



ISSUE 13: APRIL 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 (TRC), over 1.8 million refugees living in Turkey are receiving humanitarian support through monthly cash assistance.

April snapshots



1,827,385 individuals
reached with cash assistance



290,091,875 TRY
transferred to 323,464 households



3,662,493,775 TRY
transferred since April 2020

Highlights

First distribution of increased transfer value

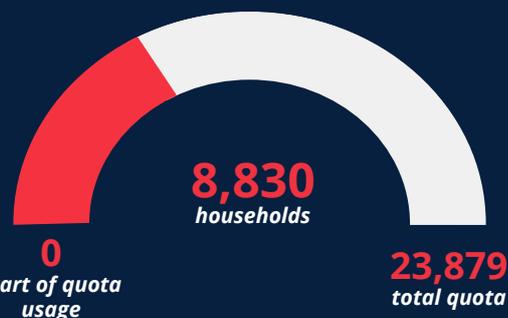
April marked the first month of the increased transfer value, aimed to help respond to the evolving needs of refugees (people living under temporary and international protection in Turkey). Each person benefiting from ESSN now receives 155 TRY, an increased amount from 120 TRY. The distribution took place on 28 April, where 290,091,875 TRY was transferred to 1,827,385 individuals in 323,464 households.

Early transfers to respond to the national lockdown

Teams quickly adapted to the announcement of the 18-day national lockdown by providing cash transfers two days earlier than planned in order to address access issues in assistance.

SASF ALLOWANCE

In April 2021, 8,830 households (35,268 individuals) received ESSN assistance via the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation (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

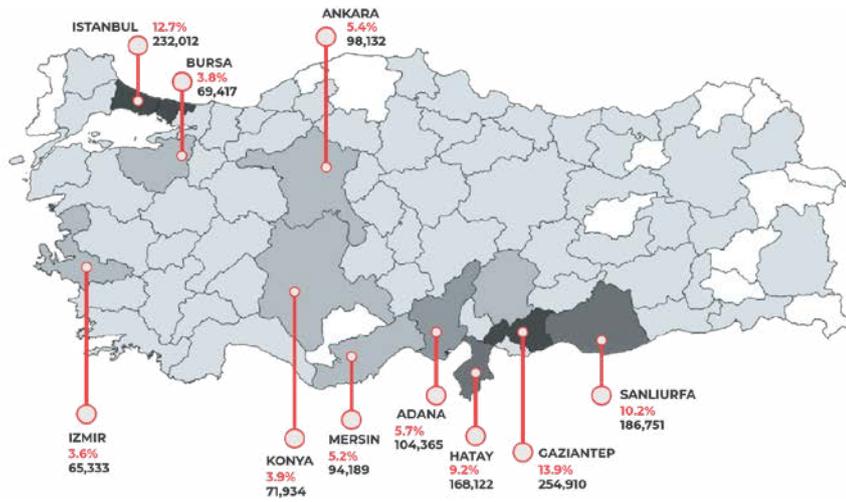
In April 2021, a total of 3,690 household applications were received by the SASF offices and TRC Service Centres. Of the total, 39.8 per cent were received by TRC Service Centres and 60.2 per cent at SASF offices.

The total number of household applications received by the TRC Service Centres and SASFs between April 2020 and April 2021 is 38,989 (14,396 having been taken solely by TRC Service Centres).

Eligible
53.2%

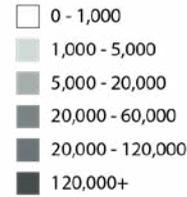


Ineligible
46.6%



Province breakdown of ESSN recipients

Number of individuals



CRITERIA BREAKDOWN ¹



41.2%
households
with four or
more children



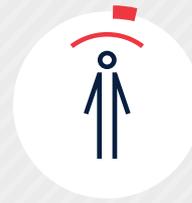
26.5%
households
with high
dependency
ratio (≥1.5)



13.7%
households
with single
caregiver and
children (<18)



