



# International Forum on Local Solutions to Migration and Displacement



*From emergency to resilience and development*  
26-27 November 2019, Gaziantep, Turkey





# International Forum on Local Solutions to Migration and Displacement

## Productive partnerships for effective support to refugee-hosting municipalities: Best practices from forum co-hosts' experience in Turkey

As of October 2019, more than 4 million refugees are living in Turkey—the largest refugee population in the world. Turkey's Temporary Protection Regulation provides Syrians with access to services such as health, education and other social services, which are provided through national systems. The Government of Turkey has shouldered the bulk of the financial burden in responding to the needs of Syrians under temporary protection to date.

Over 98 per cent of Syrians under temporary protection now live within host communities across the 81 provinces of the country. As such, Syrians make use of public and municipal services in their daily lives. However, the sudden increase in population has proven challenging for local institutions such as municipalities, in extending services to refugees and ensuring social cohesion.

While hosting refugees was largely a new task for many, municipalities have demonstrated resilience in response to the refugee presence. Municipalities have coped with the direct consequences of refugee arrivals and presence by extending social services and adapted to address the specific needs of refugees. They have also transformed themselves to take on the role of fostering social cohesion and inclusion of new communities.

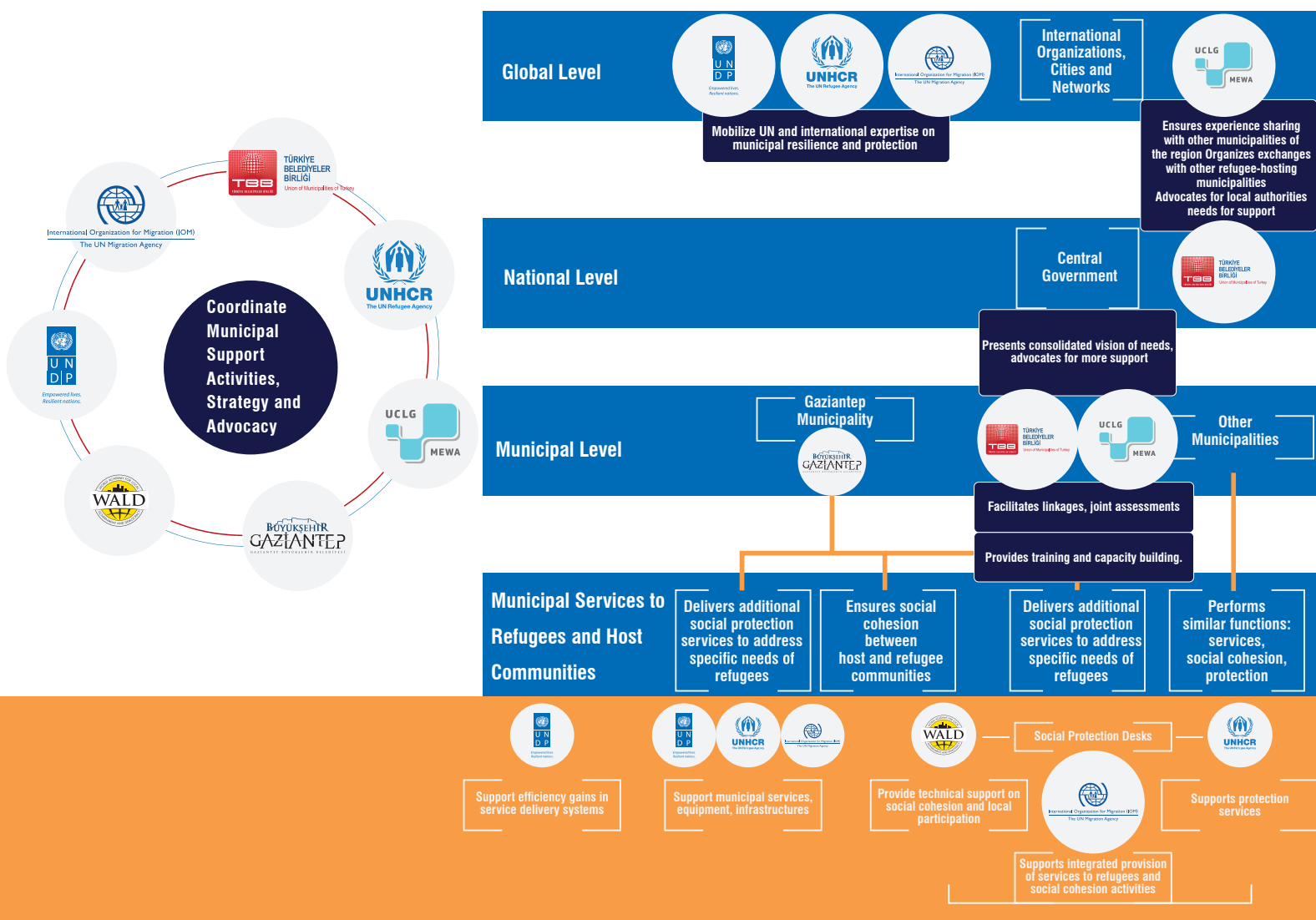
The response of Turkish municipalities such as the Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality to hosting record numbers of migrants and refugees is a global example of successfully making the link between humanitarian assistance and development goals. It demonstrates how refugees can be successfully included into national and local services.

The co-hosts of the municipal forum, UNDP, UNHCR, IOM, the Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT), United Cities and Local Governments—Middle East and West Asia Section (UCLG-MEWA) and the World Academy of Local Authorities and Democracy (WALD) have all played a key role in working with the Government of Turkey to contribute to strengthen the resilience of Gaziantep and other municipalities:

- **UN agencies**—UNDP, IOM, UNHCR and others—are key to provide additional resources to municipalities, both in terms of tangible support to services, and in terms of technical expertise and capacity support to develop new approaches or protection services. They also help raise the voice of municipalities in global forums.
- **Cities networks such as the UMT and UCLG-MEWA** play an important role identifying and describing the needs and priorities of municipalities to government counterparts. They facilitate networking and exchanges between Turkish municipalities and other refugee-hosting municipalities in the region and in the European Union.
- **WALD** has provided crucial added value to both UN, national and local partners on technical issues such as integrated protection services, social cohesion, and inclusion of refugees in local participatory processes.

In addition to providing their respective added value in support municipalities, the co-host organizations have effectively developed partnership with each other to provide complementary, comprehensive, effective and flexible support to municipalities with a view to contribute to needs of host communities and refugees being met. The lessons learnt from this experience in Turkey are summarized here and further documented in the briefs of each co-host enclosed in this folder.

# Partnership between co-hosts agencies for comprehensive support to municipalities



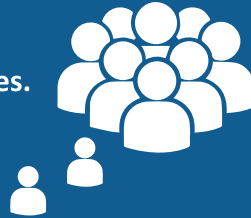
## Overview of the support provided to Turkish municipalities

- The co-hosts and other national and international partners have provided financial, capacity, and technical support to the Government of Turkey since the onset of refugee arrivals. In 2015, the response emphasized the need to work on strengthening the resilience of host communities, Syrians under temporary protection, and the institutions supporting them. This led to the formulation of the Refugee and Resilience Response Plans (3RP) to contribute to more sustainable responses to immediate needs.
- Acknowledging the critical role of municipalities in achieving this objective, 3RP partners increased their support to and engagement with municipal authorities.
- Since 2014, USD60 million worth of funding has been mobilized by 3RP partners to support municipalities. This funding was directed to 60 different municipalities, which together host 90 per cent of the refugee population.
- The scale of this support has rapidly increased, with funding secured for 2019 representing triple the value of support provided in 2016.
- The co-hosts and other 3RP partners supported municipalities to enhance participatory decision-making and improve coordination and resource-mobilization in service delivery to address the specific needs of refugees.
- Partners also provided support to municipal infrastructures, especially in southeast Turkey. This helped municipalities improve solid waste management, and also public spaces (playgrounds, sports facilities, public parks) and wastewater fire-fighting and emergency services.
- In other parts of Turkey, co-hosts and other partners supported municipalities to enhance participatory decision-making, improve coordination and resource-mobilization to address the specific needs of refugees and strengthen municipalities' roles in social protection mechanisms.
- The support from the co-hosts has also paved the way for municipalities to mobilize additional international support, notably in the form of loans from international financial institutions and other bilateral development partners.

## Key numbers on refugees & municipalities

- Istanbul is the largest hosting municipality, with over

500,000 registered refugees.



- The small municipality of **Kilis on the Syrian border** is hosting as many refugees as its regular population.



- The municipalities in South-East Turkey collectively host over **1.3m refugees**, or over **20 per cent** of their pre-crisis population.

- This increase in population has led to the consumption of **70 billion litres** more water...



- ... and the generation of **1 million tons of additional solid waste /year**.



- The fiscal implications of hosting refugees amount to **USD 126 / individual / year**, or **USD 455million** for all Turkish municipalities.



While the Government of Turkey has demonstrated remarkable national ownership of the response by providing a solid and comprehensive rights-based legal framework, the large increase in the population has placed local institutions under considerable pressure. Municipal services are automatically affected by any sudden population increase. In a context where municipal capacities were already stretched, the demographic shock created by the Syrian crisis constituted a serious test for municipal resilience. There is a high risk that residents' trust in local institutions could be undermined. Yet, municipalities have demonstrated since day one their ability to act as the front-line institutions in the response to the crisis, showing great adaptability to expand services to the refugee population and cater for its specific needs while maintaining social cohesion.

### Municipalities supported to date by co-hosts and other 3RP partners



## Good Practices from working with refugee and migrant hosting municipalities in Turkey

Support to municipalities should strengthen their overall resilience, helping them to cope, absorb and transform from hosting refugees and migrants.

- Investments in municipal services should be used as a strategic entry point for the introduction of more structural improvements in local governance and service delivery.
- This should also help introducing new technologies/methods in service delivery, particularly in waste and wastewater management, which can also generate additional revenues for municipalities, for example through recycling.
- Supporting the project management capacities of municipalities will help them not only to improve their strategic planning and decision-making processes and optimize the use of their resources but also to mobilize additional external funding.
- Municipalities preferably need separate units to work on the cases of migrants and refugees and to collaborate with channels of international and local coordination.
- Personnel in all units of municipalities should be provided with training on how to approach issues regarding foreign populations, including the specific rights and frameworks applying to refugees and temporary protection status holder.

### Municipalities are central to social cohesion and socioeconomic inclusion

- Host communities trust municipalities more than other local or international institutions and they are therefore better placed to lead confidence-building activities. The UN and NGOs can provide valuable support, notably by investing in local public spaces (parks, recreational areas) to facilitate positive interaction between residents of different communities.
- Municipalities have established mechanisms in place to reach out to communities, especially vulnerable people. International partners should build on these mechanisms to include refugees and migrants rather than duplicate them.
- The practices that allow the inclusion of refugees in local consultative, participatory and decision-making processes are very useful for refugees to express themselves. In particular, including refugees in specific bodies such as a municipal children's assembly or women's committees is key to ensure the representation of specific groups.
- Municipalities are also best placed to maximize the positive contribution of refugees to local communities, by identifying refugees' individual skills and talent as teachers, doctors, engineers, and entrepreneurs.
- Municipalities enjoy the necessary trust to disseminate positive and accurate information among host communities, and to fight negative discourse and disinformation.

### Municipalities should play a central role to ensure effective local coordination between government, humanitarian and development actors

- Coordination between the national government and municipalities is essential in providing a holistic response. Municipalities need to collaborate with provincial units of the central government which also deal with migration and asylum.
- Information-sharing protocols are particularly needed for municipalities to be able to plan their local response based on central government data on foreigners.
- Coordination and referral mechanisms between municipalities and other agencies need to be supported, including involving local universities, the private sector and civil society, to address the unique needs of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.
- Employment rapidly becomes a major challenge for local communities. Municipalities have a key role to play by regulating businesses and employment practices, but also by mobilizing development organizations, local companies, industries, and chambers of commerce to harvest the productive potential of refugees and support their own entrepreneurship initiatives.

## Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality Model for Migration Management

### Gaziantep – a historical centre and a modern hub for South East Turkey

As one of the first settlements in Anatolia and located at the intersection of Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean Region, Gaziantep has remained important throughout history. A centre of attraction with its geographical location, industry and commerce, Gaziantep has a strong economic influence on many surrounding cities.

Gaziantep is an agricultural area rich in high-value industrial crops such as pistachio, olives, cotton, raisins, red pepper, flax and cereals including lentils, wheat, and barley. Moreover, Gaziantep is an industrial and commercial centre for products from Eastern and South-eastern Anatolia. It holds a prominent position through its organized industrial zones, small industrial sites and free trade zone. Gaziantep is highly developed in terms of industry and commerce, representing 13 per cent of Turkey's total exports, and 90 per cent of pistachio and 85 per cent of dried nuts processing and exports. Being an important hub for Turkey's trade with the Middle East, Gaziantep has become a leading city for tourism through culture and tourism investments increasing in recent years. Gaziantep has a very rich cuisine with some 500 dishes and in 2015 it was included in UNESCO's Creative Cities Network in the field of gastronomy.

### Gaziantep and Migration

Although Gaziantep tops the list of cities most affected by the Syria crisis that started in 2011, the spirit of unity and solidarity in the city combined with cooperative and dedicated efforts by public bodies minimized the impact of the crisis. Important efforts were deployed with the cooperation of the international community, NGOs and public bodies led by Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality (Gaziantep MM). The Municipality sees migration not as problem to solve but a reality that needs to be managed. Over the centuries, there have been many positive outcomes of effectively managed migration movements. As the country hosting the highest number of refugees in the world, Turkey fulfils its responsibility. Border towns are particularly affected by this migrant influx.

After 8 years in Turkey, Syrians are now a part of social life. The humanitarian aid and crisis management-oriented work that was needed at the outset has been replaced by a more holistic approach aimed at economic and social development and social cohesion. Efforts to foster peaceful co-existence of both communities without tensions and violence and to promote social cohesion have been the priority of Gaziantep MM. As of 2019, 452,101 registered Syrians under temporary protection reside in Gaziantep, representing 21% of the municipality's population.



## Gaziantep MM Migration Management Branch — from emergency response to social development

At the beginning of 2016, Gaziantep's total population, including Syrians, reached 2,300,000, exceeding the projected figure for 2023. This unexpected and rapid population growth not only increased demand for social services but also resulted in increased need for social aid in addition to provision of services such as drinking water, sanitation, environmental health, housing, parks and green areas, transport, health services, solid waste management and education. To respond to these demands and needs, the Municipality went beyond its traditional role and started work in the fields of education, health, employment and social cohesion.

The focus of Gaziantep MM migration management work is that Syrian and Turkish communities develop skills to coexist in peace without conflict or tension. Gaziantep Municipality aims to turn migration into an advantage and contribute to development of the region, and offers equal opportunities to both communities to unleash their potential. Within the Municipality, a Migration Management Branch was established in 2016 within the Department of Women, Family, Education, and Social Services as the first of its kind in Turkey in order to enhance institutional capacity and engage in migration management. The Migration Management Branch employs 38 people in total, including municipal staff members and technical advisors. Its duties include delivery of social services to Syrians, internal coordination among municipal departments working with Syrians, cooperation with international partners, and project development and formulation.

Social aid is provided to Syrian guests in need to increase their quality of life in a way compatible with human dignity and as a requirement of our social municipality approach. Humanitarian aid is provided to thousands of Syrian families in need. Moreover, 5,000 portions of food are delivered every day in our three soup kitchens. The Municipality has established specific centres to provide services to Syrians, and has extended the services of others to them.

The Ensar Community Centre was established to provide guidance and advisory services to Syrian guests in various fields (such as legal, medical, employment, education, social services, culture and sports events) and to organize information sessions for them. The Centre outreach team ensures that it reaches vulnerable and

disadvantaged families. The Centre has been providing services since the beginning of 2016 to women and children in education, sports, social and cultural events. Courses delivered include language classes, sports, painting, photography, children's clubs, and computer literacy.

The International Blue Crescent Joint Community Centre, operated jointly by Gaziantep Municipality and International Blue Crescent, provides advisory services to Syrians and Turks about legal rights, medical matters, education, guidance, cinema, laundry, hobby and arts courses as well as psycho-social support (PSS) for children and women, and café and library services.

The SADA Women's Development and Solidarity Centre is a women-only centre. It provides various vocational training courses, language courses, PSS support groups, and informative sessions. The child-friendly zone created within the centre offers training sessions tailored to children.

The Gaziantep Social Research Centre (SARMER) has extended its work on social risk mapping to include data about Syrian families. Data gathered are used for regional needs analysis with the purpose of using limited resources in the most efficient way, and to identify families in need of urgent help. Syrian guests receive services from the 29 Gaziantep Arts and Vocational Courses (GASMEK) such as vocational courses and language training to support both access to employment and social cohesion.

Syrian and Turkish women who are victims of violence and their children benefit from accommodation, PSS support and advisory services offered by the municipality's Women's Shelter, which also works to eliminate child marriage.



## Gaziantep MM Projects and Cooperation with international and national partners

Burden sharing, international cooperation and tangible support are key elements highlighted in the Global Compact on Refugees that are critical for local institutions on the ground. Gaziantep Municipality implements various projects for Syrian refugees, but also participates in national and international meetings to represent the city and country in addition to sharing its experience in the region. Plans and policies are formulated at micro, mezzo and macro levels for the short, medium and long terms. Based on these plans and in support of the work of the migration branch, the Municipality has also developed successful partnerships with international and national actors active there. As a result, the Municipality can increase its response capacity and to provide comprehensive responses to both refugee and host community needs. Some notable examples of such collaboration include:

- Working with UNDP both on municipal service delivery and on livelihoods. UNDP supports the municipality on vocational training in the industry and services sector to increase Syrians' chances of finding local employment. A total of 3,000 Syrians under temporary protection have received life skills and language training while 1,200 Syrians were trained in the services sector.
- Working with IOM to provide renovation and equipment support for Ensar Community Centre and two informal education centres. The centres are now used to assist refugees with social inclusion, supporting social cohesion and intercultural exchanges, and providing information for refugees and migrants explaining life and work rights in Turkey.
- Combating Child Abuse and Child Marriage with UNICEF, based on a joint workplan to target the most vulnerable children living in Gaziantep. Training on gender equality, child marriage and child protection was provided to some 3,000 people including neighbourhood and village leaders, school principals and counsellors, Syrian teachers, Imams, Quran Course instructors and municipal staff.
- Training Programme for Syrian Refugees and Host Communities with GIZ (German Society for International Cooperation) to bring together Syrian and Turkish youth, offering them socialization opportunities, serving the purpose of social integration to benefit both refugees and local residents.
- Gaziantep Women-Only Centre with UNWOMEN. Thanks to this project, the SADA Women's Development and Solidarity Centre was established in Gaziantep. The purpose of the Centre is to broaden access of Syrian and local women living in Gaziantep to aid, services, vocational training and job opportunities, to strengthen their skills to live together within the host community, and to conduct vocational training, Turkish language courses, basic life skills programmes, inclusion and social cohesion activities.
- The municipality collaborates with a wide array of additional partners on refugee and migration issues, including Koç University and Bilkent University, CARE, the Turkish National Olympic Committee, Dream Partners Society—YGA, the International Blue Crescent Society—IBC, and Welt Hunger Hilfe.



## Best practices and recommendations from the Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality response to the Syria Crisis.

The migration policy of Gaziantep MM is a humane approach based on social justice and human rights. Focusing on an approach that does not give rise to conflicts and reduces tensions, the Municipality works to increase the welfare of both refugees and local citizens. Gaziantep considers its efforts not as benevolence but as an international and humanitarian responsibility based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The history of migration is as old as the history of mankind. Migration was the beginning of many significant events in history, still continues and will continue in the future. The world needs to understand that migration is not a problem to solve; it is rather a reality that needs to be managed. Refugees cross borders not because they wish to do so but because they have to. They can rely on Turkey and Gaziantep for protection and a humanitarian approach. We believe this will turn the world into a better place to live in. Services that Gaziantep Municipality delivers are important to ensure social peace and welfare and to contribute to opportunities for both communities to live together under equitable conditions. The fact that there are very few instances of crimes and incidents among the half million Syrians living in Gaziantep shows that both communities have accepted each other and developed skills for a common life. This underlines the success of the work undertaken by the municipality to date and motivates it to go further, notably on the following:

- Employment appears to be the major need of refugees now. As Gaziantep is an industrial city, this problem can be easily solved. This requires working with the private employment to tackle the issue of informal employment in certain businesses.
- It is essential to conduct studies in the fields of social assistance, education and health services based on human rights and equity between the refugees and local & disadvantaged communities. Additionally, coordination and referrals between municipalities and universities, provincial directorates, NGOs and INGOs is needed for efficient service delivery.
- Making use of the presence of refugees for political purposes should be resisted. The migration issue should not be politicized. Municipalities enjoy the necessary trust to disseminate positive and accurate information among host communities, and to combat negative discourses and disinformation.
- Facilitating interprovincial travel for refugees could help trade and business development. In particular, many Syrian business have been established in Gaziantep and are benefitting the city's economy. Syrian businessmen need to expand these activities elsewhere.

### More information:

Gaziantep Municipality Website <https://gaziantep.bel.tr/>  
Incilipinar Mah. Sehit Yusuf Erin Street Metropolitan  
Municipality Building Sehitkamil / Gaziantep

t: +90 342 211 12 00  
@ iletisim@gaziantep.bel.tr



## The Union of Municipalities of Turkey's Work with Municipalities Hosting Refugees and Migrants

### The Union of Municipalities of Turkey represents 1389 Turkish municipalities at all levels

The Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT) was established in 1945 and became a national organization to represent all municipalities in Turkey in 2002. Since its establishment, the Union has carried out duties focused on lobbying, safeguarding the interests of local authorities, and training the elected and appointed personnel of the municipalities. The Union advises municipalities on service delivery issues and assist its members both through skilled experts on the ground and through IT based solutions.

UMT's overall policies are defined by the General Assembly of the Union which constitutes around 800 locally elected representatives who elect the Union president—currently Fatma Sahin, Mayor of Gaziantep, and the executive board. The UMT represents Turkish municipalities at international platforms and promotes efforts to localize the multinational urban related policies such as SDGs, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework, and the New Urban Agenda. UMT is a member of Council of European Municipalities and Regions as well as United Cities and Local Government Organization (UCLG), is the contact point for the European Committee of the Regions, and acts as the secretariat for the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities.

### The Union's contacts with local officials give it a unique understanding of the needs and challenges of municipalities facing migration

As the sole national local government union, working daily directly with the local authorities, the Union of Municipalities has been at the forefront of supporting local authorities in responding to the crisis. This has led the Union to implement many programmes to support the municipalities since the start of the Syrian refugee influx. Indeed, refugees have access to all of the public and municipal services used by the host residents. However, since infrastructure and institutional capacities are designed for residents, sudden increases in population pose a great challenge, in addition to issues of social cohesion of Syrians, for the host municipalities.

The Union's overall coordination and facilitation mandate enable it to provide rapid and multilayer support to local authorities facing migration and refugee movement. The Union's continuous contact with its members identified a lack of additional financing and resources as the main overarching challenge of refugee-hosting municipalities.

The very first action of the UMT took in that respect was to support municipalities with grants of vehicles which consisted of garbage trucks, fire trucks and funeral vehicles, especially to cities that faced the most migration. In order to provide a more sustainable solution to this lack of resources, the UMT scaled up its lobbying efforts to leverage its official role of representing municipalities at national and international level. This included advocating for adequate financing for refugee-hosting cities, and establishing a dedicated department to assist municipal financial capacities by supporting their project proposals to international donors.

