

**UNHCR**United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés**UNHCR Canberra  
Fact Sheet - 2004****Questions and Answers on Resettlement from Turkey****1. How many refugees are in Turkey?**

UNHCR's Branch Office in Ankara has an active caseload of 5,368 persons which includes Iranians, Iraqis, and other nationalities (namely various African nationalities, Afghans, Uzbeks and others). After having decreased for the past several years, the number of Iraqi asylum-seekers is on the rise.

**2. Is Turkey a signatory to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees?**

Yes. Turkey is a party to the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol, but has maintained the geographic limitation of Art. 1B(1) of the 1951 Convention. Turkey has consequently limited its obligations only to persons having a well-founded fear of persecution "as a result of events occurring in Europe".

The Asylum Regulation adopted in November 1994 remains the only national legislation in force for processing individual asylum claims in Turkey. Under the 1994 Asylum Regulation, however, Turkey grants temporary asylum to *non-European* nationals who fulfill the international criteria for refugee status pending their resettlement to third countries. The Government looks to UNHCR to assist non-European refugees during their stay and to organize their resettlement, in cooperation with third countries and IOM.

**3. Where is the UNHCR office in Turkey located?**

<b>UNHCR Ankara</b>			
<i>Street Address</i>	12. Cadde, 212. Sokak No: 3 Sancak Mahallesi, Cankaya Ankara	<i>Telephone</i>	90 312 409 7000
<i>Mailing Address</i>	12. Cadde, 212. Sokak No:3 Sancak Mahallesi, Cankaya Ankara	<i>Fax</i>	90 312 441 2173
<b>UNHCR Van</b>			
<i>Street Address</i>	Istasyon Mahallesi, Terminal 1st Street, Hayirlar Cadese No. 40.2 Van, Turkey	<i>Telephone:</i> <i>Refugee Counseling</i> <i>Switchboard</i>	90 432 223 13 00 90 432 223 48 58 90 432 223 21 92 90 432 223 53 06 90 432 223 53 07
<i>Mailing Address</i>	Istasyon Mahallesi, Terminal 1st Street, Hayirlar Cadese No. 40.2 Van, Turkey	<i>Fax</i>	90 432 223 32 44



**UNHCR**

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

**UNHCR Canberra  
Fact Sheet - 2004**

**Questions and Answers on Resettlement from Turkey**

Asylum-seekers may approach UNHCR in Ankara or Van on any working day. Persons who enter Turkey illegally are required under the 1994 asylum regulation to register in the province where they crossed the border.

**4. What is UNHCR's role in Turkey?**

The UNHCR Branch Office in Turkey ensures the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers in the country. Because Turkey offers only temporary asylum to non-European refugees, UNHCR conducts refugee status determination under its Mandate to identify persons in need of international protection and seeks solutions for those recognised as refugees. For nearly all non-European refugees, the only viable durable solution is resettlement to a third country through UNHCR.

**5. How does a person get referred for resettlement from Turkey?**

UNHCR facilitates the departures of refugees recognized by UNHCR including both those registered with the Turkish government authorities and those refused registration by the authorities for procedural reasons (*i.e.*, failure to apply within the 10 days of their entry, failure to provide a valid identity document, etc.)

**6. In short, what are the criteria for determining refugee status under UNHCR mandate?**

The term "refugee" applies to any person who is outside his/her country of origin due to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to that country.

**7. How does a person obtain refugee status?**

Upon submitting their applications for temporary asylum to the Turkish authorities, non-Europeans surrender their passports and receive temporary residence permits. The residence permit serves as the asylum seeker's identity document and is valid for six months, renewable. The Government charges a significant fee for this document.

UNHCR carries out refugee status determination under its Mandate. The Government place substantial weight upon UNHCR's views when determining whether to grant temporary residence to non-European asylum seekers.



**UNHCR**

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

**UNHCR Canberra  
Fact Sheet - 2004**

**Questions and Answers on Resettlement from Turkey**

**8. Can a person appeal a denied application for refugee status?**

Non-European asylum-seekers whose applications are rejected may submit a written appeal to UNHCR. Applicants rejected on appeal may request the re-opening of their file and reconsideration of their application for refugee status based upon new or additional information not provided or available during the earlier stages of the proceeding.

