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# SSN

## THE SOCIAL SAFETY NET

### *Programme*



# 4<sup>th</sup> Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) Report

Mar'26



**KIZILAYKART**  
Cash Based Assistance  
*Programmes*



# 4<sup>th</sup> Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) Report

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Mar'26

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>CARI</b>	Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security
<b>CCTE</b>	Conditional Cash Transfer for Education Programme
<b>C-ESSN</b>	Complementary Emergency Social Safety Net
<b>DDS</b>	Dietary Diversity Score
<b>DG NEAR</b>	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
<b>DGPCA</b>	Directorate General of Population and Citizenship Affairs
<b>ESSN</b>	Emergency Social Safety Net
<b>HEA</b>	Household Economy Analysis
<b>HH</b>	Household
<b>LCSI</b>	Livelihood Coping Strategy Index
<b>MoFSS</b>	Ministry of Family and Social Services
<b>MEB</b>	Minimum Expenditure Basket
<b>ODK</b>	Open Data Kit
<b>PAB</b>	Pre-Assistance Baseline
<b>PMM</b>	Presidency of Migration Management
<b>PDMM</b>	Provincial Directorate of Migration Management
<b>rCSI</b>	Reduced Coping Strategy Index
<b>SSN</b>	Social Safety Net



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 4<sup>th</sup> round of Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM 4) provides a comprehensive overview of the socio-economic conditions of refugee households in Türkiye, focusing on the SSN Programme recipients which comprise of ESSN and C-ESSN households alongside a non-recipient control group. The findings indicate that while household incomes have increased across all groups, the rising cost of living has severely outpaced these gains, leading to a deepening financial deficit and an increased reliance on negative coping mechanisms. The findings underscore that ESSN and C-ESSN assistance provides a safety net for refugee households, though given the economic climate, with its impact on food security and debt levels, current assistance levels appear to be more of a support mechanism than a full coverage.

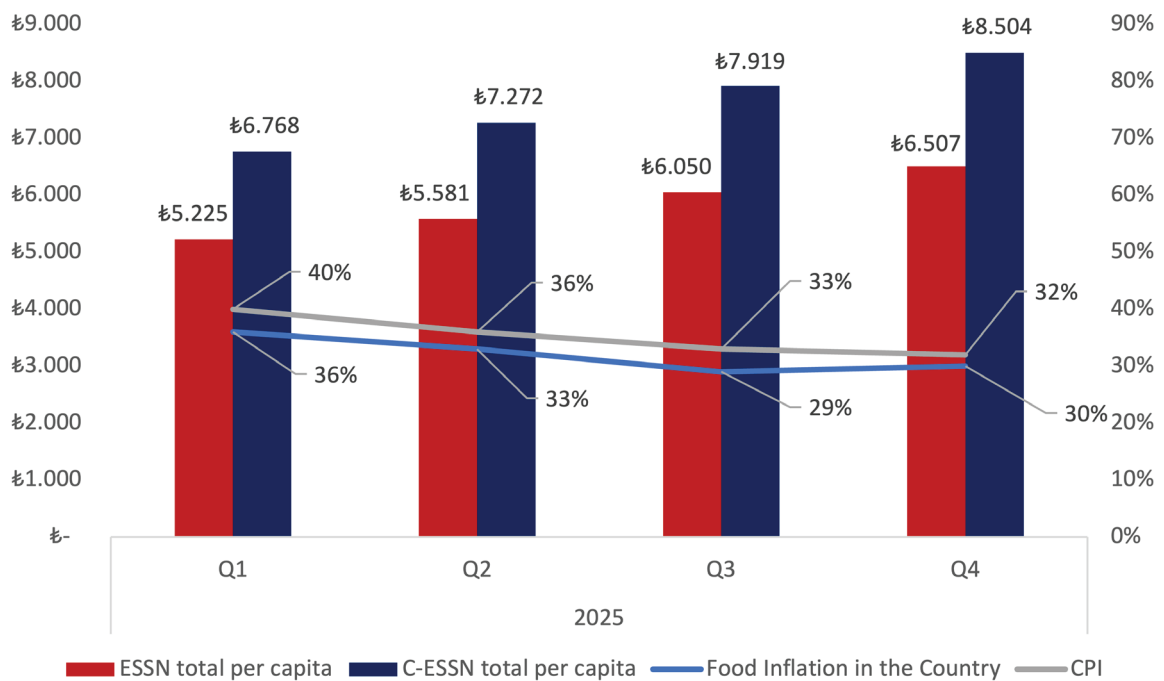


Figure 1 Quarterly overview of cost of living

## Key Findings



- » Median household incomes have risen to TRY 20,000 for C-ESSN and TRY 23,000 for ESSN groups, yet these gains are often offset by the rising cost of living.
- » Monthly expenditures for C-ESSN families have climbed to TRY 30,093, creating a persistent financial deficit.
- » Only 16 per cent of C-ESSN and 33 per cent of ESSN households are currently able to meet the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) threshold.
- » Labour participation has reached high levels; 95 per cent for ESSN and 74 per cent for C-ESSN households.
- » Despite more people working, the quality of employment remains low, with 83 per cent of ESSN and 65 per cent of C-ESSN income still derived from unskilled labor.
- » Debt has become a necessity, with 76 per cent of recipient households currently holding debt. The median debt amount has reached TRY 14,000 for C-ESSN families, and strikingly, 73 per cent of this borrowing is used solely to purchase food. Even with employment and assistance, households cannot fully cover their most basic daily requirements without falling into a cycle of borrowing.
- » Economic vulnerability is shaped differently across regions; Istanbul offers the highest nominal incomes at TRY 25,000 for C-ESSN, but also demands the highest expenditures at TRY 36,180. In contrast, the Southeast remains the most constrained region with the lowest median income of TRY 18,000 for C-ESSN households.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

The Social Safety Net (SSN) Programme is a cash-based assistance initiative supporting the most vulnerable households in Türkiye under Temporary Protection, International Protection, or with Humanitarian Residence Permit. Launched on 17 July 2023, the SSN Programme is funded by the European Union and implemented by the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS) in cooperation with Türk Kızılay (Turkish Red Crescent) and supported by the Presidency of Migration Management (PMM) and Directorate General of Population and Citizenship Affairs (DGPCA). Within the KIZILAYKART Platform, cash-based humanitarian assistance projects address different sectors under Türk Kızılay, implementing programmes with various partners, stakeholder and donors. The SSN Programme brings together two major humanitarian assistance projects implemented in Türkiye: The Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN), launched in 2016, and the Complementary Emergency Social Safety Net (C-ESSN), launched in 2021. Together, they form the SSN Programme, the world's largest cash-based humanitarian assistance programme, designed to support the basic needs of vulnerable households with dignity.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) Report provides an overview of the socio-economic conditions of refugee households in Türkiye, aiming to assess the effectiveness and impact of the SSN Programme cash assistance. By examining key indicators such as household income, expenditures, food security, livelihood and consumption based coping strategies, and access to essential services, the impact report offers insights to inform programme improvements, enhance support for vulnerable households, and ensure accountability to the households served.



## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

A descriptive cross-sectional household survey was employed to capture a snapshot of household conditions at a specific point in time. The survey was designed for remote data collection, and the questionnaire covered general demographic information, socio-economic indicators, consumption patterns, livelihood based coping strategies and food security levels of targeted households. The protection of respondents' personal data and their overall well-being were prioritized throughout the survey's design and data collection process.



### Data Collection and Sampling

Data collection was conducted between October 2025 and January 2026 by the 168 Kızılay Call Centre. Open Data Kit (ODK) platform was utilized for data collection, enabling efficient and accurate data capture in the field. Prior to data collection, an online refresher session was made for the 168 Kızılay Call Centre staff by the Türk Kızılay KIZILAYKART M&E Team, covering the survey questionnaire, research methodologies, and ethical considerations, highlighting the importance of receiving informed consent from all surveyed individuals. Without exception informed consent was obtained from each individual aged 18 and over.

A stratified simple random sampling method was employed to survey 5,797 recipient and non-recipient households over the phone. Using a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, the sample was designed to produce representative findings at both national and regional levels. The population was divided into distinct, non-overlapping subgroups (strata), with stratification based first on region and then on recipient status (C-ESSN, ESSN, and non-recipient).

Data quality was checked throughout the data collection process. This involved ensuring logical consistency within questions, conducting reliability checks, applying conditionality, and maintaining timely communication with enumerators through real-time reviews of the collected data.

## Geographical Area

Data were obtained across five geographic strata; Aegean, Anatolia, İstanbul, Mediterranean, and Southeast regions in Türkiye. The boundaries of these regions were determined by the proportion of the beneficiary population from which survey samples were drawn. Consistent with previous rounds and in parallel with the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat) accords, İstanbul was treated as a separate stratum due to its unique socio-economic structure.

