

# Assessment of Needs and Mental Health Problems of the Syrian Refugees Living in Turkey: Preliminary Results

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STUDIES UNIT**

**2016**

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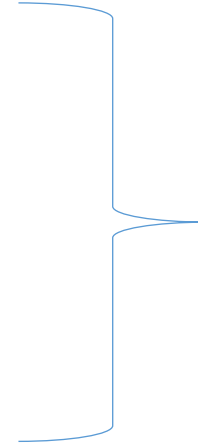
*“There is no greater sorrow on  
earth than the loss of  
one’s native land.”*

**Euripides**

# UN High Commissioner for Refugees



- 59.5 million forcibly displaced people
  - 19.5 million refugees
  - 38.2 million internally displaced persons
  - 1.8 million asylum seekers



**FORCED MIGRANTS**

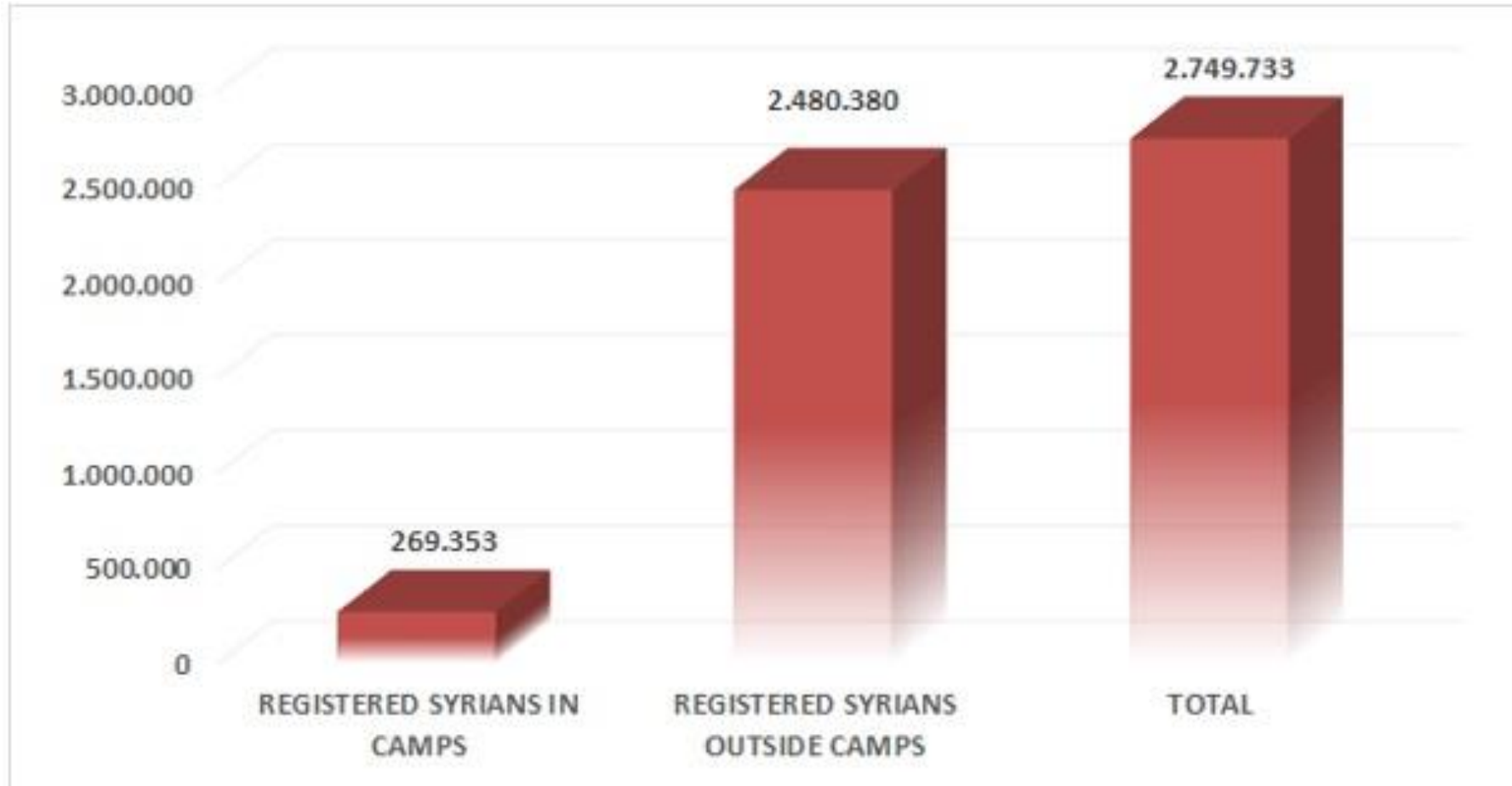
- Syria is the top source country of refugees
- 4.6 million registered Syrian refugees

