

# RIGHT TO EDUCATION FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES AND OTHER PERSONS UNDER TEMPORARY PROTECTION

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Mülteci  
Hakları  
Merkezi

Refugee  
Rights  
Turkey

GEÇİCİ KORUMA ALTINDAKİ KİŞİLER İÇİN EĞİTİM HAKKI

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İNGİLİZCE

This resource is produced by **Refugee Rights Turkey (RRT)** in the context of a project partnership with US-based **Refugee Solidarity Network (RSN)**. The information presented here is for informational purposes only.



Mülteci Hakları  
Merkezi



Refugee Solidarity  
Network

## **I am a refugee from Syria. Do my children and I have the right to education in Turkey?**

Turkey provides temporary protection to Syrian nationals, stateless persons, and refugees arriving from Syria. Upon completing your temporary protection registration and meeting certain conditions, you and your child will have access to primary, secondary, and higher education, as well as to Turkish language courses and vocational training.

## **Who can benefit from the right to education in Turkey?**

In order to benefit from the rights and services provided within the framework of temporary protection including education, you need to complete your temporary protection registration. Therefore, to enjoy the right to education without restriction, it is important to complete your and your child's temporary protection registration.

## **I have completed my and my child's temporary protection registration. Which school should my child attend?**

As per the current legislation, all children, including children under temporary protection, have the right to compulsory education in Turkey. Therefore, your school-aged child can attend a public school.

Compulsory education in Turkey covers 12 years and has three stages: 4 years of primary school (1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grade), 4 years of lower-secondary school (5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade), and 4 years of upper-secondary school (9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grade). The language of instruction in public schools is Turkish.

For further information about how to register your child in the correct school, you may visit the District Education Directorate (İlçe Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü) in your district of residence.

## **How can I enroll my child in public school for compulsory education?**

To enroll your child in a public school, you need to approach the District Education Directorate in your location. During registration, you will need your and your child's Temporary Protection Identity Documents which contain your foreigner ID number starting with '99'. As school enrollment is carried out based on your place of residence, you need an official document from the Population and Civil Registry Department (Nüfus Müdürlüğü) in your district showing your residential address. The District Education Directorate will refer you to the nearest available public school for registration.

Depending on the grade your child is entering, you may be required to submit additional documents demonstrating previous school attendance or diplomas of your child. If you do not have these documents, the District Education Commission established within the Provincial or District Education Directorate will carry out a grade placement evaluation. The District Education Commission will carry out an oral or written test and following this assessment, your child will be placed in the appropriate grade level.

## **My child is enrolled in a public school. I she/he going to receive a diploma?**

Students who have successfully fulfilled the requirements of a public school are entitled to receive a diploma.

However, if your child is registered as a guest student, she/he may not receive a diploma. In order to avoid any such problems, please complete the temporary protection registration of your child at your earliest convenience and inform the school administration about the completion of registration.

## **Is compulsory education free or should I pay for it?**

Education is free in all public schools.

## **I want to enroll my child in a high school. What should I do?**

Children who have successfully completed eight years of compulsory education are entitled to enroll in high school. It is therefore important to present documents demonstrating previous school attendance to the Provincial or District Education Directorate. If your child attended a Temporary Education Center under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education, you may also submit certificates obtained from that center.

The District Education Directorate shall carry out an assessment and notify you about the results and grade placement. Following this notification, you can enroll your child at the school where he/she has been placed. It is important to have your Temporary Protection Identity Documents with you during the application.

If you do not have any documents demonstrating your child's previous school attendance, you must approach the District Education Directorate. The officials of the District Education Directorate will carry out an assessment to decide the appropriate grade level of your child. You will be able to enroll your child as per the decision of this assessment.

If your child completed her/his pre-high-school studies in another country and you wish to enroll her/him in a Science High School (Fen Lisesi), Social Sciences High School (Sosyal Bilimler Lisesi), Anatolian Religious Vocational School (Anadolu İmam Hatip Lisesi) or Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School (Mesleki ve Teknik Anadolu Lisesi), your child needs to take the Liselere Geçiş Sistemi (LGS) examination. To take this examination, your child must be enrolled at the 8th grade of a middle school in Turkey.