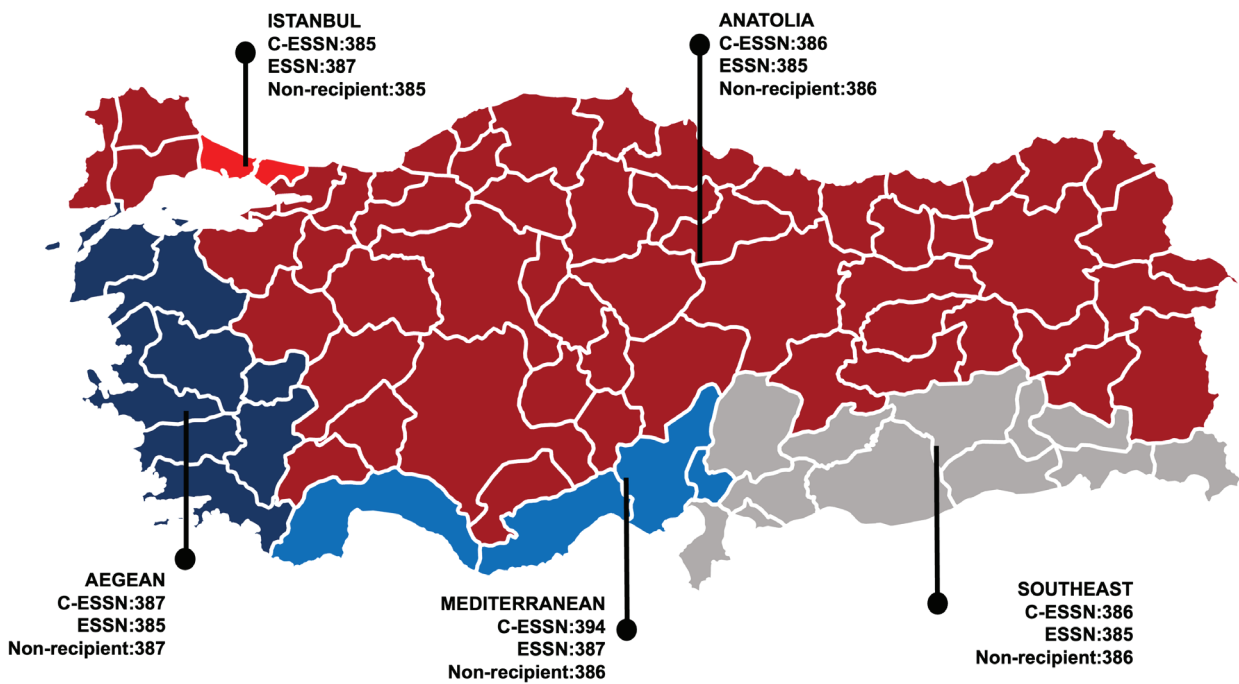
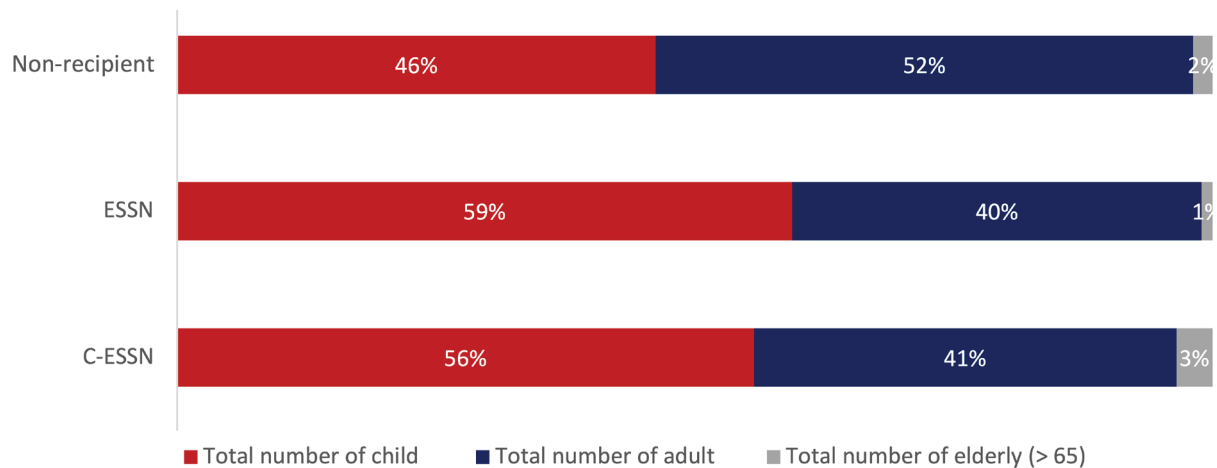


Figure 2 Survey map

## OUTCOMES

### Demographic Profiles



**Figure 3** Age and gender distribution of households

The gender distribution of the Head of Household (HoH) between groups shows that the ESSN and non-recipient households are mostly male-headed (85 per cent and 82 per cent respectively), whereas the C-ESSN group maintains a significantly more balanced profile with 44 per cent of households being female-headed.

In ESSN households, nearly all heads of household are married (93 per cent), which is a pattern largely mirrored in the non-recipient group (87 per cent). Conversely, married status is significantly lower in the C-ESSN group at 64.5 per cent. The remaining 35.5 per cent of C-ESSN heads of household fall into other categories including single, widowed, divorced, or separated reflecting the program’s focus on households with specific vulnerabilities such as single-parent structures. ESSN households are the largest in size, with an average of 6.04 members, compared to 5.77 in C-ESSN and 5.63 in non-recipient households.

Children (aged 0-17) make up the largest demographic group across all household types, with the highest proportion observed among ESSN households. Averaging 3.56 children per household, children make up 59 per cent of the total population in ESSN households. C-ESSN households have the second highest proportion of children at 56 per cent (3.0 children per household), whereas smaller share is observed in non-recipient households at 46 per cent (2.4 children per household). However, the presence of elderly members (over 65) is notably higher in C-ESSN households, as they constitute 3 per cent of the population. This is three times higher than the elderly proportion in ESSN households.

## Education Levels

Educational attainment for most heads of household remain at lower secondary levels, with middle school appearing as the primary ceiling for both ESSN and C-ESSN groups. While primary school graduation is also common across all groups, very few recipients have completed higher education. In contrast, non-recipient households have nearly twice the proportion of university graduates compared to ESSN and C-ESSN households. In terms of Turkish language proficiency, the vast majority of households (96 per cent) report that at least one member is able to speak and write in Turkish. This reflects a positive level of adaptation and shows that many households possess at least the basic language skills necessary for daily life.

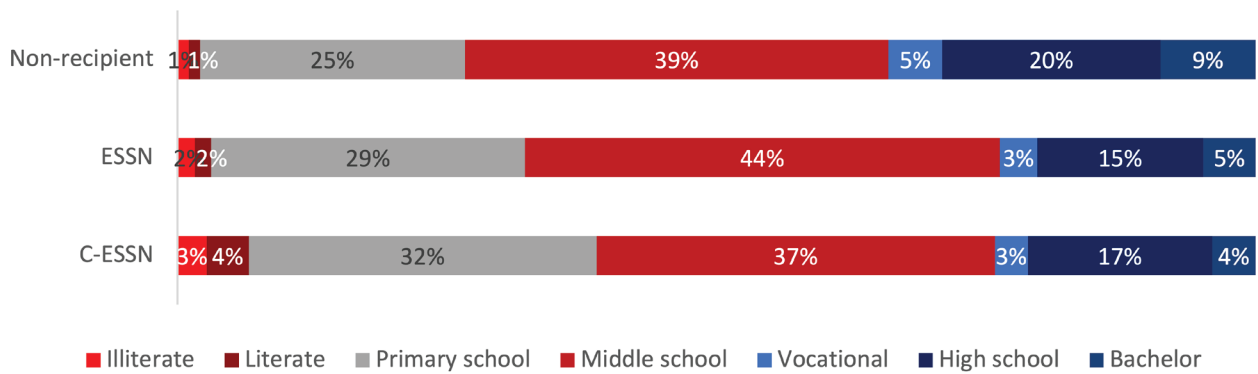


Figure 4 The highest level of education in the household

## School Attendance

School attendance figures reveal a consistent trend where girls have higher rates compared boys across all groups, a gap most visible in C-ESSN households. In C-ESSN households, 81 per cent of girls attend school compared to 76 per cent of boys, representing a 5-percentage point disparity. ESSN households show the highest overall attendance but maintain a similar gap, with 88 per cent for girls and 83 per cent for boys, while non-recipients report 83 per cent for girls and 79 per cent for boys.

