

Refugee  
Rights  

---

Turkey

Mülteci  
Hakları  

---

Merkezi

**THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION  
For Syrian Refugees And Other Persons  
Under Temporary Protection**

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Suriye'den Gelen Sığınmacılar İçin Türkiye'de  
EĞİTİM HAKKI



## **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 will have access to primary, secondary, and higher education, as well as to Turkish language courses and vocational training.

## **I have not applied for temporary protection. Do my children and I have the right to access education in Turkey?**

As per the current legislation, regardless of their status and gender, all children have the right to compulsory education in Turkey. However, if you have not yet applied for temporary protection in Turkey, your child will only have access to public schools as a guest student. In order to enjoy the right to education without restriction, we strongly advise you to apply for temporary protection at your earliest convenience.

Please also be informed that before you can access educational opportunities for adults, you must complete your temporary protection registration and obtain a Temporary Protection Identity Card.

## **I have applied for temporary protection and I have received a Pre-Registration Document. Do my children and I have the right to education in Turkey?**

The Pre-Registration Document enables you to remain legally in Turkey. However, the completion of pre-registration does not provide you an automatic right to entitlements afforded to temporary protection beneficiaries. These rights are only available following the completion of registration. It is therefore critical to complete your registration as early as possible.

Please be aware that, to ensure your child's full enrollment, you should request acceleration of the process by informing registration authorities of your child's situation.

## **I have completed my temporary protection registration and I have a primary school-aged child. How can I send him/her to school?**

As per current legislation, regardless of their status and gender, all children have the right to compulsory education in Turkey. Thus, your child is entitled to access education either in public schools or at temporary education centers. Compulsory and free education in Turkey is 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.

Temporary education centers, on the other hand, are primary and secondary education centers run by either non-governmental actors or Syrian refugees outside the camps or directly by public authorities or international organizations within the camps. The language of instruction in these centers is usually Arabic. Additionally, temporary education centers operated under the supervision of the Turkish Ministry of Education also have Turkish language teachers.

# How can I enroll my child in public school for compulsory education? Do I have to pay tuition? Will my child receive a diploma?

You may enroll your child in public schools in your place of residence with your Temporary Protection Identity Card, with your Foreigners' ID, or, if available, with your residence permit. Enrollment procedures are determined by the Provincial Education Commission at the province; however, in general, it is important to present documents demonstrating previous school attendance, certificates, or diplomas. If you do not have these documents, the Provincial Education Commission and, in some provinces, the District Education Commission, will carry out a grade placement test, either oral, written, or in some cases both. Following this assessment, your child will be placed in the appropriate grade level.

If you have not completed your temporary protection registration yet or if you do not have a Foreigners' ID Number, you may still enroll your child in public schools. In the absence of these documents, your child will be enrolled as a guest student. It is possible to change this guest status upon obtaining your Temporary Protection Identity Card.

Education is free in all public schools. The language of instruction in public schools is Turkish and classes are carried out in accordance with Turkish curriculum. Some temporary education centers, however, may require tuition or fees.

Students who have successfully fulfilled requirements in public schools are entitled to receive a diploma. Students in temporary education centers operating under the supervision of the Ministry of Education are entitled to receive a certificate upon the completion of the requirements.

# What is the legal status of Syrian schools in Turkey?

The education system in Turkey is under the supervision and control of the Ministry of Education. Regardless of their chosen titles, temporary education centers or schools that operate without authorization from the Ministry of Education do not have legal status. As such, these informal schools cannot issue a legally valid certificate and risk closure if the Ministry of Education identifies them. Thus, before enrolling your child in a school, it is critical to learn the legal status of the school and make your decision accordingly.

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

Children who have successfully completed 8 years of compulsory education are entitled to enroll in high schools. It is therefore important to present documents demonstrating previous school attendance to the Provincial Directorate of Education in your city of registration. You may also submit certificates obtained from temporary education centers.

