

ISSUE 20: DECEMBER 2021

EMERGENCY SOCIAL SAFETY NET (ESSN)

Thanks to European Union funding and a partnership between the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the Turkish Red Crescent Society (TRC), 1.5 million refugees living in Turkey are receiving humanitarian support through monthly cash assistance.

December snapshots



1,537,510 individuals
reached with cash assistance



238,314,050 TRY
transferred to 247,755 households



5,919,937,270 TRY
transferred since April 2020

Highlights

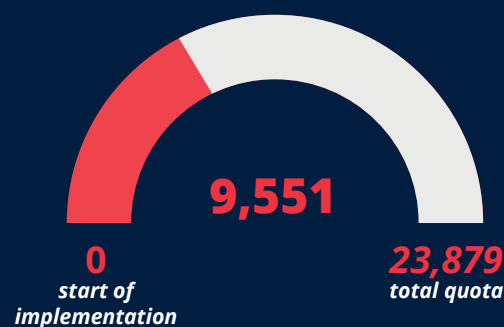
Key achievements from 2021

While IFRC and TRC collaboration uninterruptedly assisted its target population to cover their basic needs smoothly during 2021, three outcomes have come into prominence as part of this collaboration's efforts; our decision making has become more data and community-driven, we have continued build and sustain strong relations despite COVID-related restrictions, and the groundwork for transition to livelihood opportunities has been set. For more detailed information, please refer to page four.

Sweepbacks: In December, 871,879.99 TRY in total was swept back in total, 252,105.00 TRY being swept back from 230 uncollected cards and 619,774.99 TRY from 783 dormant accounts). The total amount of funds swept back since April 2020 is 19,486,083.94 TRY.

SASF ALLOWANCE

In December 2021, 9,551 households 38,159 individuals received ESSN assistance via the SASF allowance across Turkey. The SASF allowance continues to play an integral role in minimizing exclusion errors and including vulnerable households into the ESSN.



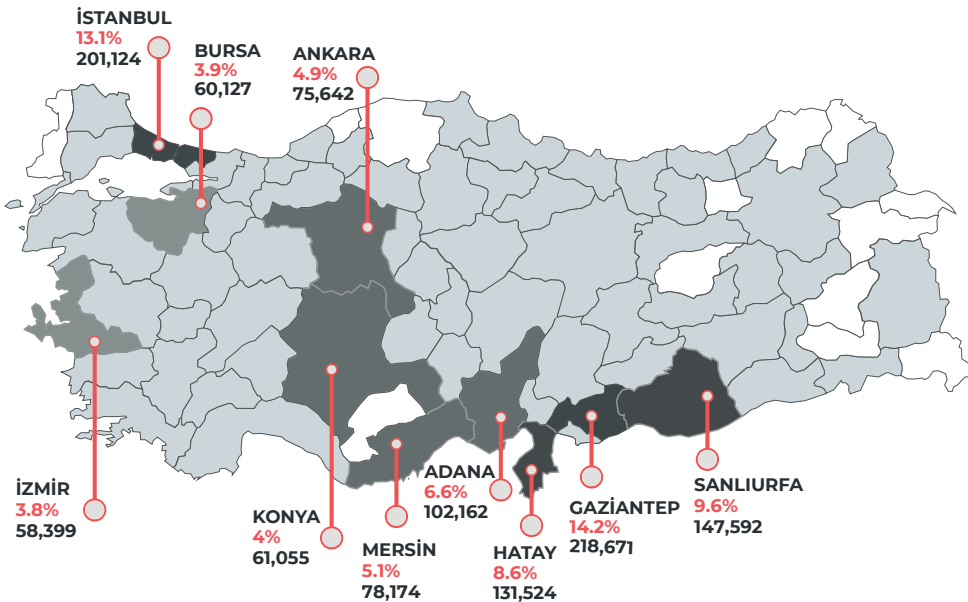
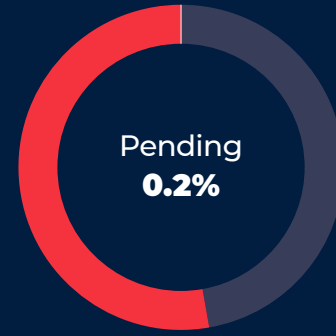
Funded by
the European Union



ESSN APPLICATIONS

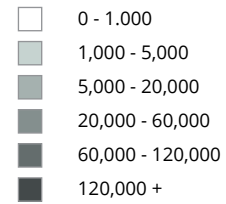
- In December 2021, a total of 3,285 household applications were received by the SASF offices and TRC Service Centres.
- Of all these applications, 62.9 per cent were received by TRC Service Centres and 37.1 per cent at SASF offices.
- The total number of household applications received since the beginning of the ESSN III Programme is 640,076 with 36.3 per cent of the total application having been received by the TRC Service Centres.

