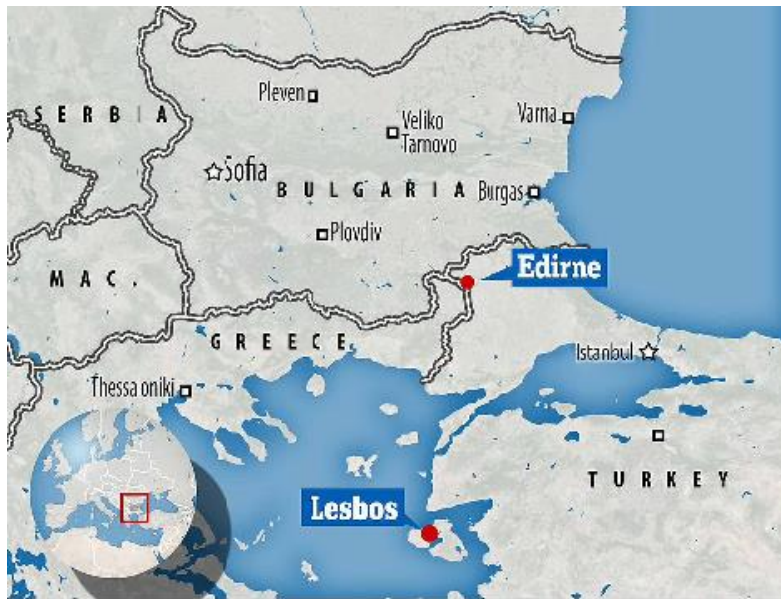


## EDİRNE - PAZARKULE SITUATION REPORT

<b>Location</b>	<b>Edirne, Pazarkule Border Gate Area, Turkey</b>
<b>Date / Report date</b>	28 February 2020 / 01 March 2020
<b>STL Contact details</b>	<b>Volkan Pirinççi</b> , Operations Coordinator, vpirincci@hayatadestek.org <b>Pınar Emine Gökğün</b> , Program Development and Quality Coordinator, pgokgun@hayatadestek.org <b>Mahmut Can İsal</b> , Legal Sector Manager, misal@hayatadestek.org

### 1. Overview



34 Turkish soldiers were killed and more than 30 were wounded in Syria's Idlib province on Thursday night in an aerial attack by Russian-backed Syrian regime forces. Same night, a security summit chaired by the Turkish president held in the presidential complex in Ankara and Turkey's communications director Fahrettin Altun said "The migrants were now also Europe and the world's problem". He said "Turkey had "no choice" but to relax border controls because it had not received enough support in hosting about 3.7 million Syrian refugees."

Turkish police, coastguard and border guards were ordered to stand down. Thousands of refugees in Turkey began arriving at the country's borders with Greece and Bulgaria on Friday after Ankara suddenly indicated it would no longer block their passage to Europe.

President Erdogan said on Saturday Feb 29<sup>th</sup> that Turkey would not stand in the way of refugees and migrants already in the country who hope to head to Europe. "We will not close the gate to refugees," he said. "The European Union has to keep its promises. We are not obliged to look after and feed so many refugees." Turkish Interior Minister said on Sunday morning that "the number of refugees left Turkey over Edirne province is 76.358 as of today."

Population data figures are as follows:

	<b>Figures</b>	<b>Source of information</b>
# of refugees at the border	At least 13.000	By the statement of <u>IOM</u>
# of refugees waiting in Pazarkule Border Gate	4.000	STL Observation, Estimation by <u>DGMM</u> and <u>UNHCR</u>
# of refugees crossed the border illegally	76.358	By the statement of <u>Turkish Minister of Interior</u>

Majority of the refugees are Iranians or Afghans followed by Syrians. Among the other refugees from Sudan, Somalia, (possibly other African countries) and Pakistan have been observed.

