



ISSUE 22: FEBRUARY 2022

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.

February snapshots



1,498,315 individuals
reached with cash assistance



304,771,325 TRY
transferred to 241,608 households



6.461.780.320 TRY
transferred since April 2020

Highlights

ESSN steering committee meeting back on track

The achievements of the ESSN Programme in 2021 were presented after one and half year at the 11th ESSN Steering Committee Meeting. Among other subjects, the solid collaboration between TRC and IFRC, announcement of the future regarding the programme, links with the C-ESSN Programme were highlighted, with an emphasis on the reliable cooperation between stakeholders.

New round of post-distribution monitoring survey (PDM 13) was finalized

The latest post-distribution monitoring survey has been finalized and about to be disseminated. The study particularly focuses on the socio-economic situation of applicants to the ESSN. Please refer to page 4 for more detailed information about the study and its main findings.

Sweepbacks: In February, 646,239.48 TRY in total was swept back, 125,365 TRY being swept back from 213 uncollected cards and 520,874.48 TRY from 6,656 dormant accounts. The total amount of funds swept back since August 2020 is 20,180,920.35 TRY.



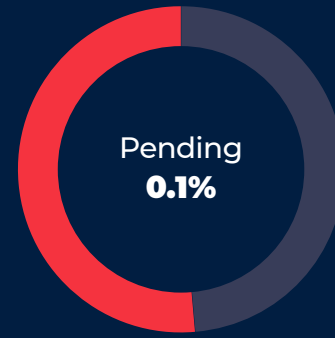
Funded by
the European Union



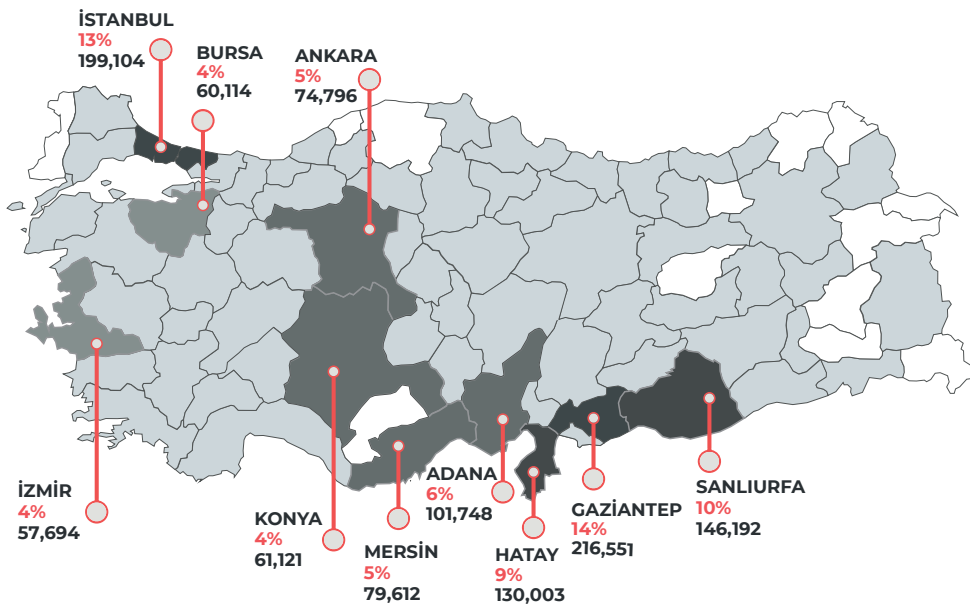
ESSN APPLICATIONS

- In February 2022, a total of **2,792** household applications were received by the SASF offices and TRC Service Centres.
- While **34.6** per cent of these applications were received by TRC Service Centres and **65.4** per cent at SASF offices.
- The total number of household applications received since the beginning of the ESSN III Programme reached **645,303** with **36.3** per cent of the total application having been received by the TRC Service Centres.