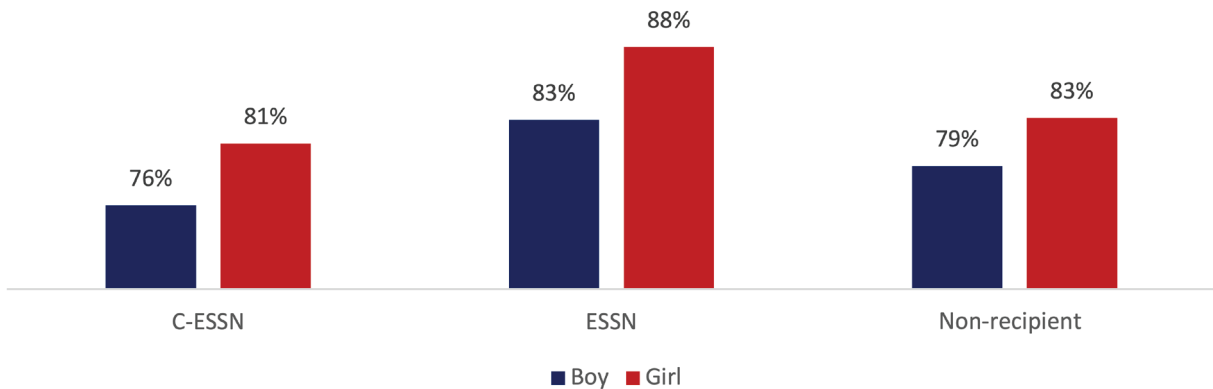
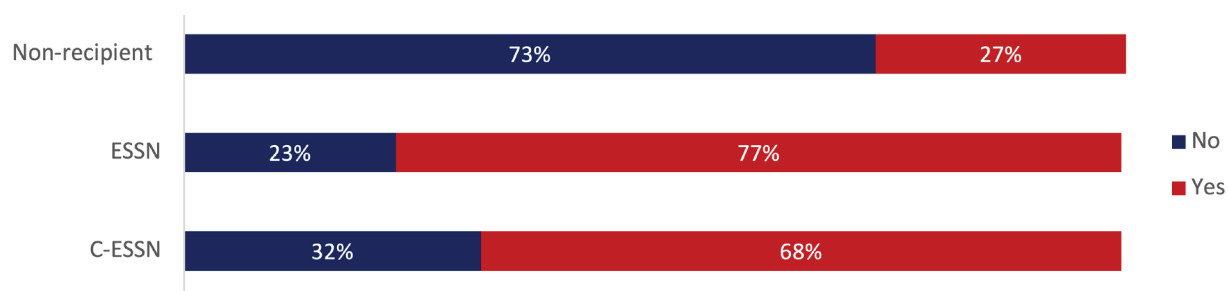


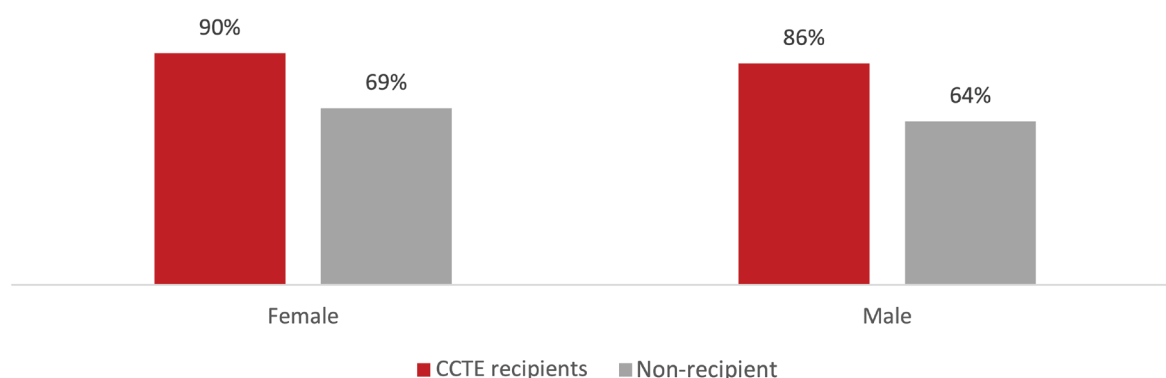
Figure 5 School Attendance rate by recipient status and gender

This disparity is driven by distinct, gender-specific obstacles that hinder regular participation in education. Non-attending boys are frequently reported as being occupied with other responsibilities, which often correlates with the high economic pressure on these households. Conversely, chronic health conditions emerge as the primary barrier preventing girls in the same group from attending school. These variations indicate that while girls are currently more likely to be present in the classroom, boys are increasingly susceptible to being diverted from their education for livelihood-related reasons, a trade-off that risks compromising their long-term socio-economic resilience.



**Figure 6** Distribution of households declaring that CCTE beneficiary by recipient status

Participation in the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education Programme (CCTE) is highly prevalent among ESSN and C-ESSN recipient households, with enrollment rates reaching 78 per cent and 69 per cent respectively. In contrast, participation remains significantly lower among non-recipients, where approximately 3 out of every 10 households (27 per cent) are enrolled in the programme. Nearly half of those not participating cite failing to meet eligibility criteria as the primary barrier. Other reasons for non-enrolment include prior participation, a lack of awareness, or challenges such as irregular school attendance and the perceived insufficiency of the assistance amount.



**Figure 7** Rate of school attendance by CCTE recipient status and gender

Also, children enrolled in the CCTE Programme demonstrate substantially higher school enrollment rates, reaching 90 per cent for girls and 86 per cent for boys. In stark contrast, children not receiving CCTE assistance has notably lower participation levels, accounting for 69 per cent for girls and 64 per cent for boys. The data indicates a relationship between being an SSN recipient and CCTE enrollment, suggesting that existing SSN recipients are more likely to enroll in the CCTE Programme due to higher awareness and knowledge of the programme.

## Shelter Conditions

The vast majority of surveyed households (96 per cent) are living in rental accommodations. While 60 per cent occupy apartment buildings, 4 per cent reside in non-traditional housing, including tents, containers, or employer-provided shelters. Regarding living conditions, 40 per cent of the population reported that their current living conditions fall below standards and that they fail to meet basic living requirements. In contrast, 50 per cent described their situation as “medium,” with only a small minority (10 per cent) reported living in good conditions.

## Household Economy Analysis

### Income

Household monthly income levels have shown a notable increase across all surveyed groups since the previous period. The most noteworthy upward trend was observed among C-ESSN households, whose median income rose from TRY 13,000 to TRY 20,000, marking a sharp rise compared to other households. During the same timeframe, the income for ESSN households reached TRY 23,000, while non-recipient households rose to TRY 26,000. Despite this general growth, recipient households consistently earn less than their non-recipient counterparts, highlighting a persistent income gap that underscores the continued necessity of cash assistance.

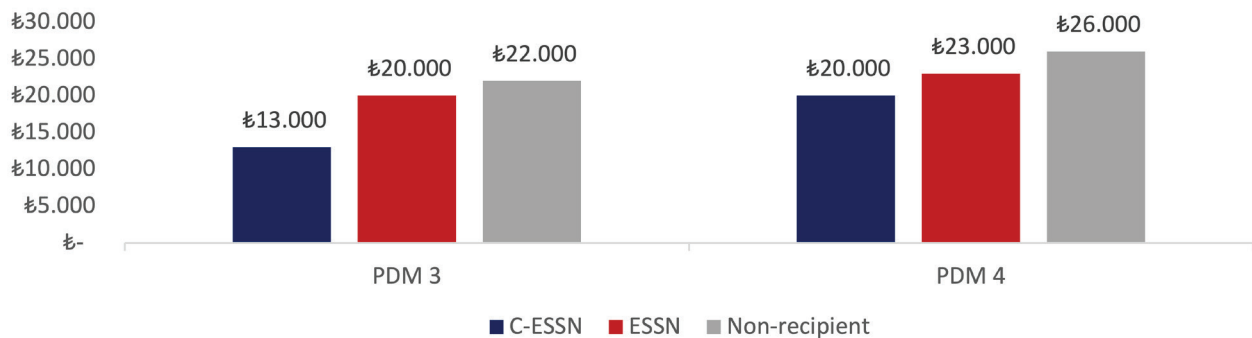


Figure 8 Median income by PDMs and recipient status

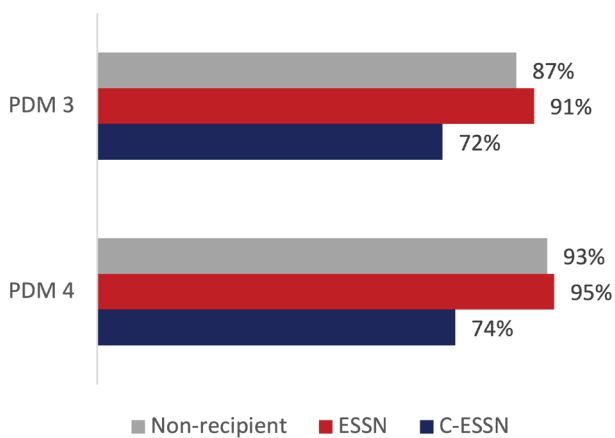


Figure 9 Distribution of households with at least one employed member by recipient status

The increase in household income is partly linked to a rise in the proportion of households with at least one working member. In PDM 4, the share of households with at least one employed member reached 95 per cent for ESSN and 93 per cent for non-recipient groups, while C-ESSN households saw an increase to 74 per cent. This upward trend is likely influenced by the seasonal timing of the data collection period. As surveys were conducted during the summer months, the data reflects a peak in seasonal and daily labor that are typically more available during those parts of the year.

