

ISSUE 28: AUGUST 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), over 1.5 million refugees living in Türkiye have been receiving humanitarian support through monthly cash assistance.

August snapshots

Transfers



1,505,152 individuals
reached with cash assistance

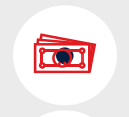


TRY 424,914,360
transferred to 249,500 households



TRY 8,336,062,210
transferred since April 2020

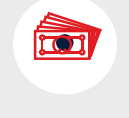
Sweepbacks



TRY 506,035.20
sweepback from 1,558 dormant
accounts



TRY 194,090
sweepback from 192 uncollected cards



TRY 25,761,927.14
total sweepbacks since April 2020

Highlights

Focus Group Discussion Series for the ESSN

As part of IFRC and TRC partnership's endeavours to investigate the livelihood and wellbeing of its target groups, FGD sessions were conducted with ESSN applicants. Main findings of this study suggest that refugees have limited access to job opportunities, with the accessible ones being irregular and precarious. Most participants refer to informal work as their last resort rather than a preference. While the most commonly mentioned jobs include textile manufacturing and construction work, social networks are observed to be the most popular way of finding employment.

Evaluative Learning Study Published

Given the current socio-economic challenges faced by refugees and the role of the ESSN in Türkiye, it is crucial to provide an in-depth understanding of refugees' income sources and the ESSN's effect on socio-economic vulnerability as well as people's capacity to cope with these challenges. Aiming to provide a detailed analysis of livelihoods and coping strategies of refugees and the link between income levels and vulnerability, an Evaluative Learning Study was conducted focusing on a comparison between the period right before and during the pandemic. [Click here](#) to access this report and refer to page four below for further information.



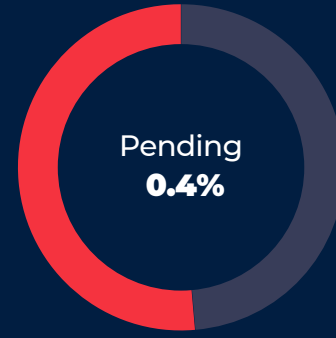
Funded by
the European Union



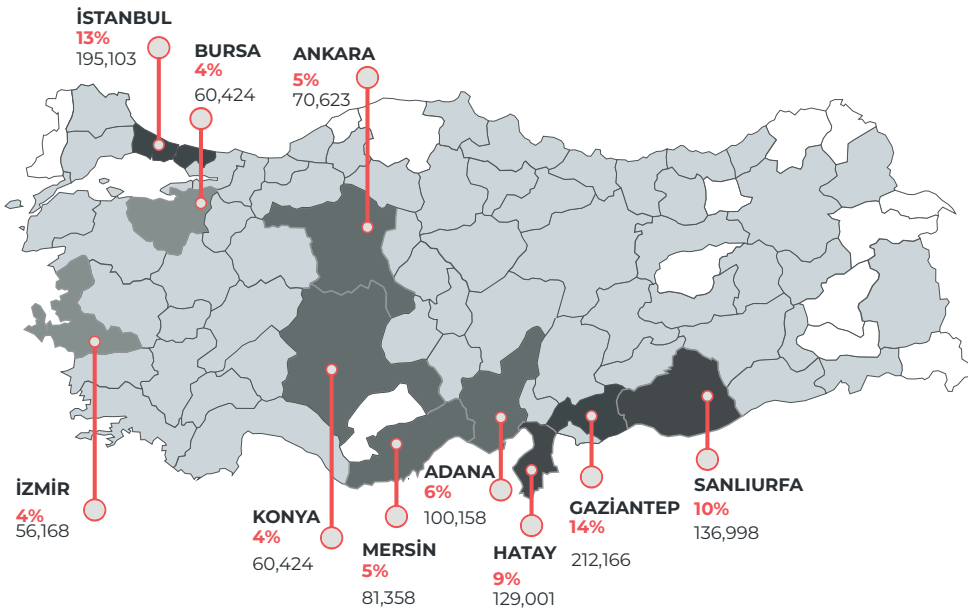
ESSN APPLICATIONS

- In August 2022, a total of 8,525 household applications were received by the SASF offices and TRC Service Centres.
- While 27.3 per cent of these applications were received by TRC Service Centres, 72.7 per cent were received by SASF offices.
- The total number of household applications received since the beginning of the ESSN III Programme reached 669,597, with 36.1 per cent of the total application having been received by TRC Service Centres.