Eligible
51.4%

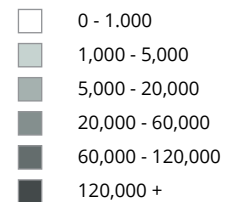


Ineligible
48.5%



Province breakdown of ESSN recipients

Number of individuals



CRITERIA BREAKDOWN ¹



56%
households with four or more children



35%
households with high dependency ratio (≥1.5)



5%
single female

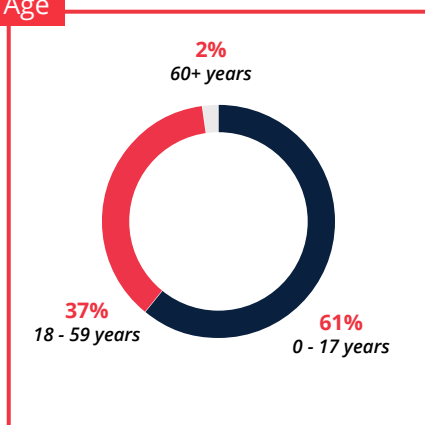
***4%** of households (9,572 HHs) receive ESSN assistance within the scope of the SASF allowance.

¹ 135,404 households with four or more children; 85,251 households with a dependency ratio equal to or above 1.5; 11,381 single females.



IN NUMBERS: DEMOGRAPHICS OF PEOPLE WE SERVE

Age



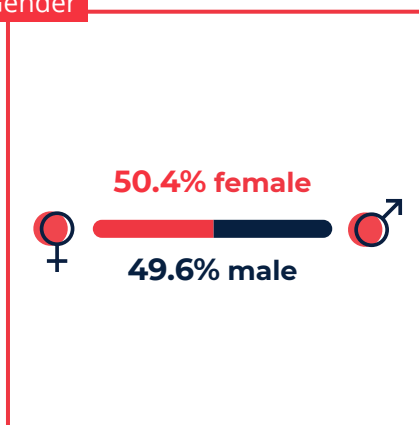
Age breakdown of ESSN recipients:

0 - 17 years: 917,251

18 - 59 years: 557,314

60+ years: 23,750

Gender

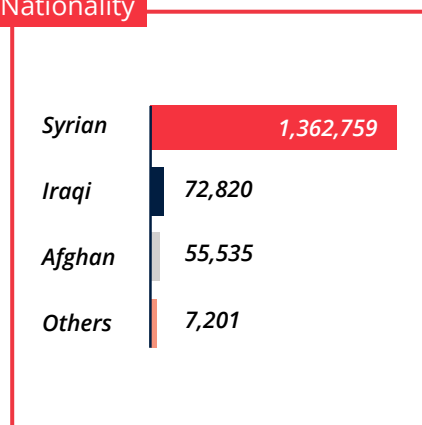


Gender breakdown of ESSN recipients:

Female: 743,256

Male: 755,059

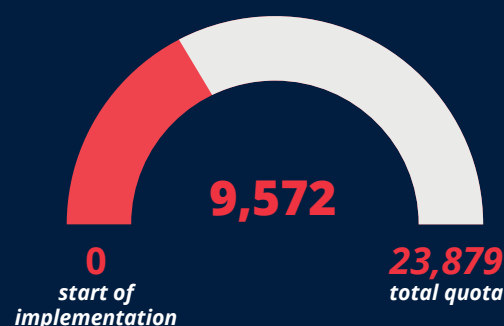
Nationality



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

SASF ALLOWANCE

In February 2022, In February 2022, 38,310 individuals from 9,572 households 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



NEW ROUND OF POST-DISTRIBUTION MONITORING SURVEY (PDM 13) WAS FINALIZED



The 13th round of the post-distribution monitoring survey (PDM 13) aims to assess the impact of the ESSN on applicant households in terms of their socio-economic situation. The study involves a comparison between recipient and non-recipient households of the ESSN, covering topics regarding level of expenditure and coping strategies that applicants have adopted to meet their basic needs. Data collection for this study took place between September and November 2021.