The primary driver of household income remains unskilled labor, which has seen an increased share across all households. Reliance on unskilled work rose to 83 per cent for ESSN households and 72 per cent for non-recipients, while income from skilled labor simultaneously declined in all households. For C-ESSN households, SSN assistance remains a vital secondary resource, providing 16 per cent of their total monthly income. This high concentration in informal sectors suggests that households remain highly susceptible to economic shocks and lack the stability of formal or skilled employment.

Top main source of income		PDM 3	PDM 4
Non-recipient	Unskilled labor	69%	72%
	Skilled labor	21%	15%
	Gifts	3%	2%
ESSN	Unskilled labor	80%	83%
	Skilled labor	13%	7%
	SSN cash assistance	3%	3%
C-ESSN	Unskilled labor	62%	65%
	Skilled labor	9%	5%
	SSN cash assistance	14%	16%

Figure 10 Income sources by PDMs and recipient status

Regional analysis<sup>1</sup> indicates that earning levels vary across different regions, with İstanbul reporting the highest figures. In İstanbul, incomes for non-recipient and ESSN households reached TRY 31,600 and TRY 29,750, respectively. This trend likely reflects the concentration of job opportunities in the metropolitan area alongside its higher cost of living. Conversely, the Southeast region continues to display the most limited economic conditions, with C-ESSN households earning the lowest median income of TRY 18,000. These disparities indicate that although metropolitan areas offer relatively greater employment and income opportunities, households in other regions face significantly more restricted income-generating capacity, particularly in the Southeast.

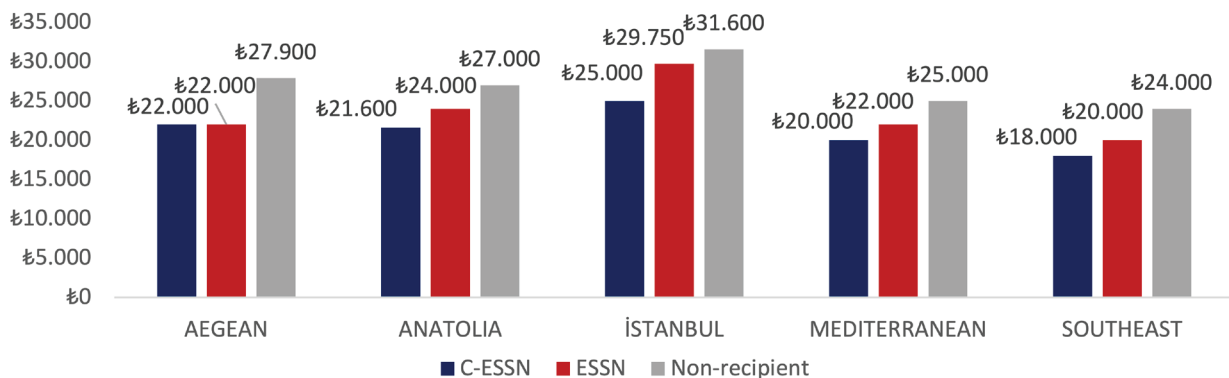


Figure 11 Median income by recipient status and strata

1 Mood's Median test were used to measure whether there is any relationship between the variables of income and region. According to test results the null hypothesis is rejected due to the fact that the probability value is less than 0.05 significance level.

## Expenditure

Household expenditures have risen 13 per cent across all recipient groups, following the trend in both income and the general cost of living. Spending for C-ESSN households increased approximately 21 per cent since the previous period. Similarly, ESSN and non-recipient households saw their monthly expenses increase to TRY 33,148 and TRY 36,035, respectively. These increases indicate that households are spending more to maintain their basic needs rather than experiencing a genuine improvement in their economic well-being.

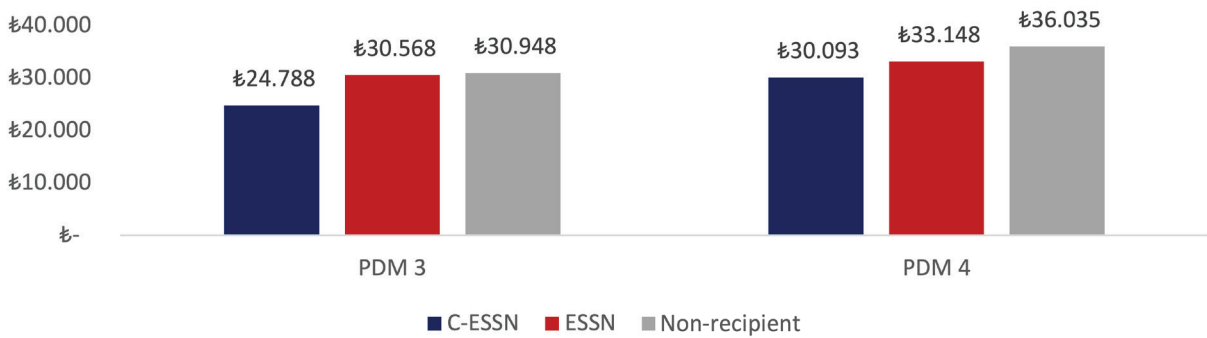


Figure 12 Median expenditure by PDMs and recipient status

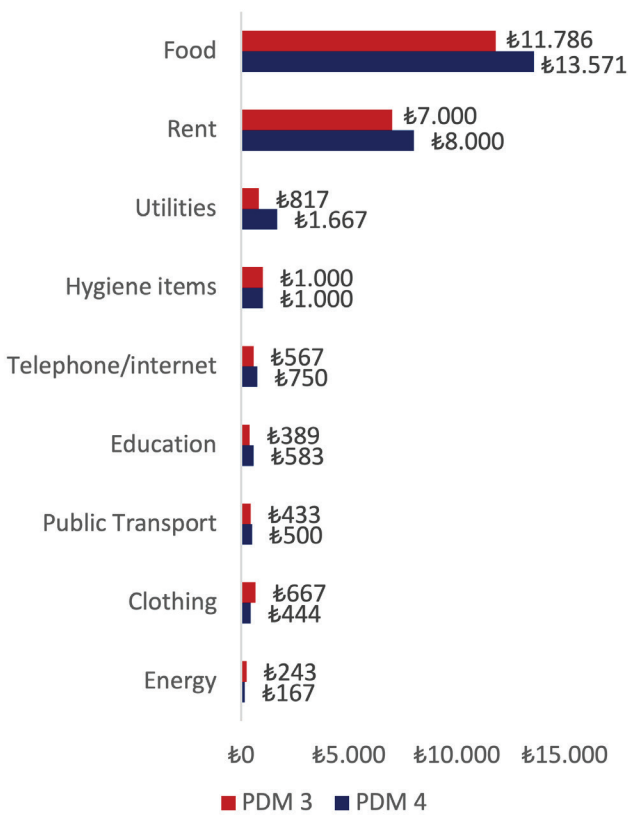


Figure 13 Median expenditure items by PDMs

The allocation of household resources remains focused on basic needs, with food and housing costs consuming the vast majority of the expenditure. This heavy focus on survival leads to the restriction of long-term investments for households. Food expenditure now accounts for 42 per cent of total spending, with average costs rising to TRY 13,571. Rent, averaging TRY 8,000, remains the second largest spending item, making up 25 per cent of the household expenditure. A notable pressure point is the cost of utilities, which has more than doubled from TRY 817 to TRY 1,667, further restricting expenditure for other necessary items.

Spending on education is stagnant at just 2 per cent of total expenditures, despite the average cost for school-related needs rising to TRY 583. To manage the rising prices of food and shelter, households have reduced their spending in other areas, such as clothing, which dropped to TRY 444. This spending pattern confirms that most families are locked in a survival cycle, exhausting their resources on daily requirements with no capacity to build resilience or save for future needs.