**9. How long after entering Turkey must an asylum-seeker (non-European) register?**

The Turkish 1994 Asylum Regulations requires asylum seekers to submit their application within 10 days after entering the country and to provide an official identity document within 15 days. The Government issues temporary residence permits to non-European asylum-seekers and regularly extends the permits of those UNHCR has recognised as refugees until they depart for resettlement. Persons properly registered in the Government procedure generally enjoy reliable temporary protection during the consideration of their application and while awaiting a resettlement opportunity. Instances of refoulement involving such persons are relatively rare and typically involve individuals charged with criminal offences in Turkey.

**10. If a person does not meet this deadline, is there any way that the person can have their case considered?**

Those who approach UNHCR and are recognized by UNHCR, legal or illegal, are in a better position since UNHCR can intervene on their behalf. If one comes into the country with a valid passport and has the required visa, then he/she should have no problem departing.

Asylum seekers who do not travel directly from their country of origin and pass through one or more other countries before reaching Turkey may also be refused registration in the Government procedure. Such "extra procedure" asylum seekers and refugees have no legal status in Turkey and are subject to arrest and deportation, although UNHCR is usually able to intervene successfully if notified in time. For some of the extra procedure cases, UNHCR has had to sometimes resort to emergency resettlement submissions for those who received deportation orders.

**11. If a person is found to be a refugee, will he/she be resettled?**

As set out above, non-European refugees will be resettled if they were recognized under an instrument relied upon by resettlement countries, meet UNHCR's criteria for resettlement and are otherwise not ineligible.



**UNHCR**

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

**UNHCR Canberra  
Fact Sheet - 2004**

**Questions and Answers on Resettlement from Turkey**

**12. How can a refugee in Turkey apply to UNHCR for resettlement?**

All recognized refugees are automatically considered for resettlement. Those recognized under UNHCR's mandate are given individual durable solutions interviews. At the interview, a determination is made whether the refugee meets UNHCR's criteria and is otherwise eligible.

**13. What happens after UNHCR determines a refugee to be in need of resettlement?**

UNHCR will refer eligible persons to one of several resettlement countries (Australia, Canada, Finland, Norway, Sweden, USA, etc.). Each country of resettlement has its own policies, criteria and practices that a refugee must follow before he or she can be resettled. The final decision on resettlement will be made by a resettlement country, not by UNHCR.

**14. What is the process for refugees who are referred to the Australian and New Zealand programs?**

Once the UNHCR office in the country of asylum decides that a person is in need of resettlement in Australia or New Zealand, the case is referred to either the local Australian Embassy or to the New Zealand Government via the Regional Office in Canberra.

The Australian and New Zealand Government make the final decision on whether the refugee will be resettled according to their criteria, not UNHCR. Further information on the Australian criteria can be obtained from the DIMIA website ([www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)). The New Zealand Government generally follows the UNHCR criteria.

UNHCR cannot guarantee that a resettlement referral will be accepted.

**15. I have been told I need to pay money for resettlement to Australia/New Zealand, is this correct?**

Absolutely not. Neither UNHCR nor the Australian or New Zealand Resettlement Programs charge a fee for resettlement interviews or decisions. Anyone asked to pay fees is encouraged to report this to UNHCR through its Complaints Procedure.



**UNHCR**

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

**UNHCR Canberra  
Fact Sheet - 2004**

**Questions and Answers on Resettlement from Turkey**

**17. Where can I obtain more information about resettlement?**

The best sources for information on Australian and New Zealand resettlement are their Immigration Departments websites ([www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au) for Australia, and [www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/](http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/) for New Zealand) and the UNHCR regional office in Canberra.

**18. Are there any other ways to help my family members to reunite with me in the Australia or New Zealand?**

Australia and New Zealand both maintain special programs with a broader definition of persons eligible for consideration than through UNHCR referrals. Information on these programs is available on the Immigration websites at [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au) for Australia under the Special Humanitarian Program, and [www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/](http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/) for New Zealand under the Refugee Family Quota in the Family Sponsored Stream.

---