9.3%
households
with one or
more individual
with a disability



3.5%
single female



3.0%
elderly people
above 60
with no other
adults in the
household

***2.7%** of households (8,830 HHs) receive ESSN assistance within the scope of the SASF allowance.

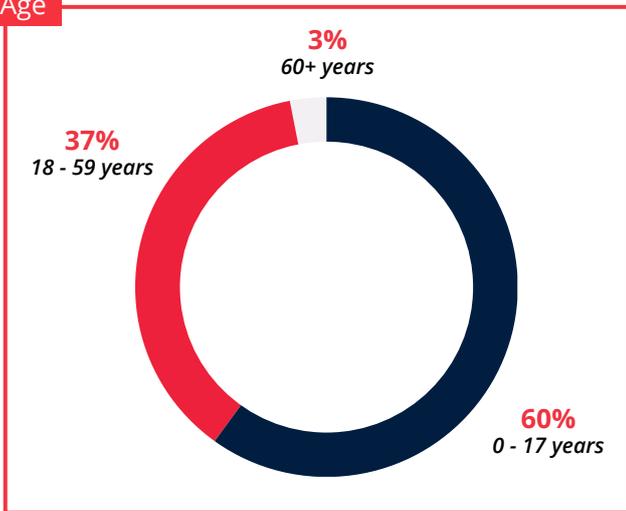
Sweepbacks: In April, 850,211.24 TRY was swept back from 450 uncollected cards (213,280 TRY) and 839 dormant accounts (636,931.24 TRY). The total amount of sweepbacks including April is 12,277,640.70 TRY.

¹ 133,162 households with four or more children; 85,661 households with a dependency ratio equal to or above 1.5; 44,388 households with a single parent with no other adults and at least one child under 18; 30,230 households with at least one individual with a disability rate of 40 per cent; 11,339 single females; 9,854 households with elderly people above 60 with no other adults in the household.



IN NUMBERS: DEMOGRAPHICS OF PEOPLE WE SERVE

Age



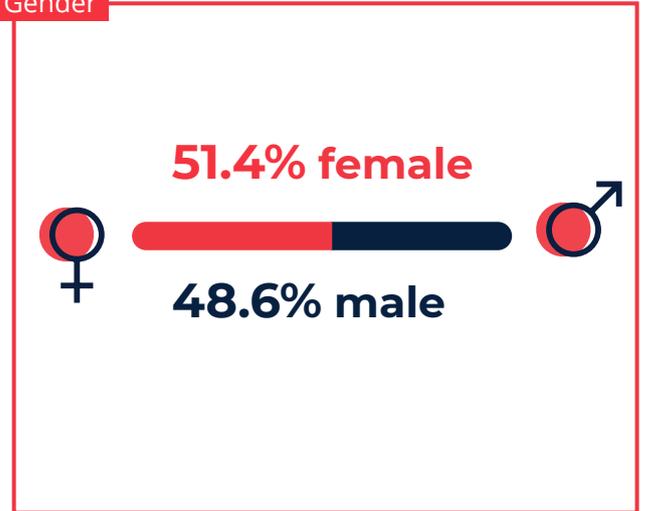
Age breakdown of ESN recipients:

0 - 17 years: 1,092,238

18 - 59 years: 681,373

60+ years: 53,774

Gender

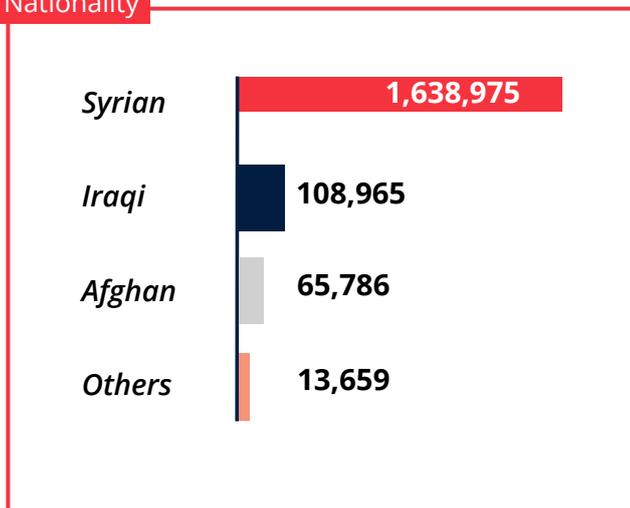


Gender breakdown of ESN recipients:

Female: 938,527

Male: 888,858

Nationality



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

Disability



Individuals with a valid severe disability health report received an additional top-up of 600 TRY per individual, totalling 6,847,200.00 TRY for April.