A key added value of the Union was to publish strong evidence of the impact of the crisis on municipalities and their need for support. Without a platform like the Union to shed light on the front-line role played by municipalities in facing displacement, such evidence would remain scattered out of sight of national and global decision-makers. As such, the advocacy work of the Union, and notably its regular analysis in 2016 and 2019 on the financial impact of hosting refugees, have been important milestones behind the increase in national and international support to municipalities in recent years, and the success story of the work of municipalities in hosting refugees in Turkey.



**The technical support, networking and advocacy opportunities presented by the Union are crucial resources for refugee-hosting municipalities' resilience**

As highlighted above, the Union has been working since the beginning of the crisis with national and international donors to develop and implement migration-related projects, either by means of grants or in technical assistance. The Union publishes studies and position papers in order to promote the exchange of experiences and to search for alternative management models and best practices across the world that have had positive impacts in dealing with mass migration. The Union organizes study visits, invites international experts to conferences and promotes linkages between cities at global level.

This has enabled the creation of global innovative partnerships, such as the ones developed with the Union of Swedish Municipalities (SKL) in 2016 to implement a project called TUSELOG to support 3 Regional Municipal Associations /12 Municipalities. The project established a strong baseline on the financial and social problems faced by the municipalities, releasing the first report on the Impact of Syrian Refugees Under Temporary Protection on Municipalities in Terms of Social Integration and Finances. Based on its conclusions, the UMT worked with over 250 staff from the targeted municipalities to develop their respective resilience master plans.

To further structure its support to refugee-hosting municipalities, in 2018 the UMT

established a new department, "Project and Financing". Initially, the department conducted a new report "Syrian Refugees and Municipalities in Turkey; A Financial Impact Analysis" in over 50 municipalities, presenting the first detailed pictures of municipal financial challenges and priorities based on data collected on the ground. This report aimed to conduct lobbying activities on migration in the presence of international institutions and agencies in order to cover the financial gaps caused by the migration influx. The Project and Financing department of the Union has also organized a series of Financing the Migration Trainings, training over 1,000 Staff from 300 municipalities on project proposal writing, and has worked closely with 60 municipalities to develop proposals for the European Union Facility support to municipal infrastructure.

UMT coordinates the communication channel between central government and local authorities in decision-making processes. This includes working with the Ministry of Interior's Directorate General for Migration Management to get inputs from municipal officials on local integration challenges and policies, or piloting with four pilot municipalities, ways to monitor refugee-related data at the local level.

Last but not least, the Union is also an important stakeholder in the Union of Cities and Local Government (UCLG): The Union of Municipalities of Turkey is the Vice-President of the UCLG Task Force, Territorial Prevention and Management of Crises, which aims to provide a platform for local governments to exchange knowledge and expertise on disaster/crisis management. Thanks to this role, the task force will be able to capitalize on the response to the Syria crisis in Turkey to improve and increase the availability of local governments expertise to disaster/crises-affected municipalities and it will highlight and develop the role of local governments in international disaster management, resilience and response.



UMT Workshop on Financing Migration with EU Funds, Ankara/2018

## Case study - analyzing the financial impact of hosting refugees for municipalities.

In the global context of growing human mobility, decentralization, urbanization and inequalities, local and regional authorities are now also regarded as strategic actors in migration and refugee policy development. Their strategic role has been recognized by the two Global Compacts on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, and on Refugees, by the New Urban Agenda, by the Sustainable Development Goals (in particular SDGs 11 and 16), and by issue "localization", all of which seek to reinforce local leadership and ownership.

Yet, despite this call to make local institutions the cornerstone of humanitarian and development efforts, detailed analysis of their role and needs to enable the design of adequate support programmes or policy changes remains scarce, which in turn undermines the ability of the international community to turn commitments into action. In order to fill this critical gap in Turkey, where municipalities have been first responders to the refugee influx without initially receiving extra budgetary support, the Union took the lead in documenting the impact of hosting refugees on municipal authorities. This presented a challenging task that only a platform such as the Union could undertake, considering that municipalities of different size and level of competencies host refugees in various numbers and proportions (while Istanbul hosts over 500,000 refugees, the municipalities hosting the largest number in proportion to the indigenous

population is the small border town of Kilis, with Syrians under temporary protection making up 103 per cent of the local population).

The Union undertook a systematic information collection exercise from over 30 of the main refugee hosting cities to provide insight to the public and decision-makers on financial costs that had to be shouldered by municipalities. The study shows that while Turkish municipalities provide direct assistance specially to refugees for an average of USD 10/ refugee, the total costs incurred, including the provision of services to an expanded population and associated expenses reaches USD 126/ refugee per year, or over USD 450 million for all Turkish municipalities.

While this represents a very substantial investment that needs to be considered as part of the costs of hosting refugees for Turkey, the study also offers indications of where the main priorities of municipalities lie, detailed in the table below. This shows that waste and environment, water and public spaces are the top three priorities for local municipalities (see the table below). The work of the Union to showcase the importance of these needs was crucial to guide investments decisions by the Government of Turkey and international partners, notably for the second tranche of the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey which has dedicated a record amount of EUR 380 million to supporting municipal infrastructure, focusing on the three priority areas identified by the Union.

**Finding from UMT Study on the Fiscal Impact of Hosting Refugees for Turkish Municipalities: Service prioritization - How would you arrange your budget if you had an extra resource of TRY 100?**

**Share of refugees: ratio of refugees to host population.**

**MM: Metropolitan Municipality  
M: Municipality**

	Hatay MM	K.Maraş MM.	Bursa MM	Konya MM	Istanbul MM	Izmir MM	Hatay Reyhanlı M.	Kilis M.	Hatay Yaylıcağ M.	Şanlıurfa Ceylanpınar M.	Gaziantep İntahye M.	Şanlıurfa Eyyübiye M.	Average (#)	Average (%)
Number of Syrian Refugees (thousand)	442	85	164	104	558	141	124	97	17	33	17	63		
Share of Refugees (percent)	28	8	6	5	4	3	130	103	60	39	26	17		
Water and sewer	10		10	15	19		4	20		34			16	16
Housing and accommodation		10			2			15	10	34			3	13
Parks, gardens and sports services	10	10	15	12	12		3	10	20	17	10	10	11	13
Public transport and traffic	40		10	13	28			15	10			5	21	9
Waste and environment	15	10	5	7	18		71	20	10	10	30	80	19	32
Social services and social aids	5	55	5	25	4	100	6	5	15	3			14	6
Education	5	10	5	17	4		2	2	10		10		4	2
Health			10		3		2						2	0
Burial and cemetery services	15	5	5	1	2		2	2	5				4	1
Culture and arts services			5		4		2	3	5		10	5	2	1
Municipal police			5	5	2		4	2	5		10		1	1
Fire rescue and emergency services			15	5	3		4	5					2	1
Others			10					1	10		30		1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

## Best Practices and recommendations from the UMT response to the Syria crisis.

- Municipalities preferably need special departments or units to work on the needs of migrants and refugees. To that end, regulations should be passed in municipal legislation providing for new unit and staff needs. Similarly, municipalities need an institutional, administrative and legal framework to collaborate with local NGOs.
- Municipalities need to collaborate effectively with the provincial units of the central government that deal with immigration and asylum. This is particularly the case for data management: since municipalities need to use data on foreigners which have been collected by the central government, information-sharing should be established, particularly in respect of the database of the General Directorate of Migration Management.
- Personnel in all units of municipalities should be provided with advanced training on how to approach issues regarding foreign populations.
- In order to increase the social inclusion and integration of Syrian refugees under temporary protection, an approach that emphasizes the "contribution" of refugees to society should be adopted. In that regard, the UMT emphasizes the importance of the "contribution" approach and proposes the identification of Syrians' individual skills as teachers, doctors, engineers, professionals and entrepreneurs, which could be of benefit to host society.
- The functions and powers of citizens' assemblies regarding foreigners should be defined.



Workshop on Building Database in Migration, Ankara/2017

## More information:

TBB Website <http://tbb.gov.tr/en/>

Tunisia Street No: 12 06680 Kavaklıdere / ANKARA

t: (0.312) 419 21 00

f: (0.312) 419 21 30

@ tbb@tbb.gov.tr



**TÜRKİYE  
BELEDİYELER  
BİRLİĞİ**

Union of Municipalities of Turkey

## WALD Work with Municipalities Hosting Refugees and Migrants in Turkey

### **WALD: at the service of democracy for all and services for all**

Since its establishment in 1993, the mission of the World Academy for Local Government and Democracy Foundation (WALD) has been to conduct community-oriented protection by means of responsible and accountable local governance, under a “democracy for all and service for all” approach. WALD produces sustainable, innovative and inclusive ways of incorporating human rights into local social life with the aim of ensuring the active participation of all parts of society in democratic governance. Thanks to the connections established with global and local partners, WALD supports local governments through solution-oriented projects that are in line with their needs, based on the principles of social peace and mutual trust and by developing the experience we obtain from local players.

As the fundamental institutions ensuring the establishment and maintenance of democracy and human rights, local governments play a key role in the provision of public services, under the principle of subsidiarity, which is specified in the Provisions of Autonomy for European Local Governments. WALD is carrying out activities in its programme areas through partnerships and grant schemes it has established with different institutions and organizations. By bringing together representatives of civil society, the private sector and public institutions, WALD enables information-sharing about new approaches.

### **WALD acts as a bridge between international and local institutions to improve socioeconomic integration of refugees and migrants.**

WALD believes that engaging local governments in the fields of human rights, democracy, education, health, and culture, is the key to faster social development and to supporting democratization processes. This also applies to the issue of migration and Syrian refugees, where working with local governments is very important. Our specific knowledge of local governments and skills in cooperating with them enable us to implement projects on migration and social issues. In line with this, WALD has been working on migration in Turkey for three years, helping local governments to strengthen their capacity

to develop democracy and human rights in the management of the refugee influx. WALD acts as a bridge between international institutions, which have direct access to international donors and expertise, and local governments which have a direct local presence but more limited access to donors and funds.

WALD is focusing especially on projects related to social cohesion, social protection, and economic inclusion, all of which are aligned with the local democracy mandate. WALD’s intimate knowledge of needs and capacities on the ground enables it to pilot innovative solutions in each of these areas, in partnership with various UN agencies such as UNHCR. This has included organizing numerous local events targeting Turkish and Syrian women and children in Istanbul to break down the language barrier and foster social cohesion.

Municipalities are generally the first port of call for refugees who are new to their local communities and unfamiliar with the availability of and access procedures for a range of services. WALD’s piloting of Social Protection Desks in Istanbul successfully addressed this challenge, helping refugees to navigate local services, and local administration to coordinate better with each other. The programme has been expanded from 2 to 12 districts in less than two years. This demonstrates how a rights-based approach and advocacy are supporting local-based solutions, in particular with urban governance, fostering a regional approach to local development and supporting local actors in dealing with the current refugee influx situation.



## WALD's technical presence on the ground helped Istanbul municipalities to set up innovative systems to respond to refugees' needs

Since the closest administrative unit to people is local government, working with municipalities is of great importance in management of the refugee influx. Policies and legal regulations determined by the central government are actually implemented at the local level. In a survey conducted in 2016 in Esenler and Sultanbeyli districts WALD found that refugees have more confidence in local governments than central government. In this study, refugees emphasized the importance of municipalities in accessing services and highlighted the facilities provided locally.

The support to municipalities on migration issues started in 2017 with social cohesion activities in 6 municipalities of Istanbul; 45 different events have been organized with 600 children and 600 women of Turkish and Syrian origin in 6 municipalities of Istanbul. These activities included a scouting camp, a football tournament and a city tour, all for children. Women engaged in craft days, cultural food days, city tours, coffee conversations, Turkish language courses and awareness-raising on violence against women, on gender equality, on sexual and reproductive health, on family planning, and considerations in raising children. The social linkages and interaction created through these events resulted in the creation of solidarity groups among the women involved.

