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## Caritas Turkey: ghost towns and displaced persons are the new emergency

"Villages have already turned into ghost towns. Residents are abandoning the worst affected areas. We are coordinating efforts with the dioceses of Istanbul and Izmir to provide shelter to the displaced." This is the 'new face' of the earthquake emergency: people fleeing cold temperatures and rubble, in search of a safe shelter. **Giulia Longo**, Caritas Turkey's national coordinator for the earthquake emergency, reports on the situation to SIR. Born in Italy, she was living in Gaziantep before the earthquake. Her house was destroyed by the quake. She is now in Istanbul coordinating Caritas emergency aid for all the affected regions.

"Many of us have lost their homes, their friends, their beneficiaries, their projects".

"Our job right now is to coordinate efforts with the Caritas confederation as a whole and get technical assistance from an emergency group that includes two workers from Caritas Italy." Arranging an appointment with Giulia is not easy. She's busy answering the phone and attending "emergency meetings", she says, apologising. Caritas workers are coordinating the logistics from Istanbul together with the rescue team. "Their job is to identify safe and secure routes for the delivery of emergency aids," Giulia explains. "We also started visiting the affected sites to see what can be done with the support of local staff," she adds. After the first emergency, the coming hours will be important in terms of relief efforts.





"We are aware that major emergencies such as this, on such precarious and insecure borders, cause situations of illegal trafficking that are even worse than illicit adoptions. This applies to both children and women. We are concerned and we are helpless because ours is a small organisation and we have no power."

