

Refugee  
Rights  

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Turkey

Mülteci  
Hakları  

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Merkezi

**REGISTRATION AND STATUS  
For Syrian Refugees And Other Persons  
Under Temporary Protection**

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Suriye'den Gelen Sığınmacılar İçin Türkiye'de  
GEÇİÇİ KORUMA

# What is temporary protection?

Temporary protection is the protection status established by the “Temporary Protection Regulation” dated 22 October 2014. According to this regulation, the status is applied to foreigners who

- were forced to leave their country
- cannot return to the country they left
- arrived at or crossed Turkish borders en masse or individually
- will not have their international protection needs adjudicated under an individual procedure.

# To whom does the temporary protection apply?

Syrian nationals as well as refugees and stateless persons from Syria who have arrived to Turkey en masse or individually are granted temporary protection status. Thus, the “Temporary Protection Regulation” covers not only Syrian nationals but also refugees, including Palestinians and other stateless persons coming from Syria.

In addition, the amendment introduced to the “Temporary Protection Regulation” on 7 April 2016 states that Syrian nationals who irregularly crossed to the Aegean islands and were subsequently readmitted to Turkey may also be granted temporary protection status.

# What rights are guaranteed under temporary protection?

The temporary protection regime establishes a safeguard against the return of individuals with temporary protection status to Syria against their will. This regime also grants legal residence to those registered with Turkish authorities. Finally, temporary protection status enables registered individuals to access fundamental rights and entitlements, including health care services, education, social assistance, and interpretation.

# How can I register?

The Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) is the main body responsible for the registration of all individuals under the temporary protection regime. The DGMM is a specialized government institution with offices throughout Turkey.

Since March 2016, the registration process is divided into two main stages. The first is pre-registration, which is carried out by either the Foreigners' Police branches or Sub-Provincial Directorates of Security. The second stage is registration, for which Provincial Directorate of Migration Management (PDMM) offices are the responsible authority.

Please be informed that the actual locations for registration may differ. You should consult with the PDMM office to learn which pre-registration and registration location is nearest to you.

## What is pre-registration?

Persons wishing to benefit from temporary protection should approach the nearest registration center for pre-registration. Authorities explain that pre-registration is needed to assess eligibility for temporary protection.

During this stage, the authorities will request your basic demographic details, such as your name and surname, and your date and place of birth. If you have any identification documents, it is important for you to present them to the competent authorities. Please be advised that this is not a requirement for pre-registration, and individuals who do not possess an ID are still entitled to pre-register. In such cases, your statements will suffice for the completion of the registration. During the pre-registration, the competent authorities will also take your biometric data.

Please be informed that authorities will also require you to present documents (such as utility bills, a certificate of residence, or a rent contract) to verify your contact details and address. The authorities will treat all information and data with strict confidentiality.

Following the completion of pre-registration, you will be provided a Pre-Registration Document with a validity of 30 days. This document will contain a Foreigners' ID Number starting with '98'. Should the assessment of your eligibility for temporary protection take

longer than 30 days, the validity of the Pre-Registration Document will be extended for additional 30-day long periods.

After the finalization of the eligibility decision, you will be required to proceed to the second stage; i.e., approach the Provincial Directorate of Migration Management and complete your registration. Please be informed that only persons found eligible for temporary protection will have a right to complete registration. If you have received a negative decision at the pre-registration stage, please contact our office for further information.

## **What is the Pre-Registration Document?**

The Pre-Registration Document enables you to remain legally in Turkey. This document also gives you the right to access emergency health care services for free.

Please be informed that the completion of pre-registration does not provide you automatic access to rights and entitlements afforded to temporary protection beneficiaries. You will have full access to these rights after you complete your registration.

## **I have completed my pre-registration. What should I do?**

As previously stated, if you are found eligible for temporary protection at the pre-registration stage, you will need to visit Provincial Directorate of Migration Management (PDMM) office to complete registration.

Upon completion of the registration, the PDMM authorities will replace your Pre-Registration Document with a Temporary Protection Identity Card. This document is free of charge and will include your photo and basic identity information. The ID card will also contain your Foreigners' ID Number starting with '99'. The Temporary Protection Identity Card is not a substitute for a residence permit or any other equivalent documents. This card also does not allow its bearers to obtain long-term residence permits.

