

# REFUGEE, ASYLUM-SEEKER & MIGRANT PERCEPTIONS IN TURKEY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the [Mixed Migration Platform, Ground Truth Solutions](#) has collected data from some 1,356 refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants living outside of camps across four locations in Turkey – [Istanbul](#), [Izmir](#), [Gaziantep](#), and [Kilis](#). In July 2017, a series of focus group discussions were conducted in [Istanbul](#), [Gaziantep](#), and [Izmir](#) to delve deeper into the findings that surfaced during the first round of quantitative data collection. More background and information on the methodology can be found at the end of the reports. Ground Truth Solutions is planning to conduct another round in October 2017, which will take a closer look at the perceptions of refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants towards cash-based assistance.

### Priority needs are not met

Respondents largely feel that the support they receive does not meet their most important needs. Unmet needs include shelter and payment of household expenses, cash, employment and livelihood support, education, and medical care. Additionally, respondents largely do not feel that support reaches the people who need it most. Small families are believed to be left out, along with those without official Turkish identification cards, and vulnerable groups like the elderly and persons with disabilities.

### Unmet information needs

Across all locations, there is little awareness of the types of available support. With most respondents having access to either a shared or personal smartphone, SMS messaging is the most preferred way to receive information from aid agencies and local authorities. More than half of the respondents in each of the surveyed locations also said they were unsure of their options to remain in Turkey or how to apply for resettlement in another country. Even more do not know where to access this information. Meanwhile, respondents generally have a high level of trust in the information they get from aid agencies and official sources.

### Lack of awareness of and trust in complaints mechanisms

Few people interviewed know how to make suggestions or complaints about services and there seems to be a substantial amount of scepticism among respondents whether they would receive a response if they were to make a complaint. As a result, it is not surprising that a majority of respondents would prefer to make suggestions or complaints through face-to-face meetings.

**For more information about Ground Truth's work in Turkey, please contact Elias Sagmeister (Programme Manager – [elias@groundtruthsolutions.org](mailto:elias@groundtruthsolutions.org)) or Andrew Hassan (Programme Analyst – [andrew@groundtruthsolutions.org](mailto:andrew@groundtruthsolutions.org)).**

Below are some of the key findings from the data collected in Istanbul, Gaziantep, and Kilis from April to May 2017 and in Izmir during July 2017. For more information, please consult the [full reports](#).



Figure 1. Map of Turkey displaying locations of data collection

### Limited awareness of and trust in cash support

Among survey participants who are aware of cash-based assistance programmes, opinions differ as to whether cash transfers are fair and transparent. Respondents partly feel that cash is distributed without an in-depth understanding of the needs of a household, resulting in large exclusion and inclusion errors, or insufficient cash instalments.

### Finding accommodation and work is possible, but often inadequate

Respondents generally feel that people from their country of origin are able to find housing and employment in Turkey. However, due to the high cost of living and lack of affordable housing, many say they have had to settle for cramped and derelict apartments. Moreover, most say that the work they are able to find is usually informal, leaving many vulnerable to exploitation through low wages and long hours. Language barriers and a lack of documentation are obstacles to finding more stable and better paid formal work.

### Strong feelings of safety and acceptance from Turkish people

Most respondents say they feel safe. Those who feel unsafe cite instances of verbal and physical assault, theft, and racism or discrimination. Though most feel accepted by the local population, tensions are considered to be on the rise as locals consider refugees and other foreigners to be a burden on Turkey's economy, making an already competitive housing market even tighter.