### 2. STL's Assessment in the Area

A rapid assessment team of STL has moved to Edirne on Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup>. STL team has observed

Pazarkule border Gate area, talked with humanitarian actors and interviewed refugees

### 3. Humanitarian Needs and Gaps by Sector

#### 3.1. Shelter and Non-Food Items



People spend the night outside. Only few families have been observed with camping tents or makeshift shelters made by the tarpaulins taken out from banners by the road side. People sleep on the ground without any insulation materials underneath.

No actor has mentioned any planned shelter support in the pipeline.

People mostly reported the need of blankets. Some families have only one or two blankets while some has none. The need for tarpaulins and mattresses has been observed by assessment team.

Mothers also mentioned the need for diapers for children.

ASAM reported that 1,500 blankets will be provide by UNICEF. Mavi Kalem Association has also reported that they are planning to distribute 1,000 blankets within two days.

#### 3.2. Food Aid

People reported the urgent need for food and drinking water. They mentioned that Kızılay has distributed soup. DGMM has also mentioned that they have distributed some ready to eat food boxes. However, people reported that the food support provided was not sufficient, some people could not receive food and they have been hungry at the time of assessment.

People also mentioned the need for baby formula and milk. Some mothers reported that due to insufficient food they consume and cold weather conditions they are having difficulties to breastfeed their babies.

ASAM, in cooperation with UNHCR was preparing for the distribution of 1,600 food package by the time of assessment.

UNHCR mentioned that 3,000 lunchboxes are planned to arrive today, 7,000 more will arrive by Tuesday and 10.000 more by Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup>.

Increasing number of people are being expected to reach the border area and actors are concerned that the food packages in pipeline will not be sufficient.

No baby formula or milk distribution has been observed and none of the actors mentioned any distribution plan so far.

Some locals sell bread and bagels to refugees with at least double price.

### **3.3. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)**

Clean water for drinking and hygiene practices is a priority need. No water taps have been observed in the area. Some people sell bottled water with very high price. Insufficient amount of bottled water was also distributed during the food distribution.

Sanitation conditions have been observed very poor. There are only two mobile toilet facility without handwashing units. There were at least 100 people waiting in the queue at the time of assessment. Open defecation is observed in the area. People mention that the smell gets worse. Waste management has also been a problem in the area.

ASAM reported that UNICEF will provide 4,500 bottled water, 3,000 packages of baby diapers, 1,000 package of wet wipes and 500 soap.

### **3.4. Protection**

People have risk of losing their lives by drowning, cold weather or getting shot by tear gas or other means of ammunition during pushback.

If people manage to cross the border, they have risk of losing their refugee IDs along with their rights in Turkey, in case they are sent back to Turkey. People also have risk of administrative detention, jail time in Greece and deportation to their country of origin.

Tension between different migrant groups with different country of origin was also reported by the people interviewed.

### **3.5. Health, Nutrition and Psychological Support**

Some injured people with bandages has been observed. It is reported that they were hit by the gas capsules shot by Greek forces during pushback. People mentioned that one person has a serious injury and taken to hospital in Edirne center.

Some mothers reported that their children have fever due to cold weather and they do not have any medicine or access to any doctor.

## **4. Coordination**

UNHCR, ASAM (SGDD) and Mavi Kalem are the humanitarian actors in the field. Deputy Governor Yusuf Güzel and PDMM Manager Musa Aşılıoğlu are in charge of coordination. UNHCR İstanbul Head of Office is present in the field.

## **5. Safety and Security**

There are many check points of police and military police. The assessment team has been stopped in each check point and given access to area as a humanitarian organization. Access need to be followed closely.

It has been observed that sometimes there are rumors that Greece opens the border and people immediately rush to border gate. There is risk of injury for refugees and responders in these cases. There is also risk of exposure to tear gas.

One of the major risks for responders is poor hygiene conditions. Lack of masks observed in the area.

Some small theft cases during the night have been reported by refugees.

## 6. Photographs from the Area