That being said, the Temporary Protection Identity Card legalizes your presence in Turkey, and the Foreigners' ID Number on this card is necessary to access fundamental rights and services such as health care and education. Moreover, you may enter into contracts, including for services such as telecommunications (i.e. cellular phone, internet), with your Temporary Protection Identity Card.

## Why is it important to register?

Registering with the Turkish authorities first and foremost enables you to remain legally in Turkey. Once you are registered, you will also be able to access public services granted under the temporary protection regime. If you have arrived to Turkey irregularly or do not have a valid travel document or residence permit, and if you wish to travel outside of Turkey, including through resettlement or family reunification, you will need an exit permit, which is only attainable if you are registered. Finally, all persons seeking temporary protection are required to register according to the “Temporary Protection Regulation”.

## Does registration impose any restrictions on me?

Registration does not impose any restrictions on you. You do not have any obligation to go to a camp after being registered. However, please be informed that as a general rule, you will only be able to benefit from rights and services in the province where you completed your temporary protection registration.

## **I have an ID which has a Foreigners' ID Number starting with '98'. What should I do?**

Pre-Registration Documents contain a Foreigners' ID Number starting with '98'. To obtain a Foreigners' ID Number starting with '99', you must complete registration.

There is also another document which contains a Foreigners' ID Number starting with '98', which is officially known as a Foreigners' ID Card. This card demonstrates that you have registered with Turkish authorities and therefore legally reside in Turkey. However, to avoid any difficulty in accessing rights and entitlements, you are required to obtain a Foreigners' ID number. You may visit the website of the DGMM at [www.goc.gov.tr](http://www.goc.gov.tr) and obtain your Foreigners' ID number by entering your number starting with '98'.

## **I have lost my ID card. What should I do?**

You should report to the nearest registration office, which will note your declaration and give you a new ID card. You may follow the same procedure for damaged or worn-out ID cards.

## **Do I have to register with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)?**

In accordance with the temporary protection regime, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) does not register and adjudicate the asylum claims of individuals under temporary protection. Thus, you are not required to register with UNHCR.

## **I have family members who arrived in Turkey after me. How can I register them?**

Your family members can first pre-register and then register with the competent authorities in the same manner. As both pre-registration and registration are carried out individually, it is important for your family members to be present at the time of their pre-registration and registration appointments.

## **I am registered. Can I reunite with my family members who are still in Syria?**

Individuals who have registered with competent authorities under the temporary protection regime have the right to bring a claim for family reunification. As per the “Temporary Protection Regulation”, you can only make these claims for a spouse, minor children or dependent children of any age. You should apply for family reunification with the DGMM, as it is the main body responsible for receiving and assessing the claim. Where necessary, the DGMM will cooperate with other relevant institutions.

## **How can I register my newborn?**

It is the duty of the mother, father, or legal guardian of the child to register the birth with the Population Bureau in the province where the birth took place. The registration must be done within 30 days of the birth. Please be aware that failure to comply with this requirement may result in an administrative fine.

It is important to present the original birth report provided by the hospital or the health center and other relevant documents in your possession. However, if you do not have any of these documents or if the birth did not take place in a hospital or health center, you are still entitled to register your newborn. In some cases, particularly where the birth took place at home, the Population Bureau authorities may order a verification.

Following your application, the Population Department will issue a birth certificate in two copies. This document is known as “Form A: International Birth Registration Certificate”. This certificate will contain the identity details of the parents, as well as the child’s birth place and birth date. The certificate will also include information on the citizenship status of the child. Please demand a copy of this certificate and make sure to verify the accuracy of the information stated in the document before signing it. To ensure the international validity of the document, we also advise you to obtain an apostille. You can approach to the prefecture (kaymakamlık, in Turkish) to this end.

Please also note that you are also required to register your newborn in the Provincial Directorate of Migration Management (PDMM) where you are registered. Following the registration, your newborn will also be issued a Temporary Protection ID Card.