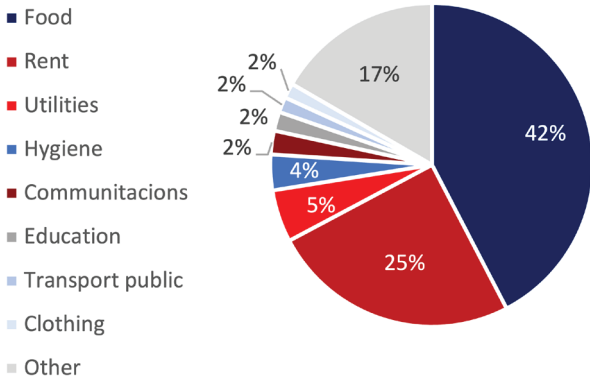


Figure 14 Share of expenditure items

Istanbul<sup>2</sup> has the highest expenditures across all groups, with spending reaching TRY 36,180 in C-ESSN households and TRY 37,160 in ESSN households. While major metropolitan hubs offer more job opportunities, the higher costs of basic needs in these areas often offset the benefits of the higher nominal wages found there. In contrast, the Southeast region shows the lowest absolute spending, with C-ESSN households averaging TRY 27,843. However, since they also have the lowest income levels reported, households in the Southeastern region experience a distinct form of economic pressure, marked by a limited ability to generate sufficient income to meet even comparatively lower living costs.

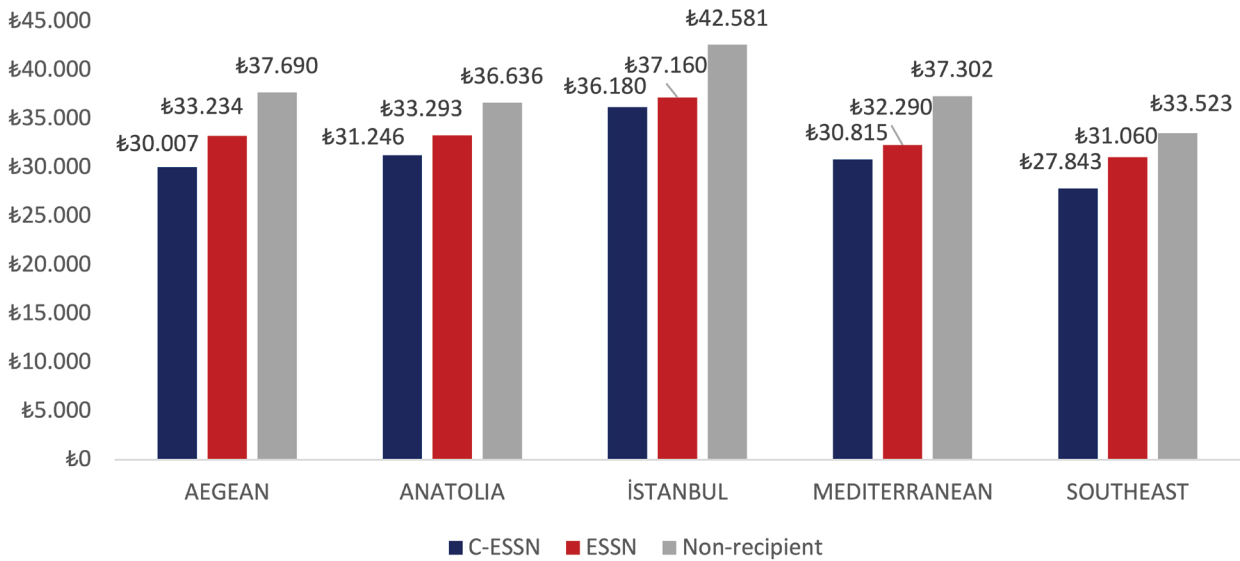


Figure 15 Median expenditure by recipient status and strata

2 Mood's Median test were used to measure whether there is any relationship between the variables of expenditure and region. According to test results the null hypothesis is rejected due to the fact that the probability value is less than 0.05 significance level.

## Debt

The prevalence of debt remains high across all household groups, with 76 per cent of C-ESSN and ESSN households currently holding debt. Although the proportion of households in debt has remained almost the same compared to PDM 3, debt amounts have risen 25 per cent overall. Debt amount for C-ESSN households reached TRY 14,000, while for ESSN and non-recipient households it rose to TRY 17,000 and TRY 20,000 respectively. These rise in debt levels might be indicative that families are taking on larger financial burdens to maintain their basic standards of living regardless of recipient status.

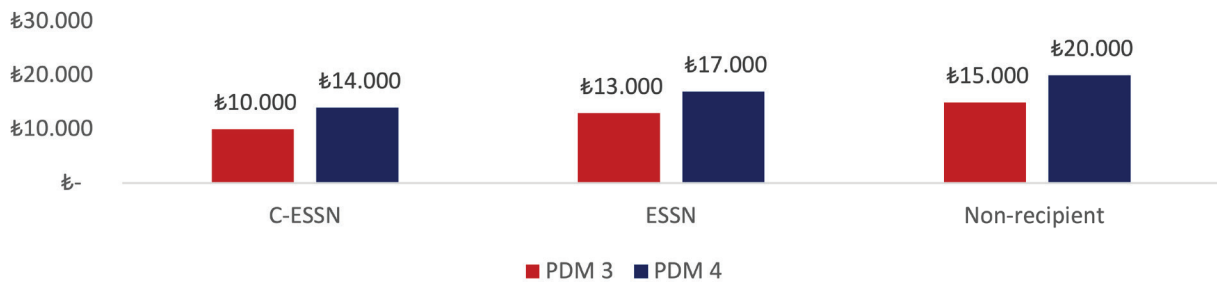


Figure 16 Median debt by PDMs and recipient status

Household borrowing is almost entirely directed toward essential needs, confirming that debt acts as a critical coping mechanism. Food is the main reason for borrowing, reported by 73 per cent of families, with rent and utility costs also serving as major drivers. Households rely heavily on informal networks and local businesses to secure these resources. Local shops are the most common source of credit, utilized by 39 per cent of households; while 59 per cent of families turn to relatives and friends for financial support. Dependence on close social networks for to meet basic needs highlights the limited financial capacity and continued economic vulnerability of households.

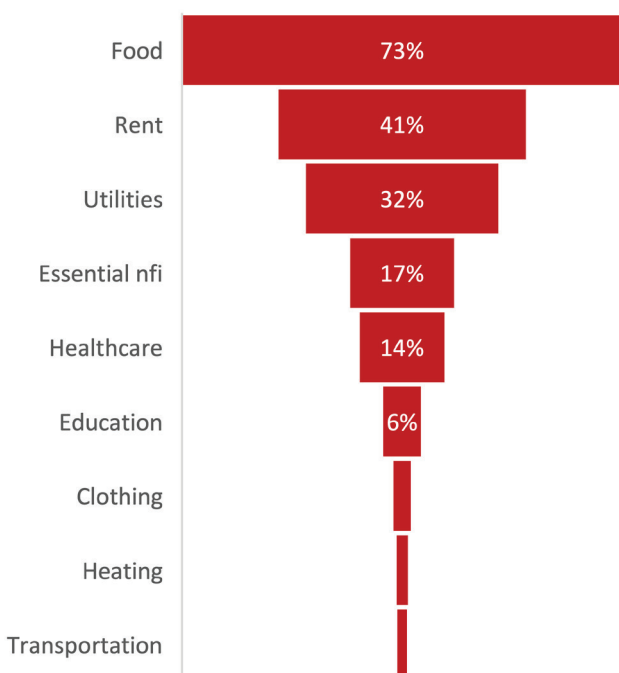


Figure 17 Reasons for debt

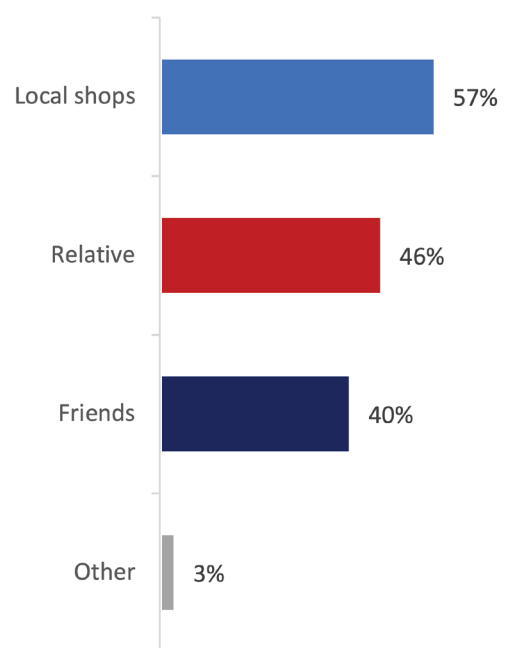


Figure 18 Sources for debt

### Cost of Living Analysis

The MEB<sup>3</sup> threshold has increased across all groups in the current period, reaching TRY 38,056 for C-ESSN households, TRY 42,560 for ESSN households, and TRY 40,083 for non-recipient households. Despite the rise in household income, the vast majority of recipient families continue to live below this poverty line with 29 per cent, underscoring a persistent gap between available resources and the actual cost of essential goods. Notably, only 16 per cent of C-ESSN and 33 per cent of ESSN households are able to meet the MEB. While the proportion of C-ESSN households living above the MEB saw a slight increase from 13 per cent to 16 per cent, the situation for ESSN recipients has worsened, with the share of families capable of covering their basic needs falling from 40 per cent to 33 per cent. This divergence indicates that for many households, the rising costs of survival are outpacing any minor gains in earnings, contributing to increasing poverty levels and a growing risk of deprivation, and ultimately undermining overall wellbeing.

