



Foundation

United Work



ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE TURKEY OFFICE OF THE STICHTING UNITED WORK FOR 2021





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On 12nd March 2021, The Stichting United Work Turkey Office started its operations as a foreign civil society organization permitted to operate in Turkey with the license that was initially approved to be valid for 1 year by the Directorate General for Relations with Civil Society under the Ministry of Interior.

The founding purpose of the Stichting United Work, as stated in its by-laws and operating permission given by the ministry of interior, is to enable the vulnerable refugees who had been affected by the internal war in their country to get access to employment in cooperation with the respective parties in Turkey. Clearing the way for the refugees to find jobs in order to be financially independent and, ensuring their contribution to the economy of Turkey, providing employment preparation training programs to the refugees to increase their employable skills to be offered for the Turkish employers, and supplying support in response to any demand requested by the Republic of Turkey as in line with the organizational capacity of the Stichting United Work. By this purpose, the cities to conduct activities were determined to be İstanbul, Ankara, Bursa, İzmir, Konya, Kayseri, Gaziantep, Adana, Mersin, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş.

On the date of the permission issued, in March 2021, the operating office of the Stichting United Work was located in Fulya/ İstanbul. As of the end of March 2021, SUW moved its operations to the address of "Merkez Mahallesi Geçit Sokak Norm İş Merkezi No:6 Kat:2 Mecidiyeköy / Şişli / İstanbul" where is still its current operating location. In line with this purpose, various donors both domestic and international had been contacted, projects had been designed and several project ideas had been developed and offered on the topics of formal employment by targeting Syrian refugees and Turkish citizens.

In the labor market where refugees' informal participation in employment is observed, the projects that SUW purposed to implement which aim to strengthen the social cohesion between the guest and host communities while enabling employees to work in decent jobs under equal conditions, had been well considered, as a result of that three implementing agreements had been signed. Additionally, three more donors agreed to undertake a partnership for next year.

In the scope of these projects, Suw presented the refugee job seekers to the Turkish employers that desire to hire Syrian refugees for the positions which can not be filled with the Turkish job seekers and provided assistance to the employers during the work permit application processes carried out for the hired refugees.

On 1st of October, Suw started for the implementation of its first two projects at the same time and make the first hirings to be assigned in those.

Projects:

Fair Wear Foundation



In accordance with the agreement signed with the Fair Wear Foundation Global Services B.V. (Holland) (FWF), starting from September-2021 a call center service had been activated to lend 7/24 information support, in both Turkish and Arabic languages, in the context of the practices of Turkish Labour Laws, aimed to be benefitted by the refugee and local employees of the Turkish suppliers of the International Ready-to-Wear Clothing Brands. The call center service is provided to the beneficiaries free of charge. The overall costs that consist of the personnel cost and phone bills are covered by the FWF.

From September-2021 to 31st December-2021

Language of the Support Provided	Number of the Companies	Number of the Beneficiaries
Turkish	4	5
Arabic	1	1

The project contract is indefinite and will be valid after the end of 2021.

Danish Refugee Council



On the 1st of October, a grant agreement had been signed with the **Danish Refugee Council (DRC)** to take part in the implementation of the Bridges III project funded by the KFW and aims to increase the labor participation rates of specifically both Syrian and Turkish women.

In the context of the project, the aim is to make job placements of 500 employees in the workplaces located in Istanbul in line with the employers' requirements and provide assistance to the company representatives in the process of making work permit applications. In line with the program target and by the aim of promoting especially women employment of both guest and host community members, the allocated fund assures making reimbursement of the expenses of the work permit fees and 2 months salaries for Syrian women, 2 months salaries of Turkish women, and work permit fees of 100 Syrian men by getting the operational support of SUW.

The candidates who can perform best for the job and need it at most are selected through a customized needs assessment and presented to the employers in the form of a preliminary shortlist. On one hand, it is forbidden to charge applicant job seekers accordingly to the concerning laws, on the other hand, a program is implemented in which there is no fee taken from employers and covers part of the employment expenses as a public interest.

As the project targets to support sustainable employment, employees are considered in the condition of having at least 40 working days. In 2021, to meet the targets of the project, many companies had been visited, and it has been agreed to work with 37 out of all. As seen below, 151 employees had been placed in 26 out of that 37 companies to start to work. (14 out of 151 have been excluded as they had left the jobs without completing the 40 working days),

The targets and achieved figures as the date of 31.12.2021 is as seen below.