Finally, please note that registering your newborn shall not directly confer Turkish citizenship to your child nor to you.

## **I have a special condition. What should I do?**

According to the “Temporary Protection Regulation”, unaccompanied minors, persons with disabilities, elderly persons, pregnant women, a single mother or a single father with an accompanying child, and persons who have been subjected to torture, rape, or other serious psychological, physical or sexual violence are recognized as persons with special needs.

If you or any individual in your family have a condition matching with the above-provided list, please make sure to mention this condition during pre-registration. Authorities may decide to give you priority in registration. Moreover, the Temporary Protection Regulation specifically states that individuals recognized as persons with special needs shall be given priority in accessing rights and procedures, including the right to access health care services. Finally, persons with special needs may also be given priority in access to the camps.

In case you have failed to mention your special condition either at the pre-registration or registration stage, or if these conditions have arisen afterwards, you may also approach the registration authorities and demand that your pre-registration or registration status be revised accordingly.



## **I am a minor and alone in Turkey. What should I do?**

Unaccompanied minors are recognized as persons with special needs. All protection measures and services provided to these persons are regulated under the Child Protection Law. Unaccompanied or separated minors can be accommodated either in shelters run by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy or in camps in coordination with Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD). According to Turkish law, it is essential to uphold the best interest of the child in every procedure. Therefore, if you are an unaccompanied minor or know any person in this situation, please approach our office to receive more detailed information and assistance.

## **I want to go to a camp. Is there a requirement for this?**

As of early 2017, there are 23 camps—which are officially known as temporary accommodation centers—across 10 provinces in Turkey. However, these camps fall behind in meeting the current volume of demand. Thus, the final decision in admitting an individual to a camp will be made by the Directorate General of Migration Management in coordination with governorates. According to the “Temporary Protection Regulation”, the responsible authorities are obligated to take your family situation and your special conditions into account while making the final decision for admissions. You may apply either to AFAD, which is responsible for the management of the camps, or to the governorates in these provinces.

## **I want to leave the camp. Is it possible?**

There is no barrier to leaving the camps. You should approach the camp management and communicate your decision to leave the camp. Please also be aware that you are legally required to provide the relevant authorities with your new address within 20 days of leaving the camp.

However, you should be aware that there is currently no rent subsidy, social housing or any other form of state-sponsored accommodation, so you will have to rely on your own resources for your accommodation.

## **I want to change my city of registration. Is that possible?**

If you have close family members registered and thus legally residing in another province, or wish to benefit from education or health care services elsewhere or wish to move for work purposes, you need to submit a petition to the Provincial Directorate of Migration Management (PDMM) of your city.

If you are granted a positive response, you must approach the PDMM office and request a travel permission. Travel permission documents are usually given for a period of 15 days and you are required to approach the PDMM office of the new province and notify them about this change of residence city. Please be advised that you will need to present documents (such as utility bills, a certificate of residence, or a rent contract) to verify your contact details and address during this notification process.

## **I want to go to another province for a short while. What should I do?**

To be able to travel to another city, persons under temporary protection are required to secure a travel permission document from the PDMM office where they are registered. As stated before, a travel permission document is usually given for a period of 15 days. You are also required to report your presence to the PDMM upon returning to your city of registration.

Please be informed that if you need to be outside of your city of registration for a period longer than 15 days, you may apply to the PDMM office and request an extension. This extension may be granted for up to 15 days. Please also be advised that it is important to make your request for extension before your travel permission document expires.

## Can I get a residence permit?

According to the applicable legislation, all foreigners who wish to remain in Turkey beyond the duration of a visa or a visa exemption, or for longer than 90 days, should obtain a residence permit. The residence permit allows you to stay legally in Turkey within the period of its validity.

If you have entered Turkey with a valid passport and in a regular way, it is possible to apply for a residence permit. However, there are certain requirements for getting a residence permit. Please apply to the PDMM office to inquire about these requirements and to apply for a residence permit.

## I have a residence permit. Do I have to register under the temporary protection regime?

If you have already obtained a residence permit, this will allow you to legally reside in Turkey within the period of its validity. Thus, if you have a valid residence permit, you are not obligated to register under the temporary protection regime. However, please be advised that, if you have a residence permit, you will not be able to benefit from rights and entitlements afforded to persons under temporary protection.