Eligible
53%

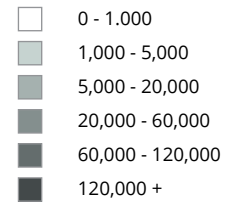


Ineligible
46.6%



Province breakdown of ESSN recipients

Number of individuals



CRITERIA BREAKDOWN



98%
households with high
gender-adjusted dependency
ratio (≥ 1.5)

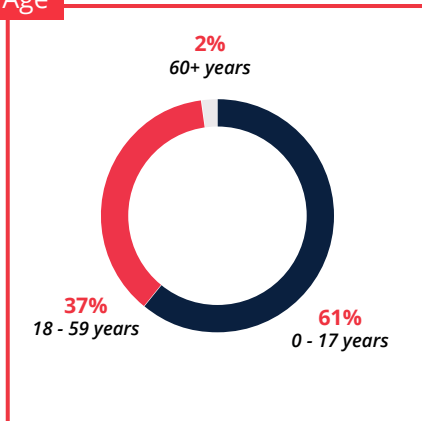


2%
5,012 households receive
the ESSN assistance within
the scope of SASF
Discretionary Allowance



IN NUMBERS: DEMOGRAPHICS OF PEOPLE WE SERVE

Age



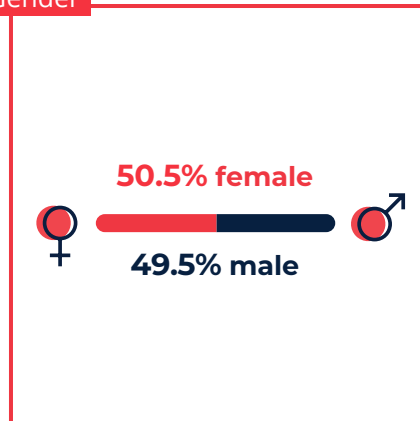
Age breakdown of ESSN recipients:

0 - 17 years: 917,899

18 - 59 years: 563,739

60+ years: 23,514

Gender

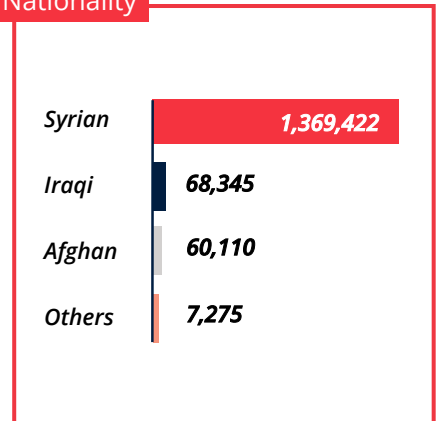


Gender breakdown of ESSN recipients:

Female: 759,859

Male: 745,293

Nationality



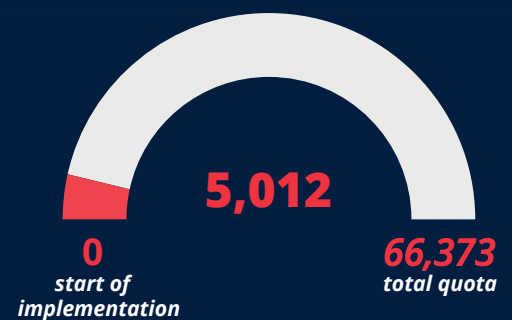
Among the 'others' category are Iranian, Somali, Pakistani, Chinese, Palestinian and other nationals.

SASF ALLOWANCE

In August 2022, 5,012 households (20,733 individuals) received ESSN assistance via the SASF discretionary allowance (SDA) across Türkiye. The SASF allowance continues to play an integral role in minimizing exclusion errors and including vulnerable households into the ESSN.

To increase the use of SASF allowance, the quota was increased from 5 per cent to 10 per cent in July.

Due to the criteria change, the ESSN's ability to target vulnerable households improved at a significant level. Therefore, many households that used to receive ESSN assistance under SASF quota are now directly covered via eligibility criteria.