FROM 120-155 TRY: FIRST DISTRIBUTION WITH NEW INCREASED AMOUNT PER PERSON

Adapting to the growing needs of refugees.



On 28 April, the first distribution was made with the new transfer amount, which increased from 120 TRY to 155 TRY. This was in response to the deteriorating situation for families we support as a result of the current socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. Since the pandemic, we have seen a worrying rise in household debt, irregular income, increasing minimum expenditure basket (MEB) and an expanding gap between household income and MEB. This month's payment was made two days earlier (28 April) than planned with the announcement of an 18-day national lockdown between 29 April and 17 May due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which helped to address potential access issues for families receiving ESSN.



Communicating the increase in transfer value with refugee populations.

The announcement of increased transfer value was made in all formal communication channels. Following this announcement, TRC Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) team compiled immediate reactions to the ESSN Facebook post announcing the transfer value increase. Questions raised in the comment section were responded to, with common questions including acknowledging the payment increase, meeting the eligibility criteria and considering to include families with two children, among others.



Responding in the midst of lockdown measures.

With the public announcement of the national lockdown on the 27th of April, the TRC 168 Call Centre disseminated information on the details in four languages (Turkish, English, Arabic and Persian) on all official Kızılaykart social media accounts and the Kızılaykart website. TRC Headquarters, Service Centres, Call Centres and field offices remained open throughout the lockdown. TRC Service Centres continue to provide regular services such as processing application and reapplication requests, conducting household visits, providing counselling, and making referrals.



PROGRAMMATIC HIGHLIGHTS

Monitoring and evaluation:

Monitoring and evaluation teams continued field activities virtually and, in some cases, face-to-face. Focus group discussions as well as monitoring card distribution, ATMs, among others. The fourth round of focus group discussions with the theme "ESSN Satisfaction" aims to understand ESSN applicants' knowledge about the programme and its objectives, identify strengths and weaknesses from their perspectives, and obtain recommendations for program improvement. The roll-out of the second ESSN Satisfaction Survey has also been completed with a sample of nearly 600 ESSN applicant households. On-site monitoring activities and ESSN processes in local institutions continued smoothly, in line with the measures of the pandemic.

Referral and outreach:

Referral and outreach field teams continued to sensitize local authorities and resolve access issues. More than 400 local institutions in 34 cities were visited in April. The institutions maintain their activities within the framework of certain measures due to the ongoing pandemic.

Coordination:

TRC and IFRC officers joined April's Basic Needs Working Group National and Field Meetings, also organised the bi-monthly Istanbul-Izmir ESSN Task Force Meeting. They shared the periodic ESSN and CCTE updates for the respective regions and announced the recent increase of the ESSN base monthly assistance. As a thematic topic, PDM 10 findings were presented by TRC M&E team.

Accountability to affected populations:

With many changes taking place in April, including the increased transfer value amount and the lockdown measures, it was critical to develop and distribute clear messages to the people we support. TRC and IFRC helped inform audiences about their rights, important programme updates and latest news, including curfew rules.

A rumour tracking and management system that captures, analyzes and responds to rumours related to the ESSN was finalized and introduced to the internal and external stakeholders for testing. The platform is intended to eliminate information gaps between responding parties and refugees. In April, TRC responded to 16,799 calls through the 168 Call Centre while 360,909 SMSs were sent out.

As an effective way for communicating with the programme applicants, the total number of SMSs sent increased to 7.6 million since the beginning of ESSN III, while total number of calls responded reached 208,213 by the end of April 2021.

In order to reschedule the payments, inform ESSN recipients and ensure continuation of activities throughout the lockdown, significant planning efforts were carried out stringently and flexibility demonstrated at central level.