In parallel, WALD piloted Social Protection Desks in the districts of Sancaktepe and Gaziosmanpasa. The general purpose of the Social Protection Project is to provide consultancy services to deal with psychological, administrative and legal problems faced by Syrian refugees at the service buildings of the municipalities, in cooperation with local governments and with a rights-based approach, and to establish a centre where the necessary guidance will be given. For the purpose of ensuring coordinated work and administrative guidance among the units affiliated to local governments, this service is provided by a support desk employee, a psychologist, a lawyer and an Arabic translator. The success of these pilots enabled the extension of protection desks to 7 Istanbul districts in 2018 and eventually 12 districts in 2019, in partnership with UNHCR.

While the Social Cohesion Project (see the figure below) reached 1,200 refugees in 6 districts in 2017-2019, the Social Protection Project reached over 30,000 refugees. WALD has started a new pilot project to reach 60 refugees to support them in obtaining work licences and work permits. In addition, Turkish language courses are being held in 9 districts, as many Syrian refugees have problems finding employment mostly because of lack of knowledge and the language barrier.

## WALD ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF REFUGEES

### PROJECTS 2017-2019

#### Social Cohesion Project

- UNHCR&WALD
- July-December 2017
- 600 children/women from Turkish and Syrian origin
- 6 municipalities of Istanbul: Avcilar, Bagcilar, Basaksehir, Beylikduzu, Esenler and Gaziosmanpasa



2018

#### Kitchen of Hopes Project

- WFP&WALD
- April-September 2019
- 60 Syrians and 60 Turks
- 2 pilot municipalities: Altindag/Ankara and Bagcilar/Istanbul



2019



2017

#### Social Protection Project

- UNHCR&WALD
- January-December 2018
- 11198 refugees benefited from Social Protection Desks
- 10 municipalities of Istanbul: Avcilar, Bagcilar, Beylikduzu, Gaziosmanpasa, Kagithane, Kucukcekmece, Pendik, Sancaktepe, Sultangazi and Sisi



2019

#### Social Protection Project

- UNHCR&WALD
- January-December 2019
- Until August 2019, 21000 refugees benefited from Social Protection Desks
- 12 municipalities of Istanbul: Avcilar, Bagcilar, Beylikduzu, Gaziosmanpasa, Kagithane, Kucukcekmece, Maltepe, Pendik, Sancaktepe, Sultangazi, Sisli and Umriye



## Case study - Moving towards sustainable solutions to socioeconomic integration of refugees

The policies produced at the beginning of the refugee inflow were mostly focused on solution-oriented and immediate needs. Longer-term and structural programmes are now more important to foster socioeconomic integration of refugee communities.

In order to foster social integration, WALD implemented the Mentorship Project in Bağcılar Municipality, Avcılar Municipality, Kağıthane Municipality and Sancaktepe Municipality in 2017. Turkish and Syrian youth came together and contributed to their personal development by sharing their experiences. In the activities organized, university students became role models by explaining their achievements to other young people. This provided a good basis for bringing the host and the refugee communities together to contribute to social cohesion through local community campaigns on access to education and prevention of peer bullying.



Children participating in social cohesion activities

The language barrier must first be crossed for the refugees to integrate into the society in which they live. WALD has therefore engaged in delivering Turkish language courses, which have been conducted as a certified programme with the approval of the Ministry of National Education Lifelong Learning Directorate. This project was continued with the support of local governments as a result of protocols signed with Public Education Centres. Language courses made it easier for refugees to find jobs and express themselves. It was also observed that the number of entrepreneurship ventures increased when unemployed refugees attended vocational courses and participated in business life.



Two Syrian refugee women at one of WALD social protection desks

Building on this, WALD continued to develop livelihoods projects in 2019. First, Social Protection Desks started to provide legal advice to refugees on how to start businesses, from getting permits to the various administrative processes. The Social Protection work of WALD also facilitated contact between refugees and the Public Employment Agency, İŞKUR, to assist them in finding jobs. This included information on job search and application, meeting with private and public sector employers, and awareness of labour law and work permit regulations.

## Best Practices and recommendations from UCLG-MEWA Response to the Syria Crisis.

- The practices that allow the participation of refugees in City Councils are very useful for refugees to express themselves. In some municipalities, the establishment of Refugee Assemblies is of particular value for achieving and improving social peace. These practices are very important as they help refugees to be included in the decision-making mechanisms.
- Including refugees in municipal Children's Assembly and Youth Centres is important to ensure the representation of refugees and for women, children and young people to have the opportunity to express themselves. Such good practices strengthen the local government's connection with the local community.

- Turkish language courses should be expanded to a larger number of refugees and migrants.
- Mentorship projects involving young people is an investment in future social cohesion.
- Municipalities have a role to play in increasing school enrolment of children and preventing child labour.
- In each hosting municipality, Refugee and Migrant Support Centres should be established.
- Continuous support needs to be provided to local governments to achieve these projects.
- Legal and administrative regulations should highlight that municipalities play a special role and become active in ensuring local cohesion.
- A Migration and Cohesion Council within the scope of City Councils is crucial for social peace between the host society and internal/external migrant communities.

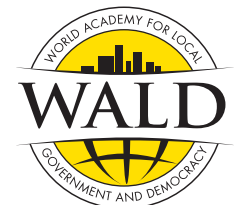


WALD "Culinary Training" within Kitchen of Hopes Project in partnership with WFP

## More information

- World Academy for Local Government and Democracy Foundation
- Project Coordination Head-Office Address: İstanbul Dünya Ticaret Merkezi, EGS Business Park Blokları, Yeşilköy Mah. Atatürk Cad. No:12/1 B1 Blok Kat:4/204 Yeşilköy/İSTANBUL

[www.wald.org.tr](http://www.wald.org.tr) | [twitter.com/wald\\_academy](https://twitter.com/wald_academy) | [facebook.com/waldacademy](https://facebook.com/waldacademy)



## UCLG-MEWA Work with Municipalities Hosting Refugees and Migrants in Turkey

### **UCLG-MEWA : a key network for municipalities.**

United Cities and Local Governments Middle East and West Asia Section (UCLG-MEWA), headquartered in Istanbul, is one of the nine sections of UCLG, which is based in Spain, and has a large membership network composed of local governments, local government associations, and NGOs from the region. UCLG-MEWA actively works in the MEWA region (including Turkey) to encourage local governments in the region to be represented on international platforms and to contribute to global agendas. Combating all forms of discrimination, UCLG-MEWA serves as an intermediary to establish solidarity bridges between its members through peer learning and as a source of learning, exchange and capacity-building, supporting the establishment and strengthening of free and democratic local self-government and their national associations. UCLG-MEWA publishes reference documents in its working languages (Turkish, English, and Arabic) and introduces new publications to strengthen the technical competence of local governments and to contribute to efforts to localize global agendas in the region. UCLG-MEWA also seeks to develop policies, programmes, and initiatives in alignment with the mission, values, and targets of the UCLG World Secretariat. It also identifies the necessary tools to ensure the implementation of these actions.

### **UCLG-MEWA helps refugee hosting municipalities to link with each other and have a voice in global policymaking.**

Although migration management is primarily the responsibility of central governments, global challenges that unfold at local level have obliged local governments to assume an effective role in this area. Since around 92 per cent of migrants and refugees in Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan are living in urban areas, the urban aspect of migration has become part of local government service provision.

In this context, UCLG-MEWA plays a key role linking local, national, and global level actors. First, this means representing UCLG members from local governments in the MEWA region at the UN and similar organizations and advocating for their rights and interests. Second, it requires developing projects, research and workshops to allow cities to learn from each other and to provide decision-makers and partners with better evidence and solutions for local integration challenges. Thanks to the wide range of municipalities in the network, to their expertise on local governance issues, and to their ability to connect local, national, regional and global

levels, city networks such as UCLG-MEWA are able to bring a unique added-value to the management of migration and refugees. UCLG-MEWA has thus been able to facilitate exchanges between cities facing similar challenges in migration and refugee management, and also to mobilize new evidence-based perspectives and solutions.

UCLG-MEWA has played a key role in drawing international attention to the role of municipalities in refugee response by facility networking between refugee-hosting municipalities in collaboration with the Center for Mediterranean Integration and also by providing tailored research and analysis on [The Role of Municipalities of Turkey and Lebanon in the Syrian Migratory Influx Management](#), analysing social inclusion policies related to urban forced migrants in the region.

UCLG-MEWA then ensures that this enhanced attention leads to improved solutions and policies among its members. For example, the above-mentioned research highlighted the fact that social cohesion issues arise between host communities and refugees, which particularly affects local governments. Within this framework, the issue of migration and social cohesion is one of the priority areas in the UCLG-MEWA working plan.

The UCLG-MEWA strategy on migration also includes facilitating exchanges between Turkish and German municipalities on local integration and social cohesion, with Turkish municipal officials developing project ideas in cooperation with German local representatives, which are to be supported by municipal support financial instruments. UCLG-MEWA has also helped cities improve their communication on migration and local governance within the scope of the Mediterranean City-to-City Migration Project. Under the auspices of Tunis Municipality, UCLG-MEWA brought together specialists in communications, cities and city associations to bring a new perspective to the issue of migration.

UCLG-MEWA facilitated an exchange between Turkish and German Municipalities on integration of refugees



## UCLG-MEWA was at the forefront of advocating for municipalities' role in the Syrian crisis

Given the acute threats to lives and livelihoods when the Syrian crisis began, the response to it has been primarily humanitarian. The situation at that time required an emergency response. There was an imperative need for different actors to address the negative impacts of the crisis on countries in the sub-region and to support the systems and services on which households rely. In response to this urgent situation, UCLG-MEWA facilitated creation of an international delegation of elected and local government practitioners which visited Syrian border municipalities in Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon in 2013. The assessment was among the first at the time to shed light on the role of local and regional authorities in welcoming Syrian refugees and to showcase the support needed by local governments to minimize the impact and to optimize the conditions for post-disaster recovery.

In light of this UCLG-MEWA began to develop several projects, workshops, and meetings with the aim of supporting and strengthening resilience in host communities, to help municipalities to address both the humanitarian and the development challenges facing refugees and host communities. UCLG-MEWA focused in particular on integration challenges for refugees and on helping the host communities to accept the newcomers. This led to the GIZ-funded project Enhancing Social Cohesion at Local Level Through Capacity Building of Migrants and Refugees Assembly with Adana Metropolitan Municipality. The programme aims to increase resilience in the countries hosting Syrian refugees; to enhance social cohesion of refugees and asylum seekers; to support effective local governance; and to establish a social dialogue between host communities and refugees, throughout the Syria crisis. A Migrants and Refugees Assembly aims to ensure social cohesion by including refugees in decision-making processes, fostering a quicker and smoother integration process.



