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. The Facility provides €3 billion in funding for **2016 and 2017**, for both humanitarian and non-humanitarian projects. As part of the Facility, the European Commission's directorate for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) has allocated in 2016 a total of €505.65 million for refugees in Turkey, making it one of the most significant contribution, per one country, in the history of the directorate.

The Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN)

The flagship humanitarian programme funded by the EU in 2017 is the [Emergency Social Safety Net \(ESSN\)](#), a single card social assistance scheme that will allow up to 1 million of the most vulnerable refugees to meet their most pressing basic needs. With an initial grant of €348 million from the EU, the implementing partner, the World Food Programme in collaboration with the Turkish Red Crescent and Turkish government institutions, is distributing electronic debit cards to refugee families. A monthly cash grant is electronically uploaded on cards allowing people to pay for what they need the most, providing them with the dignity of choice. This electronic cash transfer system is not only a very efficient way of providing humanitarian assistance but also injects funds into the local economy.

This ground-breaking approach comes in addition to a string of other aid projects that have been launched in 2016 for a total value of €169 million. This funding is granted by the European Commission to a total of 19 humanitarian organisations which are working in close cooperation with Turkish partner organisations to provide refugees and



vulnerable people with assistance including food aid, access to health services, education in emergencies, essential items for winter, protection as well as specialised assistance for the most vulnerable.

Protection

At the centre of EU's humanitarian strategy in Turkey is the need to provide for the most vulnerable groups who are in need of legal assistance, child protection services, response to sexual and gender-based violence or other specialised protection support. UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA, Danish Refugee Council, Mercy Corps and other humanitarian actors are funded by the EU to implement such protection interventions.



Photo Credit: IOM

Health

Projects providing specific services in the health sector covering primary health care assistance, physical rehabilitation/post-operative care for war wounded people, assistance to people living with disabilities, mental health services and reproductive health are also being supported by the European Commission.

Education

Education in Emergencies has also been identified as one of the priority areas for humanitarian aid. This is done through support to non-formal education and school transportation. In addition, the Commission is developing a plan to provide Education assistance through the ESSN, aimed at increasing enrolment and improving attendance for the most vulnerable children.

Long-term assistance under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey

These projects complement and tie in with the EU's assistance under the Facility focusing on education, health, migration management, municipal infrastructure and socio-economic support, channelled through the European Commission Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR).

Of the 3 billion envisaged, the total amount allocated under the Facility, for both humanitarian and non-humanitarian assistance, has reached 2.2 billion for 2016-2017. In January 2017 this represents almost 75 percent of the total. Of the total amount allocated, the amount contracted has increased to €1.45 billion and the amount disbursed has reached €748 million.