Employment Project	Targets	Job Placement	%
SUTP- Male	300	57	%19
SUTP- Female	50	27	%54
Turkish- Female	150	53	%35,3
Total	500	137	%27,4
Dropout's (leaving jobs without completing 40 working days)	-	14	
Grand Total	-	151	

SUTP* Syrian Under Temporary Protection

The project end date is 30.09.2022 and expected to be extended in 2023.



Primark

PRIMARK®

As known, **Primark ABF Investments** plc is a fast-fashion retailer that owns many stores in several countries worldwide. On **09.12.2021** a project implementation has been started that aims to support the textile and accessories suppliers of Primark in Turkey, in the process of hiring and training Syrians Under Temporary Protection (SUTPs) to be employed, the employers are also provided support in the process of work permit applications of the refugees. This is a pilot project with a one year duration and will be extended to the next years if it can be completed efficiently. Workplace visits have been started to the suppliers of Primark especially located

in İstanbul. The refugees who work in those locations have been provided online and on-site training programs on the topics of Turkish labor law, Turkish business culture, Cv writing, and interview techniques. Twenty-five job placement requests, 4 out of all to be selected among women, have been taken from 3 companies that could not fill their vacancies by the supply of local workforce, suitable candidates are being searched to fill the vacancies as requested. In line with the target of project, it is planned that 75 refugees will be placed jobs in supplier companies of Primark and provided job orientation training courses, employers of those will be assisted in the process of work permit applications.

Esra Bengisu Şamlı Böke

Esra Bengisu Şamlı Böke is a 27-year old Turkish mother. She lives in Istanbul and she has a two-year-old son.

Bengisu has a diploma in Tourism Management. She has been actively working in the tourism industry since she started university. “Many people study at universities but cannot work in their fields,” she said. “I was lucky to continue to work in the sector I wanted.”

Like many other sectors, experience is essential in tourism. Bengisu worked hard to improve her skills in the field she loved before graduation in addition to the compulsory internship period. “Schools provide you with language and technical knowledge that you can use in your career,” she says. “Whether you are a high school graduate or a university graduate, it is an industry entirely based on experience.”

Bengisu, who went on maternity leave when the pandemic reached Turkey, never thought of turning to another sector for work after returning from her leave. When she started searching for a job again, she looked for jobs with weekend holidays and regular working hours to be with her child, but it was not easy in her field where

people are requested to work on weekends and holidays. “Another problem in the business world is the negative perception of women and mothers,” Bengisu explained. “I stopped working for two years,” she said. “When I came back to work I was anxious about the potential negative perception because of not working in the past two years. Men do not have to worry about those issues as they can take their backpacks and go abroad because no one would judge them. Meanwhile, women can be subject to employers’ negative judgment because they will ask them whether they will leave their work again to take care of their children.”

Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through KfW-German Development Bank, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and United Work facilitates job placement of refugees and host community members in Istanbul. The project aims to improve the beneficiaries’ access to formal job opportunities through identifying their skills and interests, matching them with relevant vacancies, paying the work permit fees for refugees, and subsidizing the salaries of female beneficiaries for the first two months to incentivize employers to hire more women. “United Work has helped me a lot to find a suitable job for me as a mother,” Bengisu said. She is currently working as a Reservation supervisor at Rotana Hotel.




Bengisu

WELCOME

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“I am satisfied with my current job,” she said. “It has been two months and I can see myself stable in this job for a long time. I think the references provided to my employer had a crucial role in my recruitment since the tourism industry is newly recovering after the pandemic recession.”

There are still more people from the host and refugee communities like Bengisu who are struggling to find ways to integrate in the labor market. United Work and DRC are working together to increase access to sustainable sources of income for people affected by the displacement and contribute to their economic resilience. .

Financial Figures of the Stichting United Work for the year of 2021:


In addition to these ongoing projects, negotiations have been started on new project ideas with potential partners such as Stichting Spark, Qatar Charity and, The International Labour Organization Office for Turkey and, proposals have been sent for the projects to be implemented in 2022.

On the other hand, in order to continue the operations as planned in 2022, the renewal application of the permission of a foreign civil society organization to operate in Turkey, which will be expired on 12.03.2022, had been made to the Directorate General for Relations with Civil Society under the Ministry of Interior along with the relevant department of the Istanbul Governorship.