The mayor of Islahiye and the delegation members

UCLG-MEWA provided similar support to municipalities of eight Turkish provinces, shown on the map below. UCLG-MEWA draws lessons from such projects and from the experiences of its members to feed into national, regional and global policymaking by participating in international platforms. Also, UCLG-MEWA directly builds local governments' capacity through workshops such as:

- Local Economic Development in Host Communities: Organized by the Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI) in 2018 at Gaziantep, and in 2019 at Amman.
- Building Trust through Strengthened Cooperation and The Role of Civil Society in the Urban Governance of Migration: two workshops organized by the Mediterranean City-to-City Migration (MC2CM) in 2018 and 2019 at Tunis.
- Children on the Move and Unaccompanied Minors: Webinar organized by UCLG and its Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy, and Human Rights, in partnership with UNICEF

## Enhancing Social Cohesion at Local Level Through Capacity Building of Migrants and Refugees Assembly

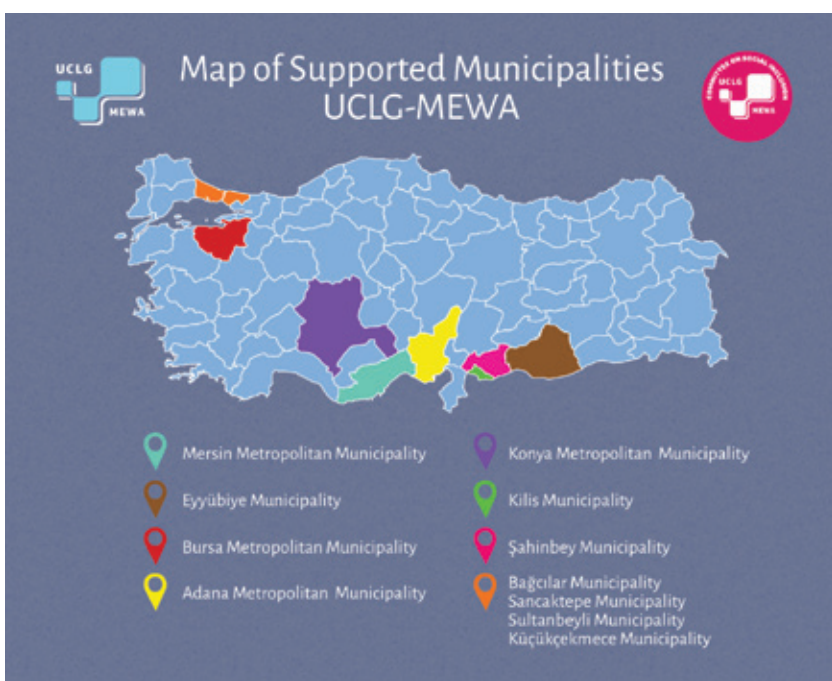
The project, Enhancing Social Cohesion at Local Level Through Capacity- Building of Migrants and Refugees Assembly, crystallized the idea of establishing the Adana City Council Immigration and Refugee Assembly to provide immigrants with the means to make a contribution to Adana in terms of economic and social life and to introduce policies to support their integration into Adana.

The Immigration and Refugee Assembly brought together immigrants and the public, non-governmental organizations and public institutions to ensure their participation in decision-making processes. The participation of local NGOs and public institutions as well as immigrants in decision-making will contribute to the more efficient functioning of the Immigration and Refugee Assembly. To encourage the successful operation of the assembly, Adana Metropolitan Municipality undertook administrative and structural preparations. A Directorate of Refugee Affairs was set up within the Department of Health and Social Affairs, and the Association of Assisting, Coordinating and Integrating Migrants in Adana was established by municipal officials and volunteers.

These structural changes have strengthened the connection and coordination with the Migrants and Refugees Assembly and developed the capacity of the Migrant and Refugee Council under the city council. Two capacity development experts from Adana Municipality Department of Foreign Relations are now specialized in migration. Responsible staff continued working for the same goals in the municipality after the project ended. Adana Metropolitan Municipality formed an expert support team on immigration and migrants, responsible for designing the strategy that will guide the municipality's work on migration management. This has not only reduced the risk that immigration and migration pose to social cohesion and social peace, but also initiated a common decision-making process to improve the culture of living together. UCLG-MEWA was then able to boost the visibility of this initiative and to disseminate the success of this pilot project and encourage the realization of similar projects in other cities.



Enhancing Social Cohesion at Local Level Through Capacity Building of Migrants and Refugees Assembly, Adana, 2018



## Best Practices and recommendations from UCLG-MEWA Response to the Syria Crisis.

- Central and municipal coordination is essential for providing a holistic and integrated response to the challenge of hosting refugees.
- The limited mandate of municipalities is a common obstacle to integrated resilience policies: decentralization or heightened municipal responsibilities may increase the competencies and capacities of the municipalities to decide and allocate their own resources.
- Share information with other response actors and local authorities in order to ensure that all actors are operating based on the same information and may coordinate or collaborate accordingly.
- Including refugees in the decision-making process is one of the key drivers of social cohesion.
- Developed countries are not always in a position to share experience. Developing countries always have experiences to share and more developed countries can benefit from their experience.
- It is important to achieve effective coordination among stakeholders, including local authorities, NGOs, municipalities and central governments, among municipality departments and with the private sector. Effective coordination between local, international and state actors is key, particularly in ensuring effective implementation of international/ national frameworks at the local level and will also lead to effective use of funding.
- Lack of data is limiting the ability to address the issues of refugees in a clear way. We need to concentrate more on collecting and organizing data to ensure information is used efficiently.



Mission to the Municipalities on the Frontline, by FCM, VNG, UMT, CUF, UCLG-MEWA, 2013

### More information:

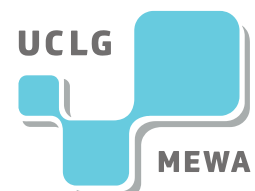
UCLG-MEWA Website: <http://uclg-mewa.org>

**Contact person:**

Yasmin ALHAYEK

[y.alhayek@uclg-mewa.org](mailto:y.alhayek@uclg-mewa.org)

Tel: 0 212 511 10 10 (116)



## UNDP Work with Municipalities Hosting Refugees and Migrants in Turkey

### **UNDP promotes sustainable solutions to immediate needs.**

For more than 50 years UNDP has worked in close partnership with the Turkish Government and numerous national and international institutions, including NGOs, academics and the business community. UNDP Turkey works across four priority areas of “Inclusive and Sustainable Growth”, “Inclusive and Democratic Governance”, “Climate Change and Environment” and “Syria Crisis Resilience Response” respectively.

UNDP Turkey always addresses complex challenges from a sustainable development perspective. In this respect, the UNDP Syria Crisis Response Programme promotes a resilience-based development approach to complement humanitarian assistance and deliver results that have a lasting impact on individuals and communities, as well as the national and local institutions that provide the services to them. UNDP does so by mobilizing strong relationships with local authorities, the private sector, small businesses and key ministries to create synergies between efforts to address the Sustainable Development Goals and the priorities of the National Development Plan on the one hand, and the needs of Syrians and host communities on the other. As the refugee presence becomes increasingly protracted, UNDP’s role is becoming even more critical to ensuring the resilience of Syrians under temporary protection, of host communities, and of local institutions. As such, UNDP’s leadership role has grown to co-chair the overall Refugee and Resilience Response Plan (3RP) in Turkey, together with UNHCR, to lead the coordination of the resilience response and to chair the 3RP Livelihoods Sector.

### **UNDP Resilience Response starts at the municipal level**

In a context where municipal capacities were already stretched, the demographic shock created by the refugee situation faced municipalities with a serious test. Nevertheless, municipalities have demonstrated since day one their ability to act as the front-line institutions in the response to the crisis, showing great adaptability and creativity. This led UNDP to focus its support on municipal institutions as a key gateway to local resilience.

Indeed, as the UN’s global development network, and as a partner with a focus on development solutions for displacement challenges, UNDP is uniquely positioned to champion the role of municipalities in harnessing the positive benefits of protracted displacement and managing the negative impacts. The UNDP’s value added in post-crisis contexts is to ensure that early recovery is included as part of the overall humanitarian response, bringing development principles into the relief stage and seizing opportunities to go beyond saving lives and start restoring national capacities, livelihoods, and peaceful conditions for sustainable human development.

Through a resilience-based development approach, UNDP takes a longer-term perspective from the outset, focusing on strengthening the capacity of communities and local governments to better cope with the consequences of protracted displacements. In line with this global role, UNDP Turkey was among the first of the 3RP partners to step up its support to municipal institutions and has been a reliable and trusted supporter of the municipalities ever since, helping them not only to cope, but also to recover and transform following shocks.



## **UNDP has been championing municipal resilience since the first days of the response**

UNDP was among the first of the Refugee and Resilience Response Plan (3RP) partners to step up its support for municipal institutions, working with the Government of Turkey to provide the affected municipalities with comprehensive support.

UNDP's role as a catalyst has been crucial to the successful transformation of municipal management approaches. Indeed, the key to sustaining municipal resilience is to leverage the support provided to introduce transformative changes in the management of municipal services.

As early as 2014, UNDP provided additional equipment, including firefighting and solid waste vehicles, to the municipalities of Gaziantep, Sanliurfa, Hatay and Kilis to help relieve the immediate pressure on municipal services. This early engagement played a key role in helping municipalities to cope with the immediate impact of the refugee influx, maintain a grip on the situation and pave the way for future, more substantive investments. This type of support is far from a one-off intervention, but actually constitutes an entry point into the area of improving municipal services in general.

The idea is to support municipalities as they recover from the impact of the shock population increase not only by expanding their capacities but also by improving the delivery of local services. In this way, besides addressing the consequences of the crisis, the municipalities will be able to deal with some of the pre-existing challenges undermining their resilience. Infrastructure support quickly generates a virtuous circle and spawns additional benefits, not only in terms of the environment and public health, but also with respect to the livelihoods of local communities.

The direct support extended to municipalities for the delivery of services has allowed them to allocate the resources saved to meet other needs. This may include priorities that are out of reach of UNDP—for example, the funding of a waste transfer station by UNDP could allow a municipality to use the equivalent amount of funds for other services, such as transport. However, considering both the scale of the crisis and the overall budgets of the municipalities, the support provided by the partners remains relatively small when compared with the 20 per cent increase in the population and demand for services which the municipalities have faced.

UNDP is uniquely positioned to assist municipalities to achieve this objective precisely because it has been working hand in hand with them since the onset of the crisis. This has created unique conditions for cooperation between UNDP and the municipalities on the introduction of more systemic changes in the way the latter are managed by working across municipal departments and competencies to identify potential efficiency gains, process optimization opportunities and training needs, and to prepare applications for national and international funding.

### **Case study: Introducing system improvement to multiply the impact of investments in infrastructures.**

Initial infrastructural support soon set a virtuous circle in motion, with additional benefits in terms of the environment, public health and livelihoods of local communities.

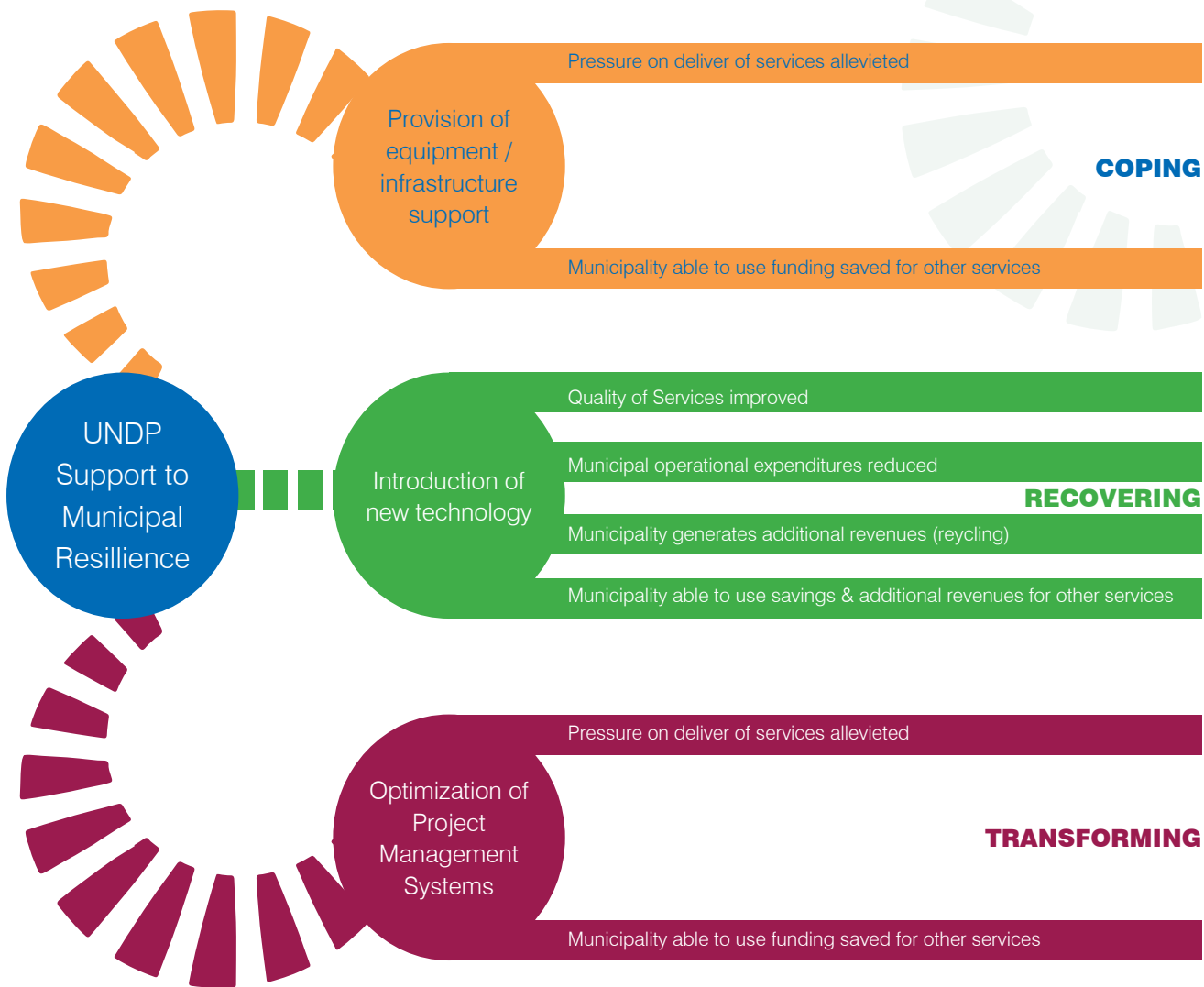
In Kilis, the municipality faced overwhelming pressure on its waste disposal infrastructure, limiting its ability to maintain a healthy and clean environment for host communities and Syrians alike. The provision of a solid waste compactor extended the existing solid waste storage capacity by two years, and UNDP is now establishing a leachate treatment and evaporation system within the Kilis sanitary landfill site to eliminate contamination risks.

In Sanliurfa, investments in Solid Waste Transfer Stations greatly improved the transfer of waste from district to central facilities. The transfer stations significantly improved the environment by preventing the use of wild dumpsites while generating economic benefits through recycling and cost savings. The municipality and UNDP then analysed the solid waste management system to identify efficiency gains able to sustain these improvements. By re-allocating solid waste vehicles across districts and replacing private contractors by municipal staff and linking districts to alternative transfer stations, the municipality was able to reduce its annual expenditure on the transfer of solid waste from TL2.2 million to TL1.3 million—a saving of TL920,000, or 42.7 per cent of the municipal solid waste budget.

In 2018, investments into the solid waste capacity of Hatay, Gaziantep, Kilis and Sanliurfa municipalities resulted not only in improving services for nearly 2 million residents, and improving transportation/ storage of over 500 tons of waste per day, but also enabled municipalities to generate USD800,000 worth of additional electricity generation through waste to energy transformation.



## Impact of UNDP Support on Municipal Resilience



Gaziantep, Hatay and Sanliurfa municipalities are now using a new project management approach supported by UNDP to take proactive and preparatory steps before the submission of projects to international donors. In Gaziantep, examination of the firefighting department showed how re-allocating emergency equipment such as firefighting vehicles across the municipality, based on an analysis of population size (including the refugee population) and the occurrence of incidents, would extend the coverage of the emergency department from 800,000 people to 1,000,000 without any increase in resources. Such support is therefore bringing major change in the operational culture and enabling the municipalities to increase their capacities beyond the pre-crisis levels.

However, these impacts need to be scaled up geographically and thematically. So far, UNDP has invested over USD30 million in the capacities and services of the four municipalities with the support of the governments of Japan and the Republic of Korea, the BPRM (United States), the KfW (Germany) and the EU Regional Trust Fund for the Syria Response (MADAD). The four border municipalities in South-East Turkey in which 85 per cent of investments have so far been concentrated host only one-third of the refugee population. Furthermore, most of the support has focused on solid waste, wastewater and emergency services, whereas municipalities have a much wider range of competencies and needs including transport, local infrastructure, and poverty reduction or social assistance.

## Best practices and recommendations from the UNDP Response to the Syria Crisis.

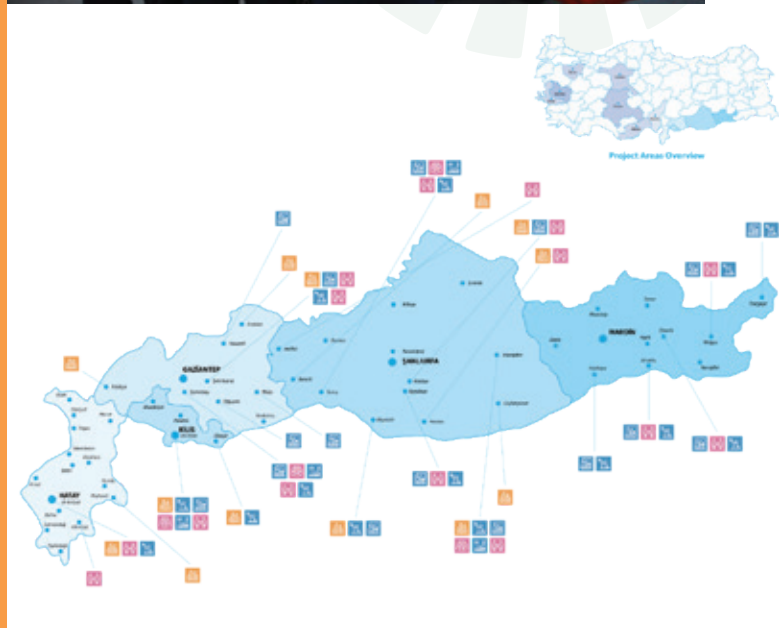
The support that the 3RP partners provide to municipalities is increasingly being used as a **strategic entry point for the introduction of more structural improvements in local governance** and service delivery:

- Capacity development activities and support for participatory decision-making at the local level and enhanced coordination and resource mobilization in service delivery.
- Introducing **new technologies**/methods such as means of reducing the wild dumping of waste, relying on waste transfer stations for waste collection, or using new leachate facilities for waste water management
- These new approaches can also **generate additional revenues** for municipalities, for example through recycling.

In addition, supporting the project management capacities of municipalities will help them not only to **improve their strategic planning** and optimize the use of their resources but also to mobilize additional external funding.

### Support to municipalities needs to be extended in three directions:

- Support more municipalities—since the four border municipalities in South-East Turkey in which 85 per cent of support provided by 3RP partners has so far been concentrated host only one-third of the refugee population.
- Support more services—most of the support has focused on solid waste, wastewater, and emergency services, whereas municipalities have a much wider range of competencies including transport, local infrastructure, and poverty reduction or social assistance. The total amount of support provided by 3RP partners represents only 10 per cent of the costs which municipalities have incurred in catering for their additional refugee populations.
- Support the social role of municipalities. As signs of social tensions and fatigue from the host communities are becoming apparent, social cohesion and harmonization are becoming a crucial priority for local and central authorities alike. Municipalities have a key role to play here to build confidence between and among communities at the local level. However, strengthening social cohesion requires not just expanding and improving existing services, but also playing an active social role at the grassroots level, to ensure that dialogue and interaction between communities happens, that mechanisms are in place to respond to incidents, and that misinformation and prejudices are countered. This new role for municipalities will require international expertise.



Map of UNDP support to refugee hosting South East Municipalities

## More information:

The following resource documents are available on UNDP Websites: [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org) and [www.tr.undp.org](http://www.tr.undp.org)

- Municipalities and People on the Move — Guidance Note
- Building a Resilient Foundation for Peace and Development—Local Governance in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings—Guide
- UNDP Turkey Syria Crisis and Resilience Response Programme—Brochure
- UNDP Brochure on Support to Municipal Resilience in Turkey—Brochure



Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations

## UNHCR Work with Municipalities Hosting Refugees and Migrants in Turkey

### Addressing refugee needs through a multi-stakeholder approach

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) was established in 1950 with a mandate to lead and coordinate international action to protect refugees and seek solutions for refugees. Since 1960, UNHCR has been working in close cooperation with the Government of Turkey on asylum and refugee matters. UNHCR's Turkey operation is one of its larger globally with an office in Ankara and field presence in İstanbul, İzmir, Gaziantep, Hatay, Şanlıurfa and Van. For the last five years, Turkey has been hosting the largest refugee population in the world. UNHCR has been working with the Government of Turkey, and in close partnership with public institutions at the national, provincial and local levels, with non-governmental organizations, with United Nations agencies, with private sector service providers as well as with refugees themselves to support the refugee response. UNHCR Turkey works across the following priority areas: promoting access to and supporting the provision of protection; strengthening access to quality services, focusing on persons with specific needs; promoting social cohesion and harmonization, working towards durable solutions and enhancing partnerships and communication, including with refugees, in the response.

UNHCR is working with the Government of Turkey in promoting a multi-stakeholder approach, international solidarity and responsibility-sharing. UNHCR co-leads the Regional Refugee and Resilience Response Plan (3RP) for the Syria crisis with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and chairs the International Protection and Migration Pillar of the Turkey 2016-2020 UN Development and Cooperation Strategy (UNDCS).

### Supporting municipalities as key protection and assistance responders

Seeking to improve the refugee response, the Global Compact on Refugees<sup>1</sup> (GCR) provides mechanisms for engagement with a wide range of stakeholders in a refugee response, including with cities and local authorities by promoting stronger support to the countries and communities hosting refugees. More than half of the world's refugee populations today live in urban areas. This makes city and municipal authorities some of the most important stakeholders in the delivery of protection and assistance to refugees in urban spaces.

In Turkey, over 98 per cent of persons under international and temporary protection live in urban or peri-urban areas, making the engagement with municipal authorities in protection and response particularly relevant. Due to increase in population, caused by refugee arrivals, municipalities face a serious challenge in service delivery and social cohesion at the local level. UNHCR's response to the Syria crisis therefore aims at supporting municipalities and to work towards implementing the principles of the Global Compact on Refugees in practice. UNHCR focuses on playing a supporting role to municipalities, reinforcing their capacity to effectively address the protection needs of persons under international and temporary protection, assisting them in removing barriers to service provision and supporting their work in promoting social cohesion and community self-reliance as well as participatory decision-making.



Refugee and host community members collaborate, socialize and acquire new skills at a Vocational Training Centre run by UNHCR and Ankara Metropolitan Municipality. Photo: Emrah Gürel

<sup>1</sup> United Nations, Global Compact on Refugees, New York, 2018, affirmed by the UN General Assembly on 17 December 2018. Available at: [https://www.unhcr.org/gcr/GCR\\_English.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/gcr/GCR_English.pdf).

## Engaging at a local level and promoting social cohesion

Municipalities are one of the first responders in addressing the impact of refugees at the local level. Municipalities in Turkey play a crucial role in service delivery, have intimate knowledge of social realities and dynamics on the ground and are central to facilitating refugee inclusion into services and sociocultural activities. Since 2014, UNHCR has supported over 40 municipalities with technical, human resources and physical infrastructure support with the aim to strengthen municipal protection services, facilitate inclusion of refugees into municipal service provision and to promote social cohesion.

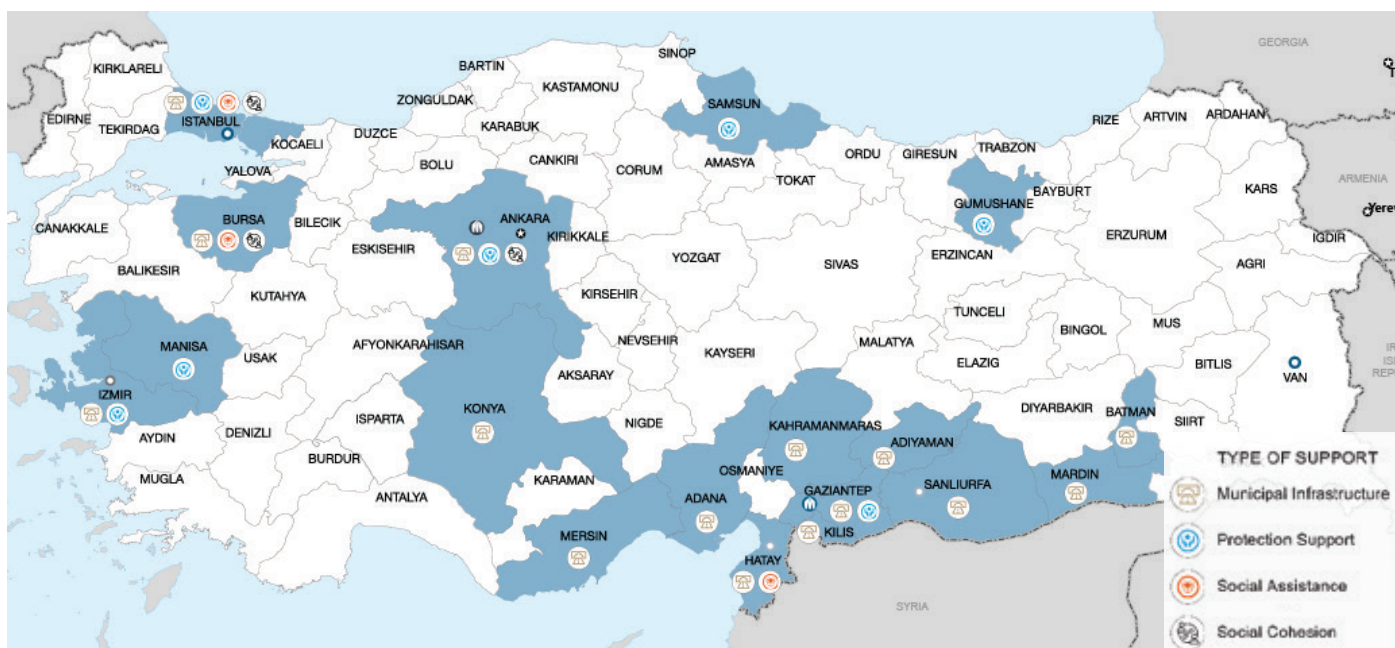
More specifically, UNHCR - with its partners - is supporting the establishment and functioning of social protection desks in municipalities to enhance the protection space in urban areas and to support protection service delivery, skills building and peaceful co-existence. Considering the importance of coordinated service provision within and between district municipalities, UNHCR assists in these by bringing together social protection desks and other local service providers and by promoting communication and information-sharing between district municipalities. Municipalities are also supported by UNHCR through community support projects which extend municipal resources to refugees and provide public infrastructure, like parks and play-grounds or vocational training centres,

where refugees and host community members can interact. Enhancing refugees' participation in local consultative and participatory mechanisms, including city councils operating under the auspices of municipalities, is also an area of focus of UNHCR's collaboration with municipalities.

The approach of expanding service provision at local level, infrastructure support and participation of refugees in local decision-making is aimed at promoting social cohesion and increasing self-reliance of refugees. However, UNHCR's support to municipalities, particularly in the areas of coordination support and participation is equally aimed at enhancing the quality of local service delivery towards building municipal resilience and transforming its service delivery.

Since the onset of the Syrian refugee crisis, UNHCR has supported municipalities with numerous smaller-scale and tangible projects, identified by municipalities and refugees alike. Through this day-to-day interaction with municipalities, UNHCR has supported municipalities to cope with and respond to refugee arrivals and played a catalytic role to affirm municipalities as a critical and core partner in the refugee response.

UNHCR municipal support map



## Cities as safe spaces: Good practices and lessons learned

Municipalities, particularly district municipalities, are the first port of call for refugees when seeking services or information affecting their daily lives. As such, municipalities are continuously approached by refugees in need of guidance and assistance.

### Protection Desks and Counselling Centres

UNHCR, in partnership with WALD, has established social protection desks in 12 district municipalities of Istanbul. In Ankara, UNHCR is supporting counselling centres in various municipalities. The staff at the centres provide information counselling and identify specific needs that the refugees may face. Once a need is identified, the staff at the centres liaise with other service providers to meet these needs through a referral network. The work at these centres is therefore a crucial first step in a comprehensive case management system, using municipalities as a hub to access other services.

### Local level coordination

To support referrals, UNHCR and its partners have worked on establishing an effective referral system. In the Istanbul Metropolitan area, district municipalities and local service providers regularly meet to share experiences on meeting refugees' specific needs. In Ankara, the counselling centre regularly discusses ways to improve refugee access to services and preventive measures against communal disputes with the local authorities, like the Governor's office. This has led to concrete results. To promote social cohesion, the counselling centres in Ankara regularly organize communal events with refugee and host community members in coordination with local authorities. For example, on World Refugee Day 2019, the counselling centre in Kecioren Municipality organized a celebratory event with 1000 participants from the host and refugee community. Building on these successful experiences, UNHCR and its partners are sharing good practices with other municipalities in refugee hosting areas. This has led to the establishment of a Refugee Support Desk and a Mobile Support Unit in Izmir.

### Provincial Coordination Platform

UNHCR, together with WALD and in cooperation with district and metropolitan municipalities, has established a municipal coordination platform in Istanbul. The platform brings together district and metropolitan municipalities, provincial directorates, civil society organizations and UN agencies to share good practices and lessons

learned in the refugee response, to identify gaps and challenges, and to delineate the strategic role municipalities play in the refugee response.

In 2018, members of the coordination platform drafted a declaration underlining the role of municipalities in strengthening refugees' self-reliance, social cohesion and refugees' access to services. The declaration, currently signed by 20 metropolitan and district mayors of Istanbul and the Marmara region and the Union of Turkish Municipalities, underlines the importance of including refugees in municipal protection mechanisms and of promoting dialogue between refugees and national institutions, including through refugee representation in local-level participatory and consultative mechanisms and municipal programmes.

### Local level participation of refugees

In line with the Declaration, UNHCR has been advocating for refugee participation in local consultative and participatory mechanisms. Through city councils, operating under the auspices of municipalities in various Istanbul districts, refugee leaders are enabled to share their communities' needs and suggestions. Several activities have been organized based upon on city council suggestions, including language courses, activities to foster good relations between communities, initiatives to strengthen social bonds and to build bridges between women from refugee and host communities. Additionally, several municipalities drafted five-year strategic plans encompassing the specific needs of refugees. UNHCR will be working to extend these promising practices in other municipalities hosting large numbers of refugees.



A children's event for World Refugee Day, 2019, organized by UNHCR with Ankara Metropolitan Municipality. Photo: UNHCR

## Recommendations from the UNHCR Perspective

The support that UNHCR and its 3RP partners provide to municipalities has helped to identify some key promising practices

- Municipalities are uniquely placed to address the **protection, social assistance and service needs** of refugees. Municipalities use a holistic approach to address the needs of everyone living within the municipal area, including citizens and non-citizens, with a good understanding of the needs of different population groups and effective locally tailored solutions to address these needs.
- As gate-keepers of **social cohesion and harmonization** in their communities, municipalities play a critical role in early detection of social tension and are well-placed to address social tension swiftly and creatively.
- **Participation** of refugees in municipal decision-making bodies contributes to refugee self-reliance and gives them a voice in municipal service delivery. It may be an important pathway to ensuring refugees are active contributors to their local communities and may contribute to achieving social co-existence.

Support to municipalities should be extended in following areas:

- Tailored support to municipalities: When municipal services become overstretched due to demographic stresses, support should be tailored to address the specific needs and may take a variety of forms, including financial and technical support, increasing human resources, support to strengthening physical infrastructure, or system-strengthening to further advance local resilience.
- Support municipalities in participatory decision-making at the local level and enhanced coordination in service delivery.
- Support municipalities in maintaining social cohesion: Social cohesion and harmonization efforts are becoming ever more a priority for local and central authorities as signs of social tensions between host and refugee communities are becoming more visible. Municipalities play an essential role to maintain social cohesion and to build confidence between and among communities through dialogue, fostering interaction, addressing misinformation and preventing and responding to incidents.
- Support strategic linkages and municipal networks: Recognizing the central role municipalities play in the refugee response, municipalities should be enabled to participate further in national level refugee response and development strategies. Such ground-up engagement would not only enrich the strategic processes but also increase the sustainability of national refugee responses by increasing coordinated action between all relevant stakeholders at national as well as local level. Similarly, further support should be provided to municipal networks to enhance information-sharing on strategic interventions related to refugee responses and to support working towards common goals and solutions.



UNHCR and WALD-facilitated Municipal Coordination Platform, Istanbul, 6 Nov. 2019. Photo: UNHCR

### More information:

UNHCR Representation in Turkey: Enis Behic Koryurek  
Sokak, No: 15, Aziziye Mahallesi, Cankaya Ankara, Turkey

Website: <https://www.unhcr.org/tr/en>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TURKEYUNHCR/>  
Twitter: [twitter.com/UNHCRTurkey](https://twitter.com/UNHCRTurkey)

Istanbul Municipal Coordination Platform:  
<https://www.koordinasyonplatformu.org/>



## IOM's Work with Municipalities Hosting Refugees and Migrants in Turkey

### **IOM supports refugees and migrants but also works with the Government of Turkey to address the longer-term impact of migration**

IOM Turkey, the UN Migration Agency, first opened its offices in Turkey in 1991 in the aftermath of the Gulf War and IOM's partnership with the Republic of Turkey was formalized in November 2004. The Mission's emergency response programmes have grown rapidly since 2012 with the start of the Syrian Crisis. As of October 2019, the Mission is now one of the largest IOM missions globally with more than 1000 staff working across the country, with sub-offices in Istanbul, Gaziantep, Hatay, Sanliurfa and Izmir and a head office in Ankara. IOM Turkey serves both refugee and host community populations by providing protection, basic needs, shelter, livelihoods and community stabilization, school transportation, and community and municipal centre services. Furthermore, alongside IOM's role in addressing the needs of migrants during crises, the Mission works in close collaboration with the Government of Turkey to address the longer-term impact of migration, including migrant assistance programmes, labour integration and migration management, resettlement, immigration and border management, research and data collection on migrant movement.

### **Municipalities are a key partners for IOM towards more sustainable solutions for migrants and refugees.**

Through strong partnerships with municipalities across 15 provinces, IOM's initiatives are fostering greater social cohesion among migrants, refugees and host communities in addition to addressing basic needs and building resilience. Municipalities in Turkey have been affected dramatically as the influx of refugees seeking safety and protection in Turkey has significantly strained local services. Initially, partners supported municipalities in an emergency context, focusing on delivering humanitarian aid.

However, as the presence of Syrian refugees in Turkey continued due to the protracted nature of the crisis, it became increasingly important to build a sustainable system which integrates migrants and refugees into cultural, social, legal, economic, and civic participation. As a result,

municipalities looked at transition to longer and more durable solutions to managing the influx of refugees, which required more expertise, especially in technical areas such as Protection. IOM has been responding to this demand by supporting municipalities through the centres it has established.

IOM's support and work with municipalities is aimed at integrated public service provisions for migrants, refugees and host community members through counselling and referral services, strengthening the capacity and knowledge of public officials, and promoting social cohesion at the local level where change and impact can be seen and experienced in a meaningful manner.

IOM supported and managed municipal and community centres, which act as focal points for liaison and cooperation with internal and external actors working on migration. The centres and IOM activities with municipalities focus on socio-cultural and recreational activities that encourage longer-term cohesion between Turkish host, migrant, and Syrian refugee communities. The aim is to contribute to the overall stability in each of the municipalities where IOM is present. Additionally, the municipal structure in Turkey provides a flexible and effective alternative to integrating service provision for refugees and migrants into the national system. By embedding and supporting migrant centres in the municipal structure, IOM can contribute to enhanced capacity to deliver services to migrants and refugees that will be sustainable over the long-term.

In addition to the focus on community centres, IOM has been working closely with local municipalities since 2016 on improving the quality and usability of infrastructure including parks, sport facilities, community centres and launderettes as well as increasing access to these facilities.



IOM used a community-based approach to create local ownership and thus ensure long-term sustainability in the management and maintaining of the infrastructure once completed. Providing common spaces where all community members come together helps people get to know each other and create friendships, hence strengthening social cohesion.

### Migrant centres have been a key tool for IOM to strengthen the stability of 7 municipalities

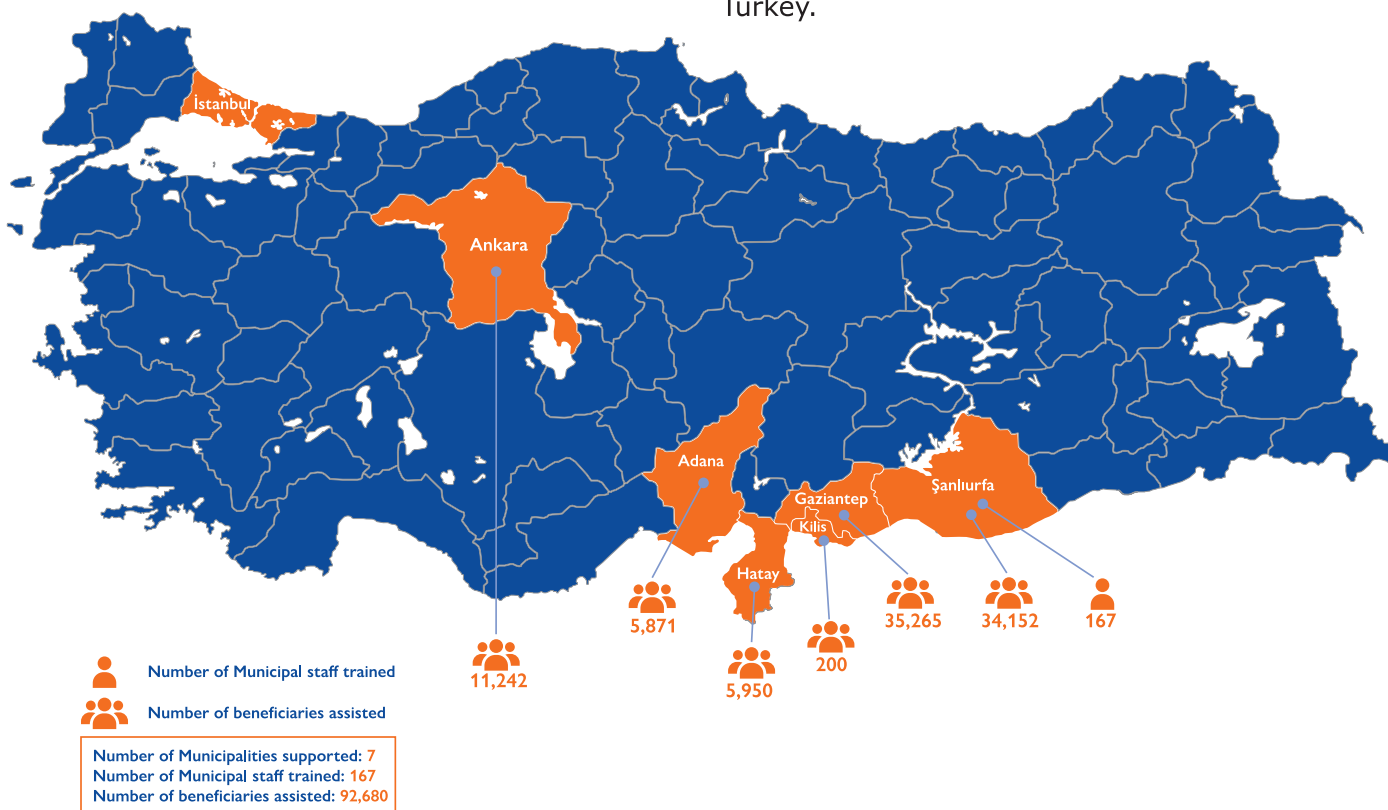
IOM's assistance and support to municipalities in coping with the responsibilities shouldered by them covers a range of activities through: 1) building the resilience and self-reliance of affected populations; 2) improving access to basic services at the community level; and 3) strengthening social cohesion. All these activities are assessed, identified and selected in a participatory process involving the host and refugee communities, as well as local authorities and leaders. The key sectors of intervention of these tangible projects investing in service and infrastructure provision or rehabilitation, may include education, health, temporary shelter, productive assets, and recreational space.

IOM has supported Keçiören Migrant Services Centre jointly with the Keçiören Municipality since 2016. The centre provides assistance to beneficiaries through counselling and referral services in the following areas: vocational training and employment, legal, health, education, psychosocial support and social assistance. It conducts capacity-building activities for Centre staff and related local authorities, and organizes educational (e.g. awareness raising, courses,

language classes) and social cohesion activities for both the host community and migrants and refugees.

In 2017, IOM established the Migrant Information and Coordination Centre in Sanliurfa under the municipal body of Migration Affairs. Through the Centre, IOM is providing counselling and referral services—as well as informative sessions—(legal, health, social services, education, vocational guidance), capacity-building, technical expertise and community engagement activities. Also in 2017, IOM Turkey started supporting the Ensar Community Centre run by Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality with recreational and community activities, language and education courses, sports courses, break dancing, arts courses, capacity-building training for municipal staff, and refurbishment and rehabilitation of the Centre. Finally, IOM Turkey has also established Centre for Migrants and Refugees in Adana Metropolitan Municipality, acting as the overall coordinator for project activities and supporting implementation. The Centre assists migrants and refugees, specifically Syrians under temporary protection, through counselling and referral services (legal, education, social services, health, vocational guidance and community support), education and awareness activities. Additionally, IOM provides capacity-building for municipal and public officials in Adana and supports community engagement and social cohesion.

Since 2016, IOM has reached a high number of beneficiaries from different communities, ages, genders and backgrounds through implementing 13 community stabilization projects in cooperation with 7 municipalities in different districts across Turkey.





## Case studies from IOM Migrant Centres

In **Sanliurfa** Metropolitan Municipality, IOM contributed to two key areas where it was necessary to transition to more longer-term programming. First, integrating of protection for migrants and refugees was needed for municipalities in line with international standards: IOM provided technical guidance and oversight to ensure basic protection service delivery. Second, Sanliurfa Municipality looked to increase community engagement between Syrian refugee and Turkish host communities, especially where there existed vulnerable populations from both communities. Through IOM's technical and logistical support, municipal centres were established to provide tailored assistance and foster social cohesion. The range of services provided by the centre are best illustrated by the personal stories of the following individual beneficiaries:

1. A mother had concerns about her daughter who was hesitant to participate in social events outside of the home as the Syrian Crisis has caused her psychological trauma. Her mother spoke with the mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS - Mental Health and Psychosocial Support) counsellor at the Sanliurfa Centre about what she had noticed with her daughter and at the Centre's movie screening activity, staff had a chance to meet the girl. Through the active support of the Centre's PSS Counsellor, she was encouraged to socialize with the other children and her courage increased, she attended another movie screening activity of the Centre alone and expressed interest in registering for a summer school course at Hayati Harrani Municipal Youth Centre.
2. In April 2019, the Centre coordinated job placement opportunities for Syrians with İŞKUR and the World Bank in the Sanliurfa region. When the project was initiated, İŞKUR officials directly contacted the Centre's Vocational Guidance Counsellor to find Syrian workers. As the Centre has a huge database and can easily provide necessary profiling to achieve a good match for employers and employees, the Centre coordinated group interviews with employers and potential candidates. After interviews, eight Syrian refugees were hired for legal and regular employment and are continuing their jobs in the textile sector.

In **Adana**, the Municipality has sought IOM support to increase the knowledge of migration management among the Centre's personnel who work to deliver basic information and referral services in line with basic protection principles. To contribute to this longer-term goal, IOM provided capacity-building trainings to service providers on protection mainstreaming and migration management. Additionally, IOM supports both Gaziantep and Adana Municipalities in their community engagement efforts with both host and migrant communities in neighborhoods through educational (language and vocational courses) and social activities promoting tolerance and peace, with longer-term aims of cohesion and integration.

A good example of the impact of the services provided by the Adana centres is the story of a Syrian refugee family with six children who arrived at the Adana Centre searching for information on how to access social services as well as aid. IOM provided integrated counselling services on legal, health, social services and education to the family at the Centre following an initial assessment. More specifically, the family was provided with referrals to access the Emergency Social Security Network (ESSN) card, school registration for out of school children, vaccinations, postnatal services, and employment services by centre counsellors. Subsequent follow-up was conducted as well to ensure access to services following initial Centre level support. The case of this vulnerable family, which is now benefitting from social, health, education and employment services, illustrates the potential impact of integrated models such as the migrant centres.



IOM Psychosocial Support teams hosted 1000 people in a fast-breaking event in Nizip, Gaziantep with the support of Seyit Ahmet Kanar, Mukhtar of Fevzipaşa

## Best Practice and recommendations from the IOM Response to the Syria Crisis.

- As municipalities have existing mechanisms in place to reach communities, especially vulnerable people, these mechanisms should be supported early on to include refugees and migrants.
- Municipalities' capacity to reach out to host communities is highly effective. Host communities trust municipalities more than international agencies. As harmonization and cohesion are becoming more important than ever, municipalities have both trust and power to engage host communities on those topics in ways that the UN and other NGOs may not be able to.
- Municipal-level migration policy and guidance are needed to steer response and coordination at the onset of a crisis to better manage and respond to the needs of vulnerable persons. It is crucial that a protection lens is incorporated into any migration policy, and municipalities are aware of and using international frameworks and standards in both policy and service delivery.
- Coordination and referral mechanisms on services between municipalities and central government agencies need to be strengthened. This includes hiring staff with diverse capacities and competencies to address the unique needs of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.
- Public parks rehabilitation increases interaction between refugees and host communities. Following IOM's interventions, people were pleased to have a place to spend time and additional support for parks rehabilitation in adjacent neighborhoods was requested.
- The rehabilitation of women's cultural centers undertaken by IOM helped women to start developing themselves and get to know other women from the community.
- Protection still must be mainstreamed in all administrative levels of the municipality to ensure a protection lens is incorporated in all service delivery.
- Municipality centres do not always have an adequate budget to shoulder the municipal work and provide services and thus are instead reliant on international or aid funds. This is not a sustainable approach and having a budget dedicated to migration-related services will ensure longer-term service provision once donor/crisis fatigue sets in and we move to a transition period.

- A gap identified by community centres relates to targeting men in the migrant, refugee, and host communities with tailored activities that will not only enable them to engage with other communities but also to develop their livelihood, communication, and life skills.
- Institutional and operational standards of community centres should be adopted through a legally binding document to ensure clear internal communication rules, procedures, and standards for municipality units and staff.



In Ensar Community Center, Syrian and Turkish children are enjoying sunny days spending time in nature. While learning about planting processes they also experience cooperation and team work. @IOM 2019/ Mehemt SADIKOGLU

### More information:

IOM Turkey Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/IOMTurkey/>

Adana Migrant Centre: <http://www.adana.bel.tr/versiyon4/birimlerimiz-2/>

Ankara Migrants Centre : <https://www.kecioren.bel.tr/>

Gaziantep Ensar Community Centre : <https://gaziantep.bel.tr/sayfa/teskilat-semasi-2>



International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
The UN Migration Agency





[www.municipalforum2019.org](http://www.municipalforum2019.org)

