



AMID ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

FINDINGS OF POST DISTRIBUTION MONITORING SURVEY (ROUND 14) | JULY 2022



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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

About the program

The Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) program provides unrestricted, unconditional cash assistance¹ to people living under temporary or international protection in Turkey to help them meet their basic needs. The ESSN is funded by the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) and implemented through a partnership of the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS), the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC). As of March 2022, the ESSN has provided monthly assistance to over 1.5 million people.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to assess the impact of ESSN assistance on the socio-economic conditions of recipients, with particular focus on their level of expenditure, debt, coping strategies and food consumption. Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) aims to track changes over time and compare these to the ones experienced by non-recipient households.

Objectives of the study

- 1** To measure the extent to which minimum expenses such as food, rent, utilities, non-food items (NFI), health, education, etc. are met.
- 2** To determine if/how income, debt and expenditure are critical in understanding households' economic resilience.
- 3** To determine the severity of the coping strategies adopted when facing economic/financial difficulties.
- 4** To assess how secure their food consumption habits are.



“

Prices are increasing day by day. One kilogram of sugar used to cost 4 TRY, now it costs 7 TRY. For example, 100 TRY that I earned for a day used to cover my needs. Currently, under these living conditions, I need to earn 300 TRY, however I barely make 100 TRY.

– Male, ESSN recipient, Hatay

1 • According to Turk Stat, the annual inflation for food and non-alcoholic beverages was 64.47 per cent; for housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels, it was 49.72 per cent. For more detailed information please visit: <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Tuketici-Fiyat-Endeksi-Subat-2022-45791>

Background & statistics

The annual inflation rate has been increasing exponentially in Turkey since November 2021. Cost of living has been severely impacted and prices of main expenditure items, namely food, rent and utilities have skyrocketed². Accordingly, minimum wage has been increased by 50.5 per cent³.

Since March 2022, COVID-19 measures in the country have been eased further and the requirement to wear masks in open areas has been removed.

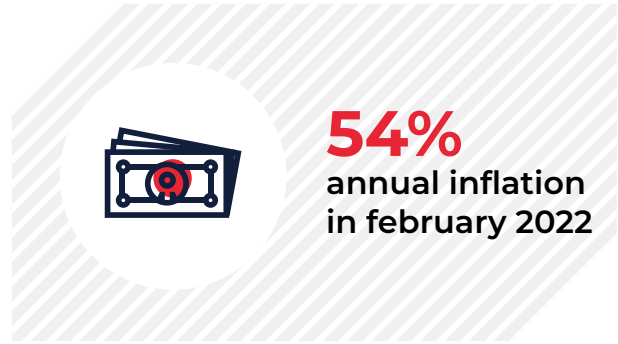
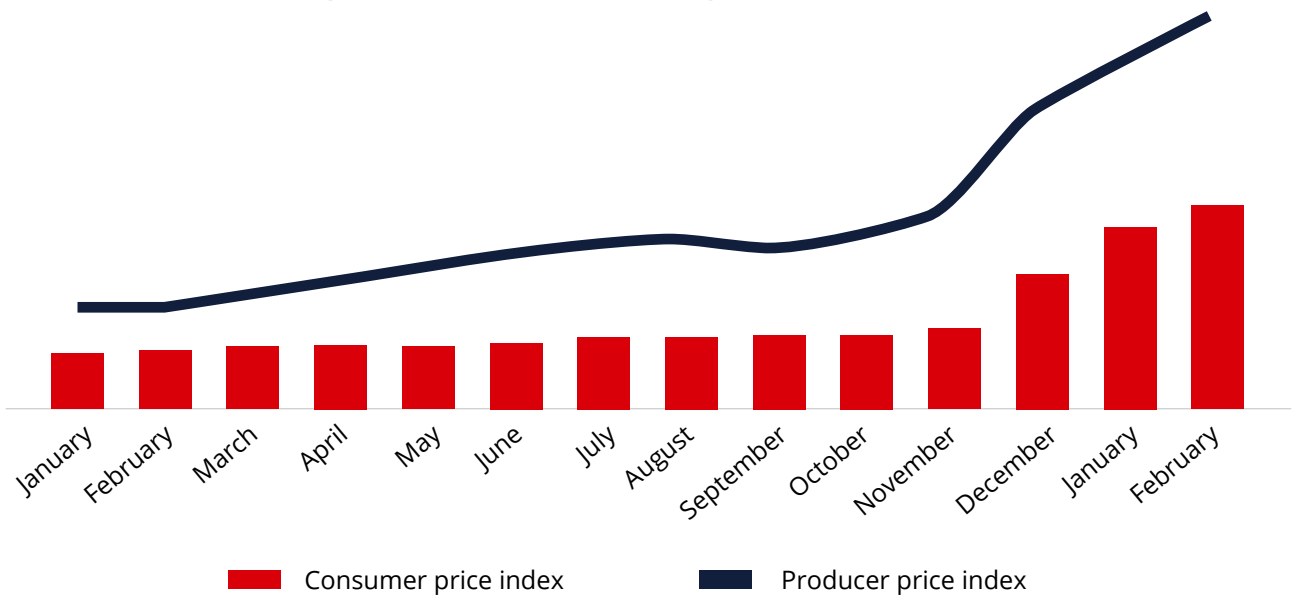


Figure 1: Annual Rate of Changes in CPI and PPI (%)



2 • According to Turk Stat, the annual inflation for food and non-alcoholic beverages was 64.47 per cent; for housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels, it was 49.72 per cent. For more detailed information please visit: <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Tuketici-Fiyat-Endeksi-Subat-2022-45791>