From 12.03.2021 to 01.10.2021, there was not any financial activity due to the spent time on founding, searching for project funds, and other operational tasks. However, starting from 01.10.2021 the financial resources allocated by project partners had been received and, project activities had been started.

The Operating Account of Stichting United Work for the Year of 2021 is as seen below.

EXPENSE ACCOUNT		INCOME ACCOUNT	
Debt Balance Carried Forward	0,00	Income Carried Forward	0,00
General Expenses	72.666,82	Incomes of Donation and Aids	2.251.233,28
Personnel Expenses	644.297,90	a- Incomes of Membership Fees	0,00
Total of Purpose and Service Expenses	0,00	b- Domestic Donation and Aids	481,00
a- Training and Research	0,00	c- Oversea Donation and Aids	2.250.752,28
b- Social Services	0,00	d- Other Donation and Aids	0,00
c- Other	0,00	Financial Gains	675.810,13
Other Expenses	0,00	a- Foreign exchange incomes	675.810,13
		b- Social Security Institution Incentives	24.952,01
		- Premium Reductions Law no 5510	24.259,51
		- Social Security Premium Reduction in Minimum Wages	692,50
		c- Other Incomes	14,40
Cash on Hand	0,23	Taxes and Social Security Premium Payables	95.283,80
Existing Bank Account	2.324.217,67		
Receivables	6.111,00		
GRAND TOTAL	3.047.293,62	GRAND TOTAL	3.047.293,62



As the project implementations that had been started in 2021 and will be continuing in 2022, the allocated budgets had been transferred and recorded in the expense account for the next year.

As a non-profit civil society organization, in line with the by-laws and mission of the Stichting United Work Turkey Office, to maintain the operations in benefit for the formal employment of the members of Turkish society and refugee communities and to offer its services to the thousands of job seekers and employers who care to benefit, for the Stichting United Work it is a key fact that to be supported by more projects and keep being permitted to operate in Turkey.

I hereby certify that the information provided in the present Annual Activity Report is accurate, reliable and, complete to the best of my knowledge.

Enis KÖSEM

Stichting United Work

Representative of the Turkey Office

Salam Nabulsi

Salam Nabulsi is a 30-year-old refugee from Daraa, Syria. She is a very energetic and positive person and speaks fluent Turkish. She met her husband while studying geology at Damascus University and got married. She fled Syria in 2016 before she was able to graduate from the university.

During her journey from Syria to Turkey, they had their newborn child. Afterwards, they arrived in Sanliurfa, Turkey, and started their new life there. “We had to start from zero,” she says. Job opportunities in Sanliurfa were limited, so they decided to move to Istanbul. Soon, her husband found a job as a restaurant chef and she worked with him as an assistant. “We didn’t have any family members here to help us, yet we tried to manage our life,” Salam says. After having another child, she could not continue working in the restaurant due to the long hours required there.

Most Syrian women face challenges while trying to find decent job opportunities and taking care of their kids at the same time. Salam thought of working as a teacher since it does not require long hours. Despite her previous teaching experience in Syria, she could not find any jobs. She could

only tutor children in her neighborhood which provided an unstable income. Meanwhile, her husband faced many challenges in different workplaces, such as not receiving his salary or being compensated for less than initially agreed on.

With funding from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through KFW-German Development Bank and in cooperation with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), United Work conducts job placement by matching employers and job-seekers. The project helps people from refugee and host communities to find jobs and provides support in obtaining work permits for refugees so all people of concern can equally access opportunities in the job market.

“We heard that United Work helps Syrians under Temporary Protection match with employers, so we sent our resumes to United Work. They called me for this job in less than a month since I am skilled and have two kids,” she said.

After an interview with a store manager, she was selected to be a sales representative at a store in Sabiha Gökçen Airport. “I like this job a lot because of the shorter working hours and flexible work conditions. I can take





care of my children,” she said. “I like that I have a work permit and social security insurance. They would protect my rights as an employee.”

“ The project was a great opportunity for us,” she says, “To sign up for the program, you just need to contact United Work and explain your skills and qualifications during the application process. They try to find you the job that best fits your experience and skills. I totally recommend everyone to contact United Work and sign up so they can find decent jobs.”

Salam feels happy and stable, but she is not going to be the last beneficiary as there are still many skilled Syrian and Turkish people who face challenges in getting formal jobs.





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