EVALUATIVE LEARNING STUDY

Evaluative Learning Study is a secondary data review report utilizing the quantitative data from 7th, 8th, 10th, 11th and 12th rounds of Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) report, as well as the qualitative data collected from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), collected by IFRC and TRC partnership. In this study, not only were the quantitative and qualitative data sets utilized together, but also a comparative perspective was adopted to see the differences between livelihood conditions of ESSN applicants before and through COVID-19 pandemic. Main findings regarding this comparison are as follows:

- In terms of consumption coping index, *households with labour income as the household's main source of income had lower levels of consumption coping (12.3) in the pre-COVID and COVID periods than households whose main income is not labour (14.7 out of 35).*
- The pandemic had a diverging impact on ESSN recipients and non-recipients in terms of vulnerabilities and the use of negative coping strategies in the earlier stages of the pandemic, possibly due to ESSN's COVID top-up amounting to TRY 1,000. *By September 2020, the share of the population living in households with an acceptable food consumption score decreased significantly for non-recipients to 65.9 per cent, while it remained almost stable for recipients at 77 per cent.*
- In the later stages of the pandemic, though, ESSN recipients and non-recipients ended up with similar vulnerability levels eventually. *By January 2021, around half of the ESSN applicants were living in households with a poor or borderline (hence not acceptable) food consumption score.*
- Except for the earlier stages of the COVID pandemic, ESSN recipients and non-recipients are in fact quite similar in terms of the issues they face with regards to meeting their basic needs and their use of coping strategies. *Türkiye has been going through a record high inflation phase that started by the end of 2021 and the real value of the ESSN transfer diminished considerably following the high inflation rates.*

While the COVID pandemic has not entirely ended, COVID related negative impact on households has decreased considerably since the second half of 2021, however, now the deteriorating economic conditions and high inflation at alarming rates are further expected to increase the vulnerability of refugees, both recipients and non-recipients.

PROGRAMMATIC HIGHLIGHTS

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Upon completion of data collection for the second round of Intersectoral Vulnerability Survey (IVS-2), data analysis process was initiated. Data was collected through face-to-face interviews with 3,500 respondents. This study was conducted to measure the wellbeing of target groups and to identify households with varying levels of vulnerability.

Aiming to explore the extent to which the new eligibility criterion efficiently targeted the vulnerable households, assessment reports were prepared. Findings suggest that the targeting adjustment yields desired results. M&E field teams, on the other hand, conducted on-site monitoring activities to acquire collect feedback from SASF and PDMM offices regarding the latest ESSN eligibility criterion.

Referral and Outreach (R&O)

Aiming to provide an accurate and detailed profiling of the programme's recipients including their level of education, willingness to work and the type of work they are willing to do, R&O teams conducted a profiling survey with a selected sample of 350 recipients. This study is expected to provide contextual information regarding the post-pandemic period in Türkiye, as well as improving the programmes referral capacity. Supporting the livelihood referral mechanisms is also among the objectives of this study.

Coordination

During the reporting period, the coordination unit conducted quarterly ESSN taskforce meetings to ensure all sectors receive the latest updates about the programme. Besides, the unit participated in 3RP sectoral meetings, and conducted field activities including visits to UN agencies, I/NGOs, and other relevant actors. The ESSN taskforce meeting for Marmara-Aegean region was held on 7 September, and the SET taskforce meeting was planned to take place on 15 September.

Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA)

With an objective of providing ESSN applicants with accurate and up-to-date information, over 277,000 SMSes were sent in various categories such as important programme updates, the applicants' eligibility status, programme information channels and monthly uploads.

In August, 450 questions were received and responded to through [facebook](#) and [programme website](#), in addition to 21,015 calls being received through the 168 call centre.

Facebook posts were shared to communicate with the target groups on important topics such as the gender-adjusted selection criterion, monthly removal reasons, address change process, and application-related procedures.

ESSN IV Transition Planning

To prioritize stakeholder planning for the ESSN IV transition, initial stakeholder meetings were held with ECHO, DG NEAR, DGSA, and TRC, including meetings with field teams in Gaziantep and Istanbul. These planning discussions outlined expectations for the handover of the donor role from ECHO to DG NEAR, potential recommendations for ESSN IV that should guide the transition planning, and suggestions for joint governance for the transition process.

On the other hand, IFRC is reviewing key activities in the programme management role, in consultation with TRC and DGSA counterparts, to identify which activities may still benefit from external programme support and which new activities will be required for ESSN IV, and to categorize activities as the ones to be retained in ESSN IV and the ones to be transitioned to TRC or DGSA as part of their implementation roles and capacities.