Eligible
52.7%



Province breakdown of ESSN recipients

Number of individuals



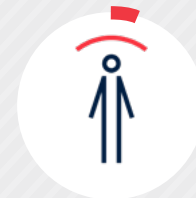
CRITERIA BREAKDOWN ¹



56.2 %
households with four or more children



35.2%
households with high dependency ratio (≥1.5)



4.8%
single female

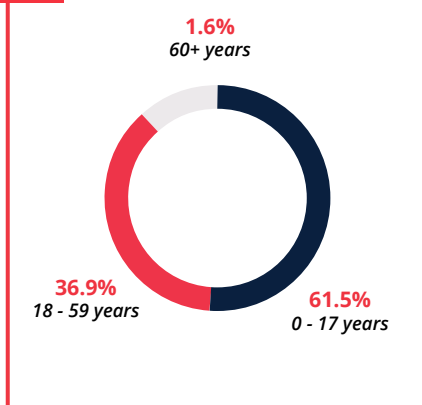
***3.8%** of households (9,551 HHs) receive ESSN assistance within the scope of the SASF allowance.

¹ 139,172 households with four or more children; 87,238 households with a dependency ratio equal to or above 1.5; 11,794 single females.



IN NUMBERS: DEMOGRAPHICS OF PEOPLE WE SERVE

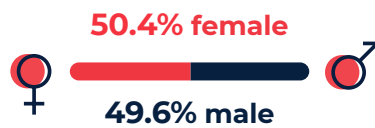
Age



Age breakdown of ESSN recipients:

- 0 - 17 years:** 946,151
- 18 - 59 years:** 567,269
- 60+ years:** 24,090

Gender



Gender breakdown of ESSN recipients:

- Female:** 774,458
- Male:** 763,052

Nationality

| | |
|--------|-----------|
| Syrian | 1,399,027 |
| Iraqi | 74,816 |
| Afghan | 56,275 |
| Others | 7,392 |

Among the 'others' category are Iranian, Somali, Pakistani, Chinese, Palestinian and other nationals.



2021: CELEBRATING OUR SUCCESSES TOGETHER

Enhancing data and community-driven decision making:

Throughout 2021, IFRC and TRC teams adopted multidimensional approaches to better understand the ongoing context, needs and realities for those receiving the ESSN and those applying for the assistance through several field visits, remote focus group discussions, satisfaction surveys, meetings with advisory committee, post distribution monitoring surveys, feedback received through programme's official communication channels and the Intersectoral Vulnerability Survey. Teams have helped address challenges faced by people receiving the ESSN assistance through eligible data analysis, addressing removal, sweepbacks and household composition changes. This prioritization of data and the harmony among the teams have allowed for IFRC and TRC to make critical changes in the programme, including targeting, increasing the transfer value and minimum expenditure basket calculations, and in general, effective implementation of the ESSN programme in coherence with the C-ESSN programme. In this way, improvement of the programme through involvement of communities in different stages have been ensured.

Building stronger relationships despite COVID-19:

Restrictions and challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic brought about an environment where many planned activities have been suspended. However, TRC and IFRC teams continued to row against the tide, maintaining supports to vulnerable people receiving ESSN with necessary precautions. Remote and online modalities were adapted for focus group discussions, community engagement, SASF workshops, and meetings with relevant stakeholders of the ESSN. Field teams continued to conduct visits to local authorities and regional stakeholders to sensitize and raise awareness about the programme, and alternative referral pathways were explored. In particular, high level field monitoring missions were held in Istanbul and Gaziantep regions where stakeholders were visited. Also, through high level courtesy visits carried out by senior management of TRC and IFRC, stakeholders and policy makers including the President of the Republic of Turkey and the Minister of Family and Social Services were contacted, and humanitarian issues and the future of the ESSN and migration issues were discussed.

While high level monitoring missions and courtesy visits helped IFRC to increase its recognition among stakeholders and bureaucratic actors, thus IFRC and TRC field teams visits to district governors helped to remove some of access barriers within the ESSN programme. Since the local authorities are in charge of the Board of Trustees which is the main body to decide on the SASF allowance quota usage, such sensitization visits can help the usage of quota allocated to their districts, and provision of assistance to vulnerable refugees who have not been accepted to the ESSN programme because of the demographic criteria.