If you face any difficulty during registration, please approach the Provincial or the District Education Directorate in your area of residency.

## **What should I do to obtain a high school diploma or certificate of equivalency?**

Students who have successfully fulfilled the requirements of public high schools are entitled to receive a high school diploma.

If you have not completed your high school education in Turkey and your diploma/certificate is **not** in your possession, you must register at Open Education High School (Açık Öğretim Lisesi) to obtain a secondary education certificate of equivalency. If you are below 18, please approach the office of the District Education Directorate in your district of residency and request to take a placement test.

If you have not completed your high school education in Turkey and you have a diploma/certificate in your possession, you must obtain a certificate of equivalency to determine the equivalency of your diploma with those issued by secondary education institutions in Turkey. To do so, please visit <https://edenklik.meb.gov.tr> website of the Ministry of National Education or approach the District Education Directorate or the Provincial Education Directorate in your area of residency.

## **Can I or my child enroll in a secondary school or high school providing distance education?**

The Ministry of National Education provides distance education opportunities for those who were or are not able to complete their secondary or high school education. Persons under temporary protection can also benefit from these distance education opportunities.

Currently, there are five distance education institutions: Secondary School (Açık Öğretim Ortaokulu), High School (Açık Öğretim Lisesi), Vocational High School (Mesleki Açık Öğretim Lisesi), Religious Vocational High School (İmam Hatip Açık Öğretim Lisesi), and Vocational and Technical School (Mesleki ve Teknik Açık Öğretim Okulu). The language of instruction and examination in these schools is Turkish.

For Secondary Schools providing distance education, applicants should be at least 14 years old and should have completed the 4<sup>th</sup> grade of

primary education. For students who have completed their primary education outside of Turkey, you need to approach the Provincial Education Directorate in your city of residence and receive an equivalency document. After you receive your equivalency document, you may approach a Public Education Center, a Vocational High School or a Religious Vocational High School in your district to apply. If your level of Turkish language is insufficient to continue with your education, you may be required to register for a Turkish language course or a Turkish reading-and-writing course.

There is no age limitation to register at a High School, a Vocational School or an Imam Hatip High School providing distance education. For those who have completed their secondary education in Turkey successfully, they need to present their diploma for registration. Those who have completed their secondary school education abroad should approach the Provincial Education Directorate to receive an equivalency document and complete their registration with that document. You will also need your Temporary Protection Identity Document during registration. You may approach a Public Education Center, a Vocational High School or an Imam Hatip High School in your district to apply. Students enrolled in Vocational Schools or Imam Hatip High Schools providing distance education might be expected to attend some of the vocational training courses delivered at a school near their place of residence.

Vocational and Technical Schools providing distance education are for students who have completed their primary education and who would like to acquire occupational and technical skills. You may approach a Public Education Center with your primary school diploma or your equivalency document to register.

You may contact the 147 call center of the Ministry of National Education with your inquiries about distance education opportunities. For further information about requirements, registration procedures and the curriculum, please visit the Ministry of National Education websites on distance education: [www.aol.meb.gov.tr](http://www.aol.meb.gov.tr) and [www.maol.meb.gov.tr](http://www.maol.meb.gov.tr).

The diploma received from high schools providing distance education

is considered equivalent to a regular high school diploma. If you or your child could not or will not be able to attend high school and receive a high school diploma, you or your child can be enrolled in a school providing distance education. If you successfully complete your distance education, the diploma you receive may allow you to continue to higher education.

## **Can persons under temporary protection enroll in universities in Turkey?**

Persons under temporary protection can enroll in universities if they meet certain conditions.

The completion of primary and secondary education in Turkey is required prior to enrolling in higher education. Students who have completed their education in public schools or in schools providing distance education in Turkey will have fulfilled this requirement. However, those who graduated from institutions outside of Turkey or who cannot demonstrate previous school attendance are required to register at Distance Education High School (Açık Öğretim Lisesi).

All foreigners who wish to enroll in universities in Turkey should take and pass the Examination for Foreign Students (YÖS), organized by universities. You may be required to pay an application fee to take this examination. In addition, universities have the discretion to request additional documents related to the applicant's previous education. Depending on the language of instruction at the university and in the department, applicants may be required to demonstrate their language proficiency. We therefore recommend that you consult the Foreign Student Departments or university websites for detailed information on requirements and for announcements.