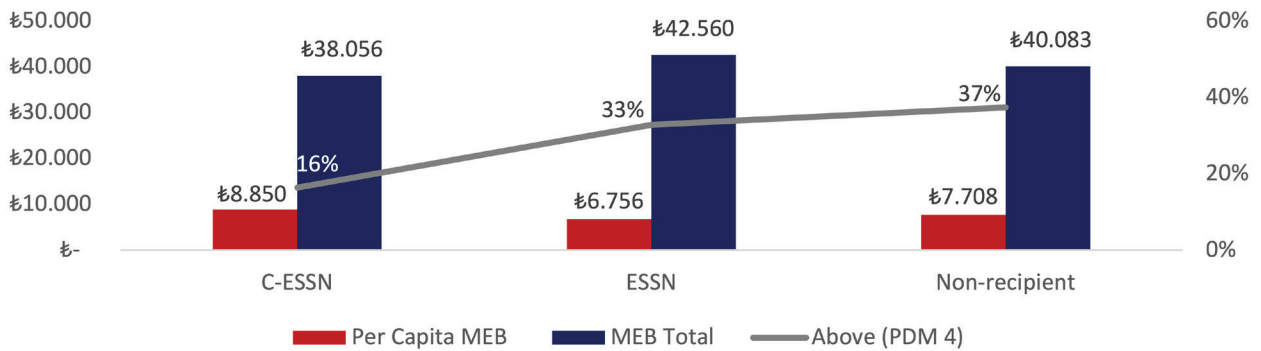


Figure 19 MEB values and below rate by recipient status

Furthermore, despite households increasing their total expenditures, these higher spending levels have not been enough to keep pace with the rapidly rising cost of the minimum basket. As a result, the percentage of households falling below the MEB threshold has remained high or increased, as they are unable to scale their spending sufficiently to cover the full cost of essential needs. Overall, sustained economic pressure traps families in a cycle of prioritizing immediate needs over long-term investments, making the continued provision of cash assistance a vital protective measure against deeper vulnerabilities.

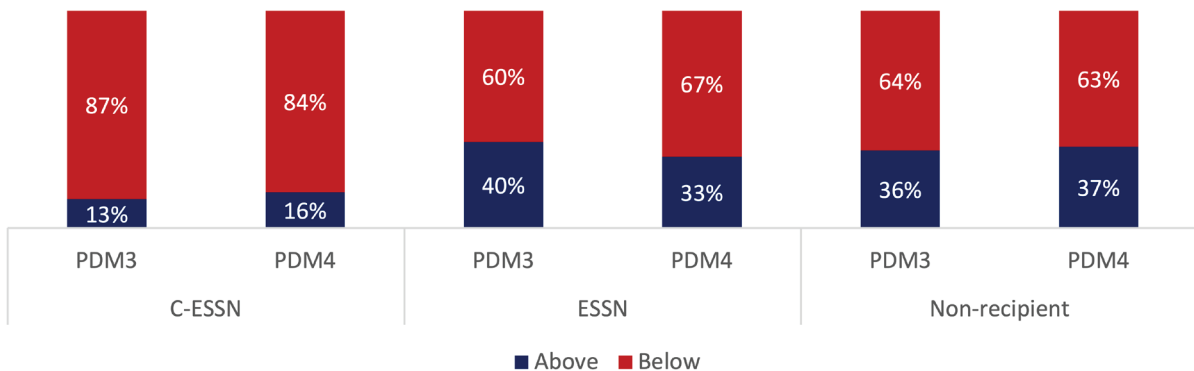


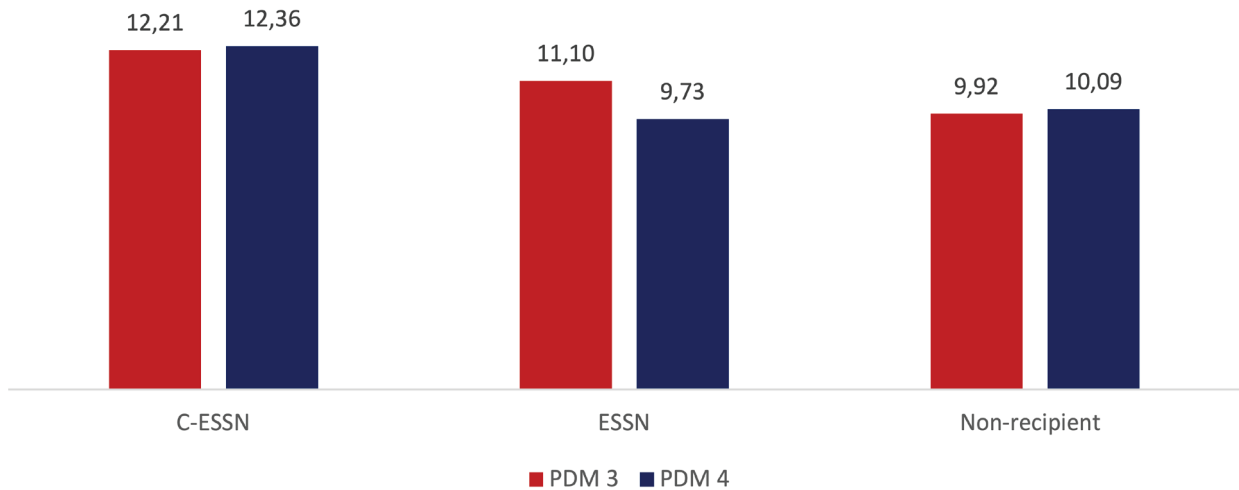
Figure 20 Percentage of households below the MEB by PDMs and recipient status

3 The Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) represents the minimum monthly cost required for a household to meet its basic needs in the current economic situation. For more detail; Türk Kızılay. (January 2025). Minimum Expenditure Basket Technical Paper. [https://platform.kizilaykart.org/tr/Doc/rapor/MEB\\_Technical\\_Paper\\_Report\\_8.pdf](https://platform.kizilaykart.org/tr/Doc/rapor/MEB_Technical_Paper_Report_8.pdf)

## Food Security Coping Mechanisms

### Reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI)

The Reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI)<sup>4</sup> scores for this period show a diverging trend among households, reflecting varied levels of short-term food security. ESSN households experienced a notable improvement, with their average score decreasing from 11.1 to 9.73. In contrast, C-ESSN households maintained the highest rCSI among all groups, with a slight increase to 12.36. Non-recipient households also saw a minor rise in their rCSI to 10.09, suggesting that eligible households are facing increased pressure (adopt more negative coping strategy) to maintain their food consumption than non-recipients.



**Figure 21** rCSI scores by PDMs and recipient status

Looking into regional details, the highest levels of coping-based strategies for C-ESSN households are found in Anatolia and the Southeast, where scores reach 12.94 and 12.67 respectively. The Southeast region stands out as a particularly vulnerable area, as it is the only region where the rCSI scores for both ESSN and non-recipient households also exceed the 10 point thresholds. These high scores in the Southeast correlate with the regions lower median income levels, suggesting that limited income generation opportunities pushes families to rely on restrictive food-based strategies more and more.

<sup>4</sup> The Reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) assesses short-term food insecurity by asking how often households have to apply for negative coping strategies, such as relying on less preferred foods or reducing portion sizes.

In contrast<sup>5</sup>, the Mediterranean region reports the lowest rCSI scores across all household groups, with C-ESSN households recording a score of 10.94. Despite İstanbul having the highest overall living costs, its rCSI scores remain relatively moderate compared to the Southeast and Anatolia regions, with C-ESSN households at 11.44. This reinforces the earlier observation that while metropolitan hubs like İstanbul demand higher expenditures, the greater availability of work may provide a buffer against the most severe food consumption trade-offs compared to more economically constrained regions. Ultimately, the consistently higher rCSI scores for C-ESSN households across every single region confirm their greater susceptibility to food insecurity, independent of local market conditions.