3 • For more detailed information please visit: <https://www.csgeb.gov.tr/cgm/haberler/2022-yili-asgari-ucreti-brut-5-004-tl-net-4-253-40-tl-olarak-belirlendi/>

CHAPTER 2: SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Research design

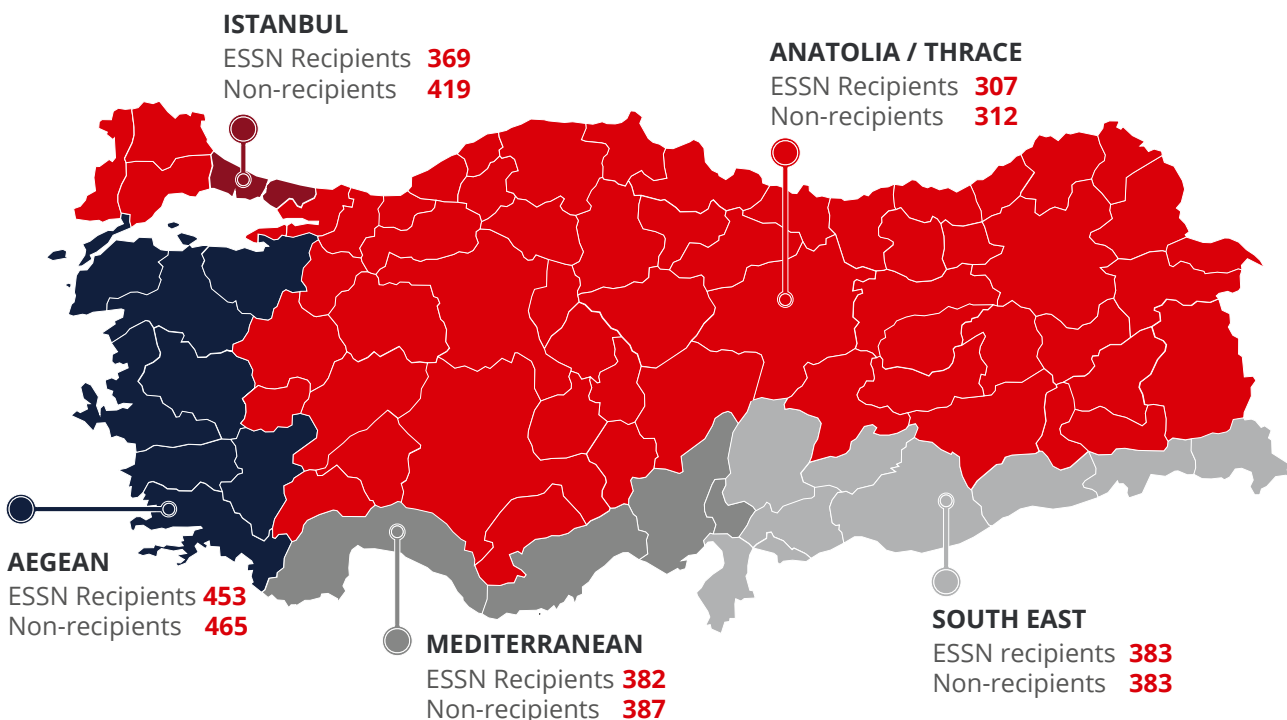
This PDM survey adopted a cross sectional survey design. This involved observations of a sample or cross-section of a population or phenomenon made at one point in time. The unit of analysis chosen for the PDM was the household.

Sample

Sample sizes for both ESSN recipient and non-recipient groups were calculated at 95 per cent confidence level and 5 per cent margin of error. PDM 14 was conducted in January-February 2022, capturing responses from 1,894 ESSN recipients and 1,966 non-recipients. Comparisons were done using the results from PDM 13 which was conducted between September and November 2021. Data was collected by enumerators from TRC's M&E unit in Gaziantep through phone surveys.

Area of study

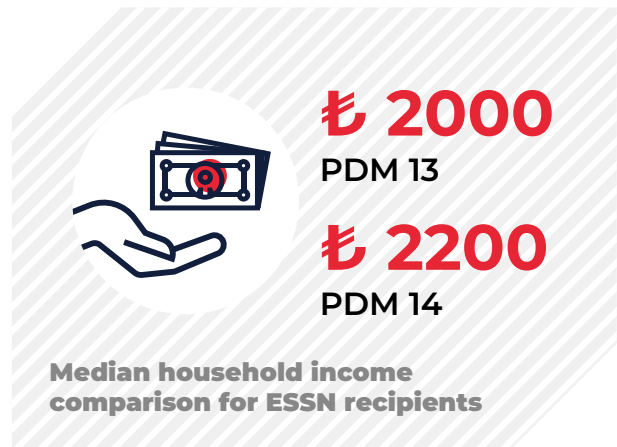
Considering that the ESSN is a nationwide program with recipients spread across different regions with diverse socio-economic status and with 80 per cent of the ESSN applicants being concentrated in 10 provinces, a nationwide sampling may lead to sampling errors. For a better estimation of study parameters, regional stratification based on the proportion of applicant households was applied. Aegean, Anatolia, Istanbul, Mediterranean and South-East regions were used as stratum, based on their similarities in their programme application figures and in socio-economic dynamics. Istanbul, the main commercial city of Turkey, was accepted as a stratum by itself because of its distinct socio-economic status, and its consideration as an independent stratum by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat). Independent random samples were drawn from these five regions as per Figure 1.



CHAPTER 3: FINDINGS

Income