## **Can I be enrolled in a university providing distance education?**

Persons under temporary protection can enroll in distance education programs of universities if they meet certain requirements. Although



the language of instruction for most of these programs and courses is Turkish, there are also programs where the language of instruction is a language other than Turkish. For further information about distance education programs, and about registration requirements and procedures, please visit the websites of the universities.

## **Are there scholarships available for university students?**

There are a number of scholarships available for students. The Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities provides various scholarship programs for foreign students including students under temporary protection. In order to receive further information about the application procedures and content of these scholarship programs, you may visit the official website of “Türkiye Scholarships” on [www.turkiyeburslari.gov.tr](http://www.turkiyeburslari.gov.tr).

In addition to the “Türkiye Scholarships”, foreigners with a right to legal stay in Turkey can apply for the “Directorate General of Foundations Scholarships for Higher Education” (Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü). As part of this scholarship program, students are evaluated based on academic success and provided monthly allowances for 8-month terms yearly. For more information, please visit [www.vgm.gov.tr](http://www.vgm.gov.tr) website.

Another scholarship program Syrian students in Turkey can apply to is the Spark scholarship. As part of this scholarship, students are provided monthly allowances, language education and various capacity-building trainings throughout their two-year or four-year undergraduate studies. For more information, please visit <https://spark.ngo>.

You may also approach civil society organizations for further information about other scholarship opportunities.

## **I want to learn Turkish. What are my opportunities?**

All children, young persons and adults who wish to learn Turkish should approach Public Education Centers (Halk Eğitim Merkezi). These centers

provide free courses. You will need to present your Temporary Protection Identity Document for registration.

In addition, several civil society organizations operate free Turkish language courses under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education. You may also take these courses.

## **I want to receive vocational training. What are my opportunities?**

You may approach Public Education Centers to receive vocational training. These courses are free of charge. However, please be aware that each Public Education Center determines course offerings on a yearly basis and may open new courses on demand. We therefore recommend that you approach the Public Education Centers to inquire about available courses. Please also note that you will be required to present your Temporary Protection Identity Document before you can enroll in these courses.

The Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) also runs several vocational courses. You may approach the Turkish Employment Agency offices to ask about course availability. Finally, there are civil society organizations that provide free skills training, hobby, and vocational courses under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education.

## **How can Refugee Rights Turkey help me?**

Refugee Rights Turkey provides free information and assistance to persons seeking international protection and those under temporary protection in Turkey. You may approach our office with your questions on the right to access protection mechanisms in Turkey and fundamental rights and freedoms.

## **Is Refugee Rights Turkey related to the Turkish government or to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees?**

No. Refugee Rights Turkey is an independent civil society organization.

It is not an implementing partner of the Turkish government or the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. However, Refugee Rights Turkey cooperates with the relevant Turkish authorities and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to ensure the legal protection of persons seeking international protection and those under temporary protection in Turkey.

## **Do I need to pay for Refugee Rights Turkey's services?**

All services provided by Refugee Rights Turkey are free of charge. Should you become aware of any person or entity claiming to be acting in our name who requests money or other financial benefits, please report them immediately to our organization. We will maintain your confidentiality.

## **Will Refugee Rights Turkey keep my information confidential?**

Refugee Rights Turkey operates under a principle of strict confidentiality and respects the confidentiality of individuals. Thus, we do not share your information or documents with any third parties without your explicit and informed consent.

## **How can I reach Refugee Rights Turkey?**

Wherever you may be in Turkey, you are welcome to get in touch with us all weekdays (Monday to Friday) from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM to discuss your questions or concerns regarding asylum procedures.

**Mülteci Hakları Merkezi**  
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You can access all of our information booklets and videos for refugees and asylum seekers in Turkey via the Publications section at our official website:

**<https://www.mhd.org.tr>**

Or via our new “Web Information Platform for Refugees”,  
launched as of April 2019:

**<https://multecihaklari.info>**  
**<https://refugeerights.info>**