- March 2011: Syria Crisis
- Turkey is hosting the largest number of refugees (3 million\*)
- 26 camps in 10 cities (AFAD, 2016)
- More than 2 million spread through the country



\*<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/teaxis/vtx/page?page=49e48e0fa7f&submit=GO>

## Syrians under Temporary Protection staying in and outside of the Accommodation Centers



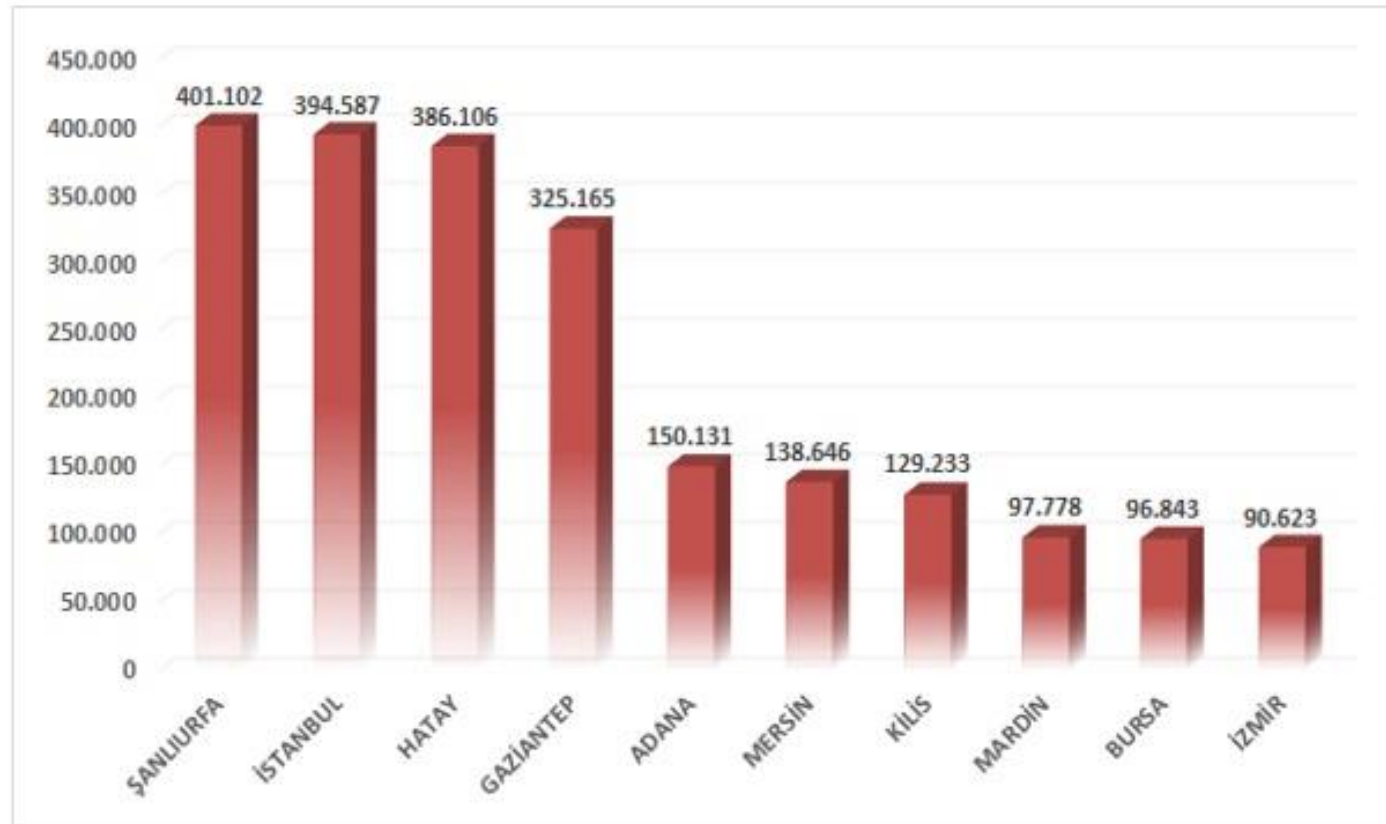
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Retrieved 24.04.2016