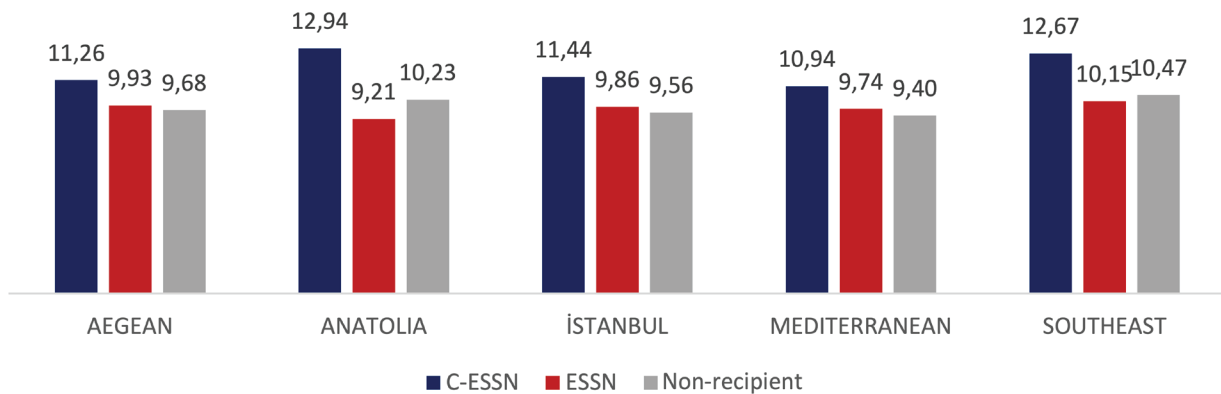


Figure 22 rCSI scores by strata

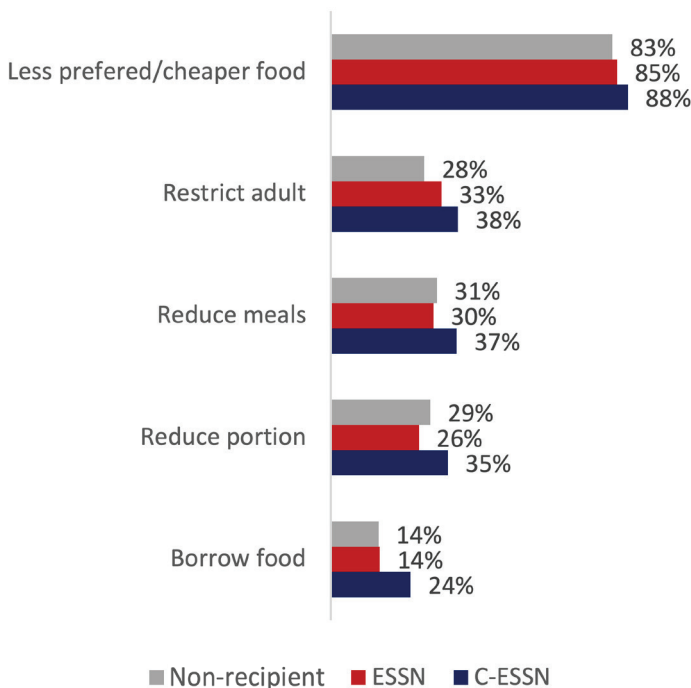


Figure 23 rCSI components distribution by recipient status

Household coping strategies reveal that households mainly cope with economic pressures by reducing the quality of the food they consume. Relying on less preferred or cheaper food options are reported by approximately 88 per cent of C-ESSN households, a pattern similarly observed among ESSN and non-recipient households as well. More severe consumption-based measures, such as reducing the number of meals and restricting adult consumption to prioritize children, remain most prevalent among C-ESSN families, observed in nearly 40 per cent of households. Furthermore, borrowing food serves as a critical last resort for 24 per cent of C-ESSN households, highlighting the ongoing fragility of their food security status compared to other groups.

<sup>5</sup> The observed difference in rCSI scores between strata is statistically significant less than 0.05. Also, Post-hoc Tukey HSD tests confirm that the Southeast region has a significantly higher mean rCSI score compared to all other regions.

### Livelihood Coping Strategies Index (LCSI)

Household resilience, as measured by the Livelihood Coping Strategies Index (LCSI)<sup>6</sup>, shows mixed results in the current period. While both ESSN and non-recipient households saw their average scores improve to 3.79 and 3.65 respectively, C-ESSN households experienced a decline in LCSI, with their score rising from 3.94 to 4.20. This increase indicates that the C-ESSN families are adopting a wider range of longer-term coping mechanisms to manage their daily economic pressures.

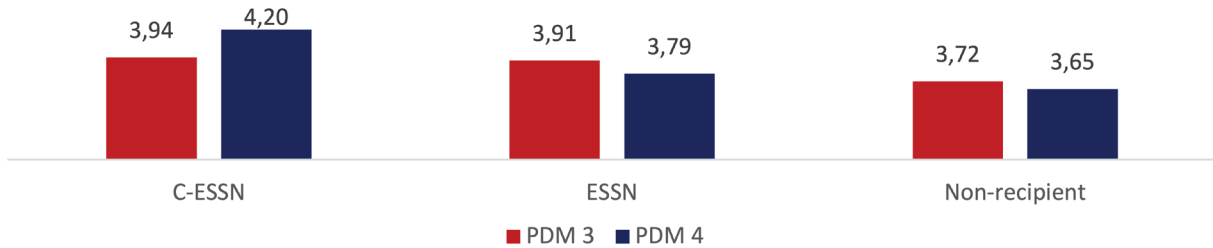


Figure 24 LCSI scores by PDMs and recipient status

Regional analysis<sup>7</sup> reveals that the Southeast has the highest LCSI scores across all groups, with C-ESSN households in this region reaching a score of 4.48. This finding suggests that, the combination of limited earning potential and rising costs in the Southeast is pushing families toward more severe and frequent livelihood-based coping measures compared to other parts of the country. In contrast, although C-ESSN households in the Mediterranean region report a relatively lower rCSI of 3.78; they face greater food-related pressures compared to ESSN and non-recipient households in the same region. Overall, despite regional differences in economic pressures, regardless of their geographic location C-ESSN group remain the most at risk group of depleting their assets and adopting negative coping strategies.

This pattern partly reflects differences in income-generating capacity across groups: ESSN and non-recipient households are more likely to have more working members, and even when employment is in low-skilled or informal sectors it may provide relatively better income opportunities compared to C-ESSN households, whose population includes a higher proportion of elderly persons and individuals with disabilities, limiting their ability to engage in income-generating activities.

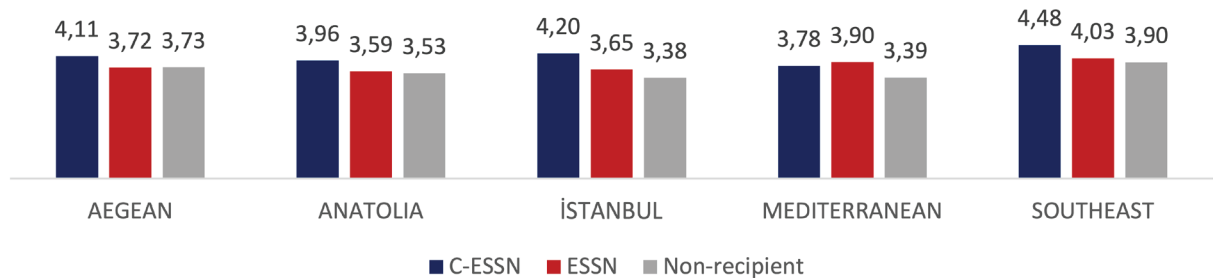


Figure 25 LCSI scores by recipient status and strata

6 Moving beyond immediate food security, the Livelihood Coping Strategies Index (LCSI) evaluates the more severe, often irreversible, actions households take to cope with significant economic hardship, such as selling assets or withdrawing children from school.

7 The observed difference in LCSI scores between strata is statistically significant less than 0.05. Also, Post-hoc Tukey HSD tests confirm that the Southeast region has a significantly higher mean rCSI score compared to all other regions.

Detailed analysis of LCSl components show that, stress-level strategies remain the most common response to financial pressures, with the vast majority of households relying on credit and borrowing. Purchasing food on credit is used by 65 per cent of C-ESSN and 64 per cent of ESSN families, while roughly 45 per cent of all groups report borrowing. Crisis-level measures also remain high, particularly the reduction of education and health spending. Specifically, 40 per cent of both C-ESSN and ESSN households have reduced their education expenditures, and 15 per cent of C-ESSN households have withdrawn their children from school. Emergency strategies, though less frequent, highlight the extreme vulnerability of the most at-risk households. Approximately 11 per cent of C-ESSN families reported that their entire household had to move due to economic hardship. Thus, C-ESSN households show a higher rates of child labour compared to ESSN and non-recipient groups, with 9 per cent indicating that children are engaged in work.