## I have temporary protection status. Can I return to Syria?

Yes, you may voluntarily return to Syria. The “Temporary Protection Regulation” states that the government of Turkey may provide support for voluntary returns to Syria. However, please be informed that voluntary departure from Turkey is considered grounds for cessation of temporary protection.

If you are certain about your decision to voluntarily return to Syria, you are required to apply to the PDMM office in your city of registration and complete a Voluntary Return Form. Upon the completion of this process, you will be provided a copy of this document along with a travel permission document. Thus, you will be able to travel to the appropriate border

crossing point and leave Turkey. Please be informed that authorities will take away your Temporary Protection ID Card at the border.

Should you later decide to return to Turkey and re-apply for temporary protection, the Directorate General for Migration Management has discretion regarding this request.

## Do I have the right to seek asylum in another country?

Persons benefiting from temporary protection in Turkey may benefit from resettlement, humanitarian admission, and other forms of resettlement. These options are only available for the most vulnerable individuals and even the available places for these individuals are limited. UNHCR Turkey cooperates with Turkish authorities and other countries to facilitate this process.

Please be informed that the final decision is not taken by UNHCR, but by the admitting countries. Please also be advised that all UNHCR procedures, including resettlement, are free of charge. We therefore strongly advise you not to believe persons who promise resettlement in return for money or any other financial benefit. These practices are clearly fraudulent.

Another possibility for going to a third country is through family reunification. Applications for family reunification should be made directly to consular representations of these countries in Turkey. Procedures for family reunification differ. Many countries require that the family member in the third country initiate the process, and most of them only accept nuclear family members—i.e., meaning your spouse and children below the age of 18.

Finally, if you have a valid travel document and a valid visa, you may also travel to a third country. Being registered under temporary protection is not a barrier, provided that you have these valid documents.

However, if you do not have a valid travel document, or if you have entered Turkey through irregular channels, you will need to obtain an exit permit from Turkish authorities before you depart from Turkey for the purpose of resettlement, family reunification, or through any other similar channel.

## What is an exit permit?

According to the “Temporary Protection Regulation”, all persons under temporary protection are required to obtain an exit permit from the Directorate General of Migration Management should they wish to leave Turkey either permanently or temporarily. All individuals who do not have a valid travel document and valid visa and who wish to travel to a third country should obtain exit permits. You may approach the Provincial Directorate for Migration Management office and present your documents demonstrating your resettlement or other forms of entry to the third country, to apply for and to obtain an exit permit.

## I was apprehended during my attempt to cross to another country and I am currently in detention. What are my rights?

Attempting to leave Turkey in an irregular manner is one of the grounds for deportation. You may also be detained for this reason. Applicable legislation as well as international agreements to which Turkey is a party require Turkish authorities to not deport persons who are in need of international protection. This is known as the principle of non-refoulement and it is prohibited to send a person to any place where he/she may be at risk of serious human rights violations. If you are detained for an irregular attempt to enter or exit Turkey and would like to receive information and assistance, you may call the Detention Hotline of Refugee Rights Turkey at +90 507 218 62 85. Our Detention Hotline operates during weekdays (Monday to Friday) between 10:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

## How can Refugee Rights Turkey help me?

Refugee Rights Turkey provides free information and assistance to persons seeking international protection and 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 UNHCR?**

No. Refugee Rights Turkey is an independent civil society organization. It is not an implementing partner of the Turkish government or UNHCR. However, Refugee Rights Turkey cooperates with relevant Turkish authorities and UNHCR to ensure the legal protection of persons seeking international protection and 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 any money or other financial benefit, 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 open and informed consent.

# Refugee Rights Turkey- Contact Information:

Wherever you may be in Turkey, you are welcome to visit our office or get in touch with us by telephone, fax or email all weekdays (Monday to Friday) from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

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# Mülteci Hakları Merkezi

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Refugee Rights Turkey



Refugee Solidarity Network



US Department of State  
Bureau of Population,  
Refugees, and Migration