The Provincial Directorate of Education shall carry out an assessment and notify you about the results and placement. Following this notification, you can enroll your child at the school where he/she has been placed. It is important to have a Temporary Protection ID Card which bears a Foreigners' ID Number starting with '99'. If you face any difficulty during registration, please approach the Provincial or Sub-Provincial Directorates of Education.

If you do not have any documents demonstrating your child's previous school attendance, you must approach the Provincial Education Commission in your city of registration for a grade placement test. You will be able to enroll your child after he/she takes the grade placement test.

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

Students who have successfully fulfilled requirements in public high schools are entitled to receive a diploma. However, if you have completed your high school in a temporary education center or elsewhere, you are required to take an exam known as the High School Proficiency and Equivalency Examination for International Students (YÖLYDS). This examination is given once a year and sessions are convened in certain provinces.

In order to apply to take this examination, you are required to complete your temporary protection registration and have an up-to-date profile on the Foreign Students Information Operation System (YÖBİS). Those who are enrolled in public schools or in temporary education centers with an active protocol at the Ministry of Education are registered in YÖBİS.

If you have completed your compulsory education elsewhere, you must register with one of the temporary education centers operating under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and obtain a student certificate through YÖBİS.

YÖLYDS applications should be submitted to school administrators. In order to avoid any problem at this stage, you must present a hard copy of the student certificate obtained through YÖBİS, the YÖLDYS application form, and a copy of your Temporary Protection Identity Card. Please refer to <https://yobis.meb.gov.tr/> for up-to-date information and announcements related to the examination.

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

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 in Turkey will have fulfilled this criterion. However, those who graduated from institutions in Syria or who completed their education in temporary education centers are required to take the High School Proficiency and Equivalency Examination for International Students (YÖLYDS). Please refer to the above section for detailed information on this exam.

All foreigners who wish to enroll in universities in Turkey should take the Examination for Foreign Students (YÖS) organized by universities. You may also be required to pay an application fee to take this exam. In addition, universities have the discretion to request additional documents related to the applicant's previous education.

We therefore recommend that you consult the Foreign Student Departments or university websites for detailed information on requirements and for announcements.

## Are there scholarships available for university students?

There are a number of scholarship available for students. You should approach civil society organizations working with Syrian refugees in Turkey for further information.



## I want to learn Turkish. Who can help me?

All children, young persons and adults who wish to learn Turkish should approach the Public Education Centers (Halk Eđitim Merkezi). These centers provide free courses. You will need to present your Temporary Protection Identity Card in order to register at these centers.

In addition, several civil society organizations operate free Turkish language courses. You may call us to ask about the availability of free courses in your province.

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

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

The Turkish Labor Agency (İŞKUR) also runs several vocational courses. You may approach İŞKUR offices to ask about course availability in your city of registration. Finally, there are other civil society organizations that provide free skills training, hobby, and vocational courses.

## 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 questions concerning access to 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 those under temporary protection in Turkey.

## **Do I need to pay for services provided by Refugee Rights Turkey?**

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 office. 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 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.

 Dr. Refik Saydam Cad. Dilber Apt. No: 39 Daire: 11 Kat: 4

Şiřhane, Beyođlu - İstanbul

 +90 212 292 48 30

 +90 212 292 48 33

 [info@mhd.org.tr](mailto:info@mhd.org.tr)

[www.mhd.org.tr](http://www.mhd.org.tr)

# Mülteci Hakları Merkezi


## Refugee Rights Turkey

 Dr. Refik Saydam Cad. Dilber Apt. No: 39 Daire: 11 Kat: 4

Şiřhane, Beyođlu - İstanbul

 +90 212 292 48 30

 +90 212 292 48 33

 info@mhd.org.tr

[www.mhd.org.tr](http://www.mhd.org.tr)

This resource is produced by **Refugee Rights Turkey** within the context of a project run in co-operation with U.S.A. based **Refugee Solidarity Network** and **Dutch Council for Refugees** and supported by **US Department of State, Bureau of Population Refugees, and Migration**.



Refugee Rights Turkey



Refugee Solidarity Network



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