Setting the groundwork for transition to livelihood referrals

Due to the protracted nature of the crises, the ESSN is currently moving towards a nexus approach supporting individuals to transition from humanitarian assistance to sustainable livelihood opportunities. An internal livelihood referral mechanism was gradually established in collaboration with the TRC CBMP Community Centers as of April 2021 to enable individuals with the potential to work to transition to sustainable livelihood opportunities supporting self-reliance as well as harmonization within the society. Moreover, IFRC and TRC are working towards exploring external referral pathways in addition to the current mechanism to enable more household to become self-reliant thus more resilient. IFRC and TRC have also actively participated in the 3RP Task Team on Referral and Transition to Livelihood Opportunities, with TRC as the co-chair and IFRC providing technical support. This active participation in the TT not only allowed understanding common approaches in the sector but also helped in driving the discussions for the way forward for establishing robust inter-sectoral referral pathways including ESSN recipients. Moreover, it is planned to carry out further livelihood pathways studies to be conducted by experts in the field, contributing to enhancement of transition to livelihoods through surveys and FGDs with the affected population. Further Livelihood Pathways Studies conducted by experts in the field with contribute to enhance transition to livelihoods.

PROGRAMMATIC HIGHLIGHTS

Monitoring and shared Evaluation:

Applicant households (both eligible and ineligible) were monitored proactively through various perspectives and methods, ranging from card distribution monitoring to remote focus group discussions (rFGDs). Conducted through 2021, PDM11 and PDM12 reports have been published. PDM13 data collection cycle has been done and reporting phase is at hand. The sample for PDM14 has been selected and data collection cycle is in place. For PDM14, a new indicator has been added with sets of questions with regard to food security. Near the end of 2021, IVS-2 workshop was completed; survey was updated in accordance with the programme future planning. Evidence-based decisions will be made over IVS-2, especially on the livelihoods and vulnerability pillars.

Referral and Outreach:

One of the key achievements of 2021 was the commencement of the first systemic livelihood referrals to the Community Centres through internal referral mechanism established between TRC, CBMP and ESSN.

In addition, launch of the C-ESSN programme took place in the second half of the year as a major change to the ESSN. Local authorities were sensitized about this development.

TRC co-chaired the Transition to Livelihoods Task Team, with UNDP and technical support from IFRC to coordinate inter-sectoral referral discussions and support the decision making of relevant sectoral actors in terms of livelihoods project design.

Throughout the year, regular outbound calls were carried out to identify applicants who have not collected their cards and are in sweepback process. This has allowed to support recipients that are not able to collect their cards due to disability to make better use of assistance.

As of April, start of the new term of ESSN programme, field teams were provided with basic level protection trainings which were designed to support the identification capacity of the field staff to better identify the protection risks and address them accordingly.

Accountability to Affected Populations:

Various factors ranging from the pandemic constitute impediments in service provision. As part of efforts to prioritize shock-responsiveness, TRC 168 call centre remained intensely active during the year by providing information, referring members of applicant households to relevant mechanisms.

To inform eligible households regarding criteria changes occurred with the launch of the C-ESSN programme, 83,576 SMSes were sent to the recipients for update. In addition, in December, 15,810 calls were received and recorded through toll-free TRC 168 Call Centre; 46.83 per cent from female, 53.16 per cent from male callers. All questions submitted through Facebook (61 queries), and more than 165 questions asked through the website were responded timely. A total of 285,856 SMSes were sent out to recipients.

In 2021, ad hoc SMSes were sent to all ESSN target group to raise their awareness about ESSN-related services such as registration, address change, household member update, ID renewal and issuing ID transactions being free of charge. Applicants were informed that if they are asked to pay for such services, they should report the situation through the ESSN official communication channels.

Also, ESSN recipients were informed about the increased payment amount through SMSes. In this regard, 322,000 SMSes have been sent. In addition to SMSes, updated payment amount has been communicated through Facebook posts and the programme web site.

The “storytelling project”, launched as pilot scheme in August 2021, currently supports ten recipient Syrians living in Turkey that are relatable yet inspiring in different ways, and that want to share their own perspectives. IFRC and TRC, with the support of EU, are providing them with the tools, resources and knowledge to be able to take control and share their stories in their own ways. In addition, the first step of #PowerToBe campaign, which showcases how cash assistance helps refugees in Turkey regain control of their lives, and how connecting through shared passions brings people together was initiated in 2021.

Coordination:

Despite the impacts of COVID-19, coordination unit participated in all sectoral meetings including BNWG meetings and education sector group meeting. During 2021, the ESSN taskforce meetings were conducted on its scheduled dates. The majority of 3RP coordination meetings were performed at the end of November; however, in December, the Coordination unit participated in the winterization task force meeting co-chaired by IOM- UNHCR with the aim in mind to find out a solution for those people suffering in winter. In addition, other interagency coordination meetings