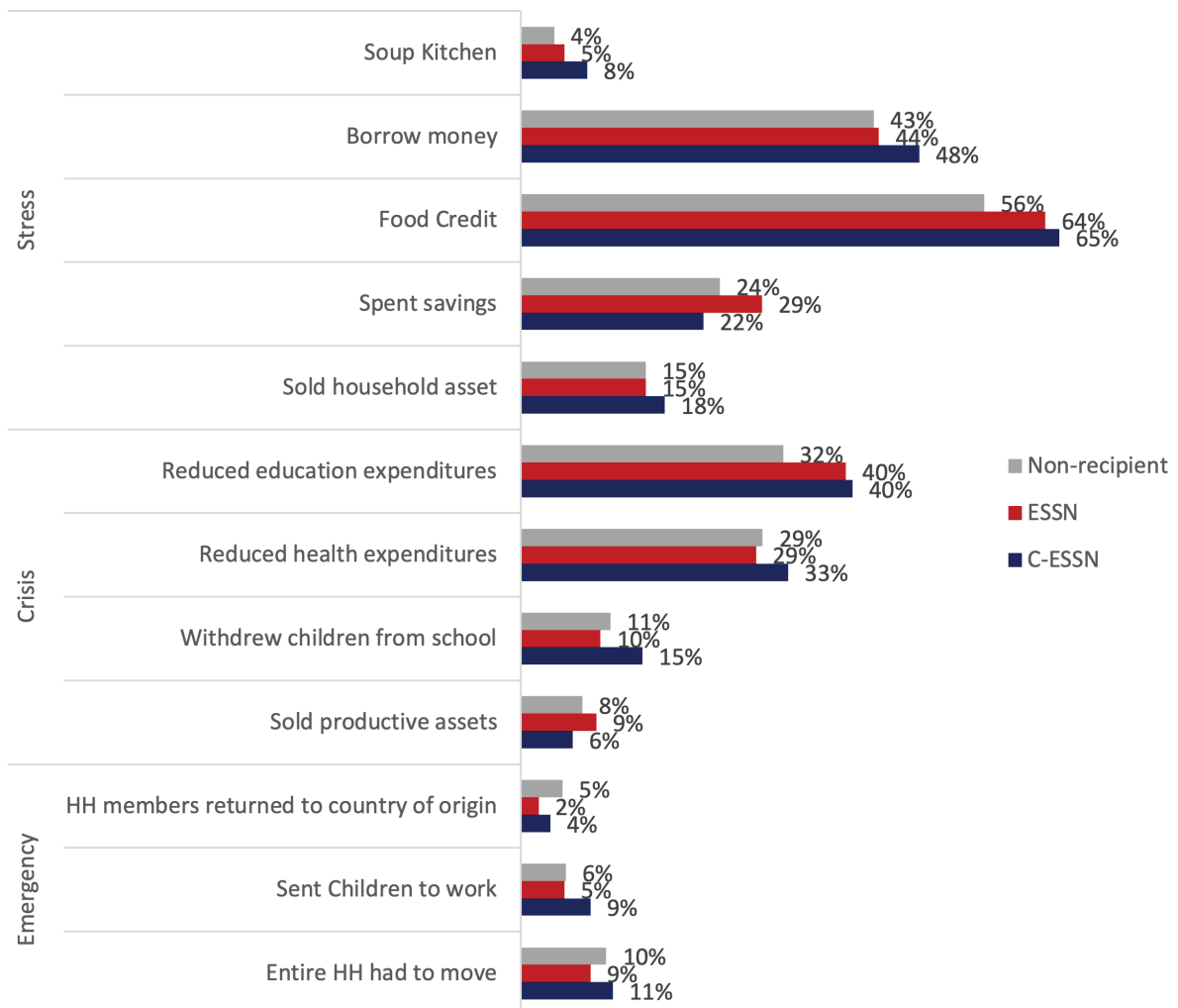


Figure 26 Distribution of LCSl components by recipient status

## Food Consumption Score

The Food Consumption Score (FCS) for this period indicates a general decline in food security across all household groups compared to the previous period. Acceptable consumption levels dropped to 76 per cent for C-ESSN and 79 per cent for ESSN households, while non-recipients remained relatively more stable at 83 per cent. This downward trend from the higher rates observed in PDM 3 suggests that, households are finding it increasingly difficult to sustain the quality and diversity of their diets in the face of persistent economic situation.

While the majority of families still fall within the acceptable category, the increase in households with borderline scores highlights a growing food insecurity. This shift typically reflects a heavier reliance on less expensive, carbohydrate-based staples as households sacrifice dietary diversity to manage their limited household economy. As a result, many families are only able to maintain acceptable consumption levels by neglecting essential nutritional sources (protein, iron sources etc.), leaving their nutritional status highly susceptible to further economic shocks.

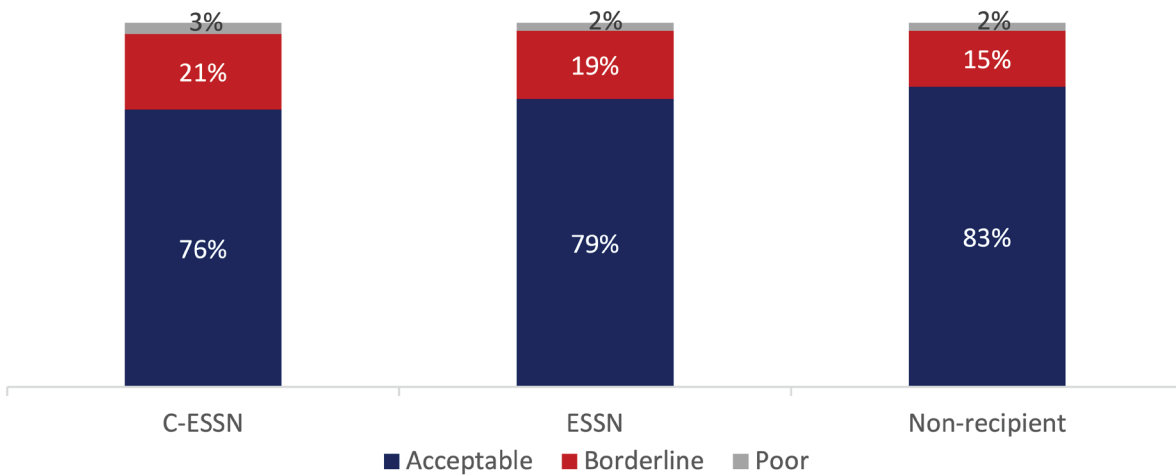


Figure 27 Food consumption groups by recipient status

## CONCLUSION

The 4<sup>th</sup> Post-Distribution Monitoring Report (PDM 4) provides an assessment of the impact of the cash assistance on household-level outcomes, capturing changes in food security, coping strategies, expenditure patterns, and overall economic pressure. The findings reveal a widening gap between household resources and the cost of basic needs, indicating that refugee families are navigating a considerably more fragile economic environment than in previous periods. Although median incomes for C-ESSN and ESSN households have increased, rising living costs have offset these gains, resulting in persistent financial strain.

The PDM4 data points out that the majority of households are above the poverty line, and able to meet the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB). Which means that many households continue to rely on debt or other coping mechanisms to cover basic needs. Despite some improvements in income and employment opportunities, households frequently resort to short-term coping strategies, including reducing food quality, limiting education-related expenditures, and in some cases withdrawing children from school or encouraging them to work. Dietary patterns also reflect economic constraints, with households increasingly relying on carbohydrate-based staples while reducing the consumption of more diverse and nutritionally rich food sources.

At the same time, the findings highlight the continued importance of cash assistance as a critical support mechanism. Recipient households generally demonstrate relatively better outcomes in managing economic pressures and maintaining basic consumption levels compared to non-recipient households, suggesting that cash support functions as an important protective layer against worsening vulnerability. However, the analysis also indicates that existing assistance levels may not fully keep pace with rising living costs, particularly for highly vulnerable groups such as C-ESSN households, whose limited income-generating capacity constrains their ability to compensate for economic shocks through labour market participation.

Overall, the results underscore the need to ensure that cash assistance remains responsive to changing economic conditions and household needs. Strengthening the adequacy and targeting of assistance will be essential to sustain food security, protect access to essential services such as education and healthcare, and prevent further erosion of household resilience in an increasingly challenging economic context.



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# SSN

## THE SOCIAL SAFETY NET *Programme*



# 4<sup>th</sup> Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) Report

Mar'26



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