Introduction

The number of refugees in Turkey has reached over 3.4 million, making Turkey the largest refugee host country in the world. About 90% of Syrian refugees in Turkey remain outside of camp settings with limited access to basic services. Altogether 39 humanitarian projects have been contracted with 20 humanitarian organisations which are working in close cooperation with Turkish partner organisations to provide support to refugees and vulnerable people.

What are the needs?

Over 3.4 million registered refugees are living in Turkey, this number includes Syrians, Iraqis, Afghans, Iranians, Somalians and other nationalities. Out of the more than three million registered Syrian refugees in the country, 246,720 people are hosted in 23 camps run by the disaster and emergency management authority of Turkey (AFAD), where refugees have access to shelter, health, education, food and social activities. Despite the efforts of the government and local authorities, and the generosity of host communities, over 90% of Syrian refugees (over 2.8 million people) as well as many refugees from other nationalities live outside the camps, under very challenging circumstances with depleted resources. In principle, registered refugees have access to public services, including education and healthcare. However, for many refugees, access to these basic facilities is often limited for various reasons, including problems in registering with local authorities and the language barrier.
How are we helping?

The total humanitarian funding provided by the EU to Turkey through the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey is €4 billion. The EU launched the €3 billion facility to deliver efficient and complementary support to Syrian and other refugees and host communities in close cooperation with Turkish authorities in 2016-2017. The facility is funded from both the EU budget and the contributions of Member States.

The flagship humanitarian programme funded by the EU under the facility is the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN), a debit card based social assistance scheme that will allow up to 1.3 million of the most vulnerable refugees to meet their most pressing basic needs. With initial financing of €348 million from the EU, the implementing partner, the World Food Programme (WFP), in collaboration with the Turkish Red Crescent and Turkish government institutions, is distributing electronic debit cards to members of refugee families through which payments are made directly to them. As of September 2017, the number of ESSN beneficiaries reached one million.

Building on the ESSN, the European Union is funding the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) project in Turkey. UNICEF is the implementing partner. The EU commitment of €34 million will fund bi-monthly cash transfers to vulnerable refugee families whose children attend school regularly. The project also includes a child protection component to ensure refugee children continue to attend school and that they receive complementary child protection services when needed. In its first year, the CCTE will support 230 000 children. These projects are complemented by a series of other aid projects that have been launched in 2016 and 2017.

Altogether 39 humanitarian projects have been contracted with 20 humanitarian organisations which are working in close cooperation with Turkish organisations to provide refugees and vulnerable people with assistance including food, access to health services, education in emergencies, essential items for winter, and protection as well as specialised assistance for vulnerable demographic groups.

These projects complement the EU’s non-humanitarian assistance under the facility focusing on education, health, migration management, municipal infrastructure and socioeconomic support, channelled through the European Commission’s Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations department (DG NEAR).

Learn more about EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey.