



SİĞİNMACILAR VE GÖÇMENLERLE DAYANIŞMA DERNEĞİ

Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants

EMERGENCY RESPONSE FOR UKRAINIANS IN TURKEY

SUMMARY

Following the initiation of the military offence of Russia against Ukraine on 24 February 2022, only in two weeks, more than 2.5 million refugees have been forced to flee from Ukraine. Together with the individuals who crossed borders to enter neighbouring countries, an additional 1.85 million people have been displaced internally within the country¹.

Since then, there has been a considerable increase in the number of Ukrainians entering Turkey as well. According to official statements, as of March 11th, 34.392 individuals with Ukrainian citizenship have entered Turkey, most of whom are placed in western border cities (Edirne, Kırklareli) and metropolitan cities like İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Antalya, Muğla. Given the fact that the Martial Law in Ukraine prohibits men aged between 18 and 60 from leaving the country, most of the individuals seeking refuge in the neighbouring countries are women, children, and the elderly. Being this the situation, the emergency responses that are planned to be implemented in Turkey are as follows:

- Providing emergency and urgent assistance
- Assisting the vulnerable individuals fleeing from Ukraine in meeting their unmet basic needs and improving their living conditions
- Ensuring personal safety and protection by providing accommodation support
- Providing access to health services
- Providing PSS kits for children
- Providing cash assistance

These interventions, it is aimed to meet the urgent needs of the vulnerable members of the asylum seekers and support their health needs.

CHALLENGE

In Ukraine, the escalation of the conflict has resulted in the damage of civilian infrastructure as well as civilian casualties. 12.65 million people have been affected in the areas hardest hit by the war within Ukraine² which has worsened the human rights violations. Groups composed of mostly women, children, and the elderly have been arriving at Ukraine's borders in severe weather conditions. They are in need of protection and support. As the situation continues to unfold, an estimated 4 million people may flee Ukraine. As data continues to be triangulated and refined, the total number of refugees from Ukraine in Poland is 1,720,227 as provided by the UNHCR data portal as of 13th of March³ and it is expected to increase

¹ The regional refugee response plan provided by UNHCR 11 March 2022: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/91283>

² <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/91283>

³ The data is gathered from: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>



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exponentially not only in Poland but also in the other neighbouring countries which also includes Turkey.

According to official statements, as of 6 March 2022⁴, more than 20.000 Ukrainians had entered Turkey. Yet, in 5 days, the Presidency of Migration Management updated this information on 11 March 2022 and provided that 34.392 individuals with Ukrainian citizenship have entered Turkey⁵. In the upcoming days, the number of newcomers is expected to increase in a similar trend.

Given the volatile situation in Ukraine, the influx to Turkey is ongoing since the instability in the country continues. The needs of those who had to flee are acute and urgent assistance to meet these needs are vital. Women, children, and elderly people are impacted differently and disproportionately. Accessing information and making informed decisions is also a major challenge for them due to the language barrier. Since children are greatly affected by this process and families have difficulty in explaining the situation, psycho-social support is needed and necessary precautions should be taken for the continuity of the treatment of children with cancer. The absence of a regular and reliable communication network increases the risk of human trafficking since the strangers can reach them through different channels easily and the lack of access to information about the legal and operational process put them into a more vulnerable situation, especially for Ukrainians who do not have relatives or friends in Turkey.

In a matter of days, Ukrainians are in need of being supported in the urgent areas of providing basic needs and cash assistance, shelter, and accessing health services.

SOLUTION

As a response to the situation, ASAM is aiming at meeting the urgent needs of Ukrainian asylum seekers entering Turkey and providing them with assistance to decrease the risks that they encounter. Within this context, they have to be provided with comprehensive assistance with a needs-based and emergency response.

In emergencies, actions should be taken very quickly to prevent further suffering. For this reason, in order to meet the basic needs of Ukrainians in Turkey by considering their diversity the following actions will be taken:

a) providing them with basic needs which includes emergency kits, food packages, hygiene kits, female hygiene kits, etc.

⁴ The data is gathered from:

<https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/suleyman-soyulu-acikladi-iste-turkiyeye-gelen-ukraynali-sayisi-42017198>

⁵ The data is gathered from:

https://twitter.com/Gocidaresi/status/1502369020145717250?s=20&t=ztJyM08Ekmt0Y_QuR9H1Cg



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- b) providing temporary accommodation assistance
- c) facilitating access to health in emergencies
- d) providing emergency cash assistance
- e) providing PSS support for children

Considering the Covid 19 pandemic, basic emergency kits such as masks should be delivered. The kits are designed to be able to meet the most urgent needs of Ukrainian women, children, and the elderly. The female hygiene kits include basic personal protection equipment such as disinfectants, wet wipes, etc. together with materials for intimate hygiene and health.

Once the most vital needs are met, assistance and support will be provided for physical and psychosocial services. The response will be implemented in close contact and coordination with Ukrainian Associations established in Turkey.

POTENTIAL LONG-TERM IMPACT

For the longer-term resilience of Ukrainians, meeting the urgent needs is the utmost priority. Once the acute needs are met through the actions provided below, it is aimed at preventing further risks and sufferings. Therefore, once the urgent needs are met, it is aimed at increasing the resilience of the individuals in the longer term once the acute situation is relieved. This process will also help identify the individuals with special needs and will enable ASAM to support them further in the long term and reduce their vulnerabilities.