One of the main findings of this study is that the struggle for applicant households to meet their basic needs persists, despite having a relatively higher level of income compared with the period between November 2020 and January 2021 on which the previous round of this study was based (PDM 12). Concordantly, applicant households are shown to have adopted a series of strategies to cope with the increased cost of living coupled with an inflationary spike. These strategies usually include acquiring debt, dropping out from school, and cutting down on quantity and/or quality of food.



Debt, as the most widely adopted coping strategy, seems to have become a regular practice for most applicant households; 86 per cent of recipient and 77 per cent of non-recipient households were in debt during data collection. Findings show that applicants are mostly indebted to local shops, relatives, and friends. It was reported that the ESSN assistance continues to play a vital role in terms of enabling recipient households to pay their debts and manage their finances in general, albeit somehow inadequately.



As for nutrition, food consumption scores in approximately half of the surveyed households were below an acceptable level. Individuals from both recipient and non-recipient households reported to have resorted to reducing not only quality but also the quantity of the food they consume. Moreover, findings also show parents and other adults in a household have been forced to eat less so that minors within the household can have enough food.



In light of the findings of PDM 13, it is conspicuously clear that the negative economic developments have dragged the already-struggling refugee population further down to the point where so many individuals are unable to eat let alone making ends meet.



PROGRAMMATIC HIGHLIGHTS

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):

- In addition to PDM 13 report being almost finalized and disseminated, data collection of PDM 14 has been completed. Data cleaning and survey weight calculation are to be done next.
- Data collection for focus group discussions on livelihood has been completed and the next step is to conduct data analysis of transcripts.
- IVS 2 data collection cycle is ongoing.
- Vulnerability to poverty approach has been studied in PDM 13 dataset for targeting related topics such as calculation of inclusion and exclusion errors.

Referral and Outreach (R&O):

- In February, R&O field teams conducted 429 visits in 42 cities within the scope of raising awareness of local authorities and NGOs, as well as carrying out advocacy activities aiming to remove barriers that individuals face during ESSN application.
- Through monthly routine analyses, households which have not collected their cards for two months have been identified. Accordingly, those households were contacted through outbound calls and informed regarding the relevant process so that they can collect their cards through their respective bank branches/ service centers.
- Households that were unable to collect their cards due to physical restrictions were identified. Cards were delivered to individuals from those households through household visits conducted by the R&O teams.

Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA):

- Among the top priorities of CEA activities is dissemination of the most accurate information to the programme target group, and do it on a timely manner and through official communication channels designed to be understood easily in terms of their language options and content. Also, following up on whether the target group has reached a desired level of awareness about the programme is crucial. In this

context, a focus group discussion within the scope of CEA began. The first FGD was held in Gaziantep in February targeting Persian-speaking recipients to measure their programme-related awareness and preferred communication channels. The inputs acquired from the recipients are to be considered while designing CEA information provision contents and activities.

- In February, around 515,000 SMSes were sent to applicants informing them about their status within the programme such as eligibility, ineligibility, monthly exclusion, discrepancy, dormant account and uncollected card etc. Besides the usual monthly upload/payment SMSes, the first top-up payment SMSes of 2022 were sent out to the eligible beneficiaries. Within this scope of top-up payment, 241 thousand SMSes were sent out. In February, 2,885 eligibility and card distribution SMSes were sent out to the beneficiaries who became eligible for the ESSN programme for the first time.
- Through Facebook, 28 programme related information provision posts were published in 4 languages. Through Facebook and website, 245 questions were replied to.
- Toll-free 168 Call Center received and recorded 15,159 calls, and 98 per cent of them were closed with responses shared with callers. A total of 14,339 calls (94.5%) were received in Arabic from a total of 75 different provinces.

Coordination:

- Coordination Unit attended Aegean Basic Needs Working Group Meeting on 24 February. A total of 30 individuals from 15 different organizations participated in the meeting. TRC and IFRC continues to hold the internal meeting for updating this year's action plan; the meeting results indicate that Coordination will have eight ESSN taskforce meetings on a quarterly basis. With other actors around the globe, the unit participated in the Global Cash Forum to stand on concrete information regarding new developments. In March, Coordination will hold the first Marmara-Aegean Taskforce meeting.