# Assessment of the Mental Health of Syrian Refugees Living out of Camps in Turkey

(World Health Organization)

Syrians under Temporary Protection (Top 10 Provinces)



## STUDY CITIES

Istanbul (N=243)

Ankara (N=125)

İzmir (N=127)

Gaziantep (N=126)

Urfa (N= 420)

Kilis (N=109)

Mersin (N=104)

Adana (N=304)

[http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik6/temporary-protection\\_915\\_1024\\_4748\\_icerik](http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik6/temporary-protection_915_1024_4748_icerik)

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# The aims of the project

- Determining mental health problems
- Analyses of needs and resources
- Assessment of the health service use



# Assessment of the Mental Health of Syrian Refugees Living out of Camps in Turkey

- December 2015-March 2016
- Reached Arabic speaking team (social workers or psychologists)
- Assessment training
- Snow ball sampling
- N=1558 Age  $\geq$  18; one adult from every family



# Assessment Tools

- Sociodemographic Data and Needs Assessment Form
- MINI International Neuropsychiatric Interview Form



# Field Work

- Started simultaneously in all of the cities
- Face to face interviews (45-60 min.)
- Sociodemographic Data and Needs Assessment Form:  
Sociodemographic information and access to basic needs and services.
- MINI: Assessed the most common mental health disorders among refugees.

# Results

## Descriptives

- **99%: Sunni Muslims**
- **0.6%: Shia Muslims**
- **0.4%: Yezidi**
- **0.2%: Christian**

### Ethnicity

- 89.9%: Arabic
- 7.0%: Kurdish

- 92.9%: Arabic is the main language spoken at home

**51% were women  
ages 18-81  
M=34.19, SD=1.90**

Results

Descriptives

<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	<b>%</b>
MARRIED	69.2
SINGLE	25.6
WIDOWED	3.5
DIVORCED	1.7
<b>LIVING WITH</b>	
NUCLEAR FAMILY	60.0
<b>NUMBER OF PEOPLE AT HOUSEHOLD</b>	
1-5	37.1
6-10	48.8
<b>Family members in Syria</b>	<b>86.3%</b>

<b>Educational Status</b>	<b>%</b>
None	14.9
Primary School	20.0
Secondary School	18.2
High School	14.7
Bachelor's	32.2
<b>Income in Turkey</b>	
0-999 TL	81.1
1.000-2.999 TL	17.2

<b>Occupational Status in Turkey</b>	<b>%</b>
Student	8.2
Housewife	33.2
<b>Worker</b>	<b>32.8</b>
Unemployed	24.3
Volunteer	1.0
<b>Occupational Status in Syria</b>	
Student	16.3
Housewife	30.6
<b>Worker</b>	<b>48.6</b>
Unemployed	3.7

# Lenght of Stay in Turkey and Thoughts on staying in Turkey

<b>Time in Turkey</b>	<b>%</b>
Less than a year	33.8
2 years	41.6
3 years	19.5
4 years	5.1
<b>Intention to Stay in Turkey</b>	
Leaving Turkey	75.0
Go back to Syria after war	15.2
Living in Turkey after war	9.8



# Lenght of Stay in Turkey and Thoughts on staying in Turkey

<b>Living in Turkey</b>	<b>%</b>
I am pleased with living in Turkey	57.0
I am not pleased...	43.0
<b>Before Moving to Turkey</b>	
Directly moved to Turkey	58.9
Migrated within the borders of Syria	32.3
Migrated to Arab countries	6.8
Migrated to Europe	0.4
Other	0.4

## Losses Due to Conflict in syria

### Any losses

No 31.8

Yes 68.2

### Types of Loss

Death of family/close ones 42.1

Death of neighbors/relatives 56.7

Destruction of home 49.4

Being in the midst of combat 50.8

## Physical Health Status of Participants

Physical Health	After the immigration
Very bad	6.0
Bad	16.5
Don't know	11.3
Good	58.3
Very well	7.9

## Perceived Mental Health Status of Participants

<b>Mental Health</b>	<b>After the immigration</b>
Very bad	17.3
Bad	33.5
Don't know	12.0
Good	34.3
Very well	2.8

# Health Service Use

	N	%
<u>No</u>	1122	72.2
<u>Yes</u>		27.7
Physical	389	25.0
Mental	18	<b>1.2</b>
Both	24	<b>1.5</b>
<u>Treatment Received From</u>		
Medical Doctor	390	25.2
Health Staff (not MD)	60	3.9
<b>Psychiatrist</b>	22	<b>1.4</b>
<b>Psychologist</b>	5	<b>0.3</b>
Other	8	0.5

# Social Support after Displacement

<b>Social Support</b>	<b>%</b>
No	79.4
Yes	20.6
<b>Social Support Through</b>	
NGO	7.4
Relative	7.0
Friend	4.2
Governmental Agencies	1.7



# MINI

*Major Depressive Disorder*

*Dysthymia*

*Panic Disorder*

*Agoraphobia*

*Social Anxiety Disorder*

*Obsessive Compulsive Disorder*

*Posttraumatic Stress Disorder*

*Generalized Anxiety Disorder*

## Table. Mental Health Status of Participants

### Participants Meeting Diagnostic Criteria (N=1066)

	N	%
<i>No Mental Disorder</i>	385	<b>36.1</b>
<i>At Least One / Or More Mental Disorder</i>	681	<b>63.9</b>
<i>1</i>	258	24.2
<i>2</i>	165	15.5
<i>3</i>	134	12.6
<i>4</i>	77	7.2
<i>5 or more</i>	47	4.4



# Mental Health Status of Participants

## Participants Meeting Diagnostic Criteria (N=1066)

	Metropolitan Cities (N=420)	Border Cities (N=646)
	%	%
At least 1 mental health disorder	66.9	61.9

# Mental Health Status of Participants

## Participants Meeting Diagnostic Criteria (N=1066)

	Female	Male
	%	%
At least 1 mental health disorder	60.7	67.1

# Mental Health Disorders

	N	%
<b><i>Major Depressive Disorder</i></b>	<b>591</b>	<b>38.2</b>
<i>Dysthymia</i>	204	18.1
<i>Panic Disorder</i>	249	16
<i>Agoraphobia</i>	234	15.6
<i>Social Anxiety Disorder</i>	102	6.5
<i>Obsessive Compulsive Disorder</i>	70	4.5
<b><i>Posttraumatic Stress Disorder</i></b>	<b>262</b>	<b>17.7</b>
<i>Generalized Anxiety Disorder</i>	61	3.9

# Suicidal Intentions

	%
Wish to be dead	5.5
Thinking About suicide	2.2
Suicide plan	1.7
Suicide Attempt	2.5

# Prevalence of MHD According to City Type

	Metropol	Border
MDD	44.1	35.5
PTSD	20.4	16.4
<b>Dysthmia</b>	22.1	15.5
Panic Disorder	19.2	14.5
Agoraphobia	16.5	15.1
GAD	5.3	3.3
SAD	4.8	7.3
OCD	4.6	4.4

# Discussion

- More than half had at least 1 mental health disorder
- Mental health disorder are more prevalent at metropol cities
- Metropolitan cities: alienation, less social support, confrontation with different cultures, high cost of living
- At border cities: similarity between cultures
- **The living location might be important for mental health.**
- Further studies covering refugees living in **coastal regions** of Turkey is necessary

# Discussion

- Mental health disorders are more common among males
- Cultural gender roles:
  - Men are more responsible to earn money
  - Protecting family
  - Further investigation is needed.
- MDD and PTSD are the most common disorders
- Helplessness & post migration stressors -- depression
- Trauma---ptsd

# Suggestion

- Capacity building
  - Trained/professional interpreters
  - Trained primary health professionals/mental health professionals on war/trauma
  - Learning and training resources in Arabic
  - Training and cooperating with Syrian health professionals
  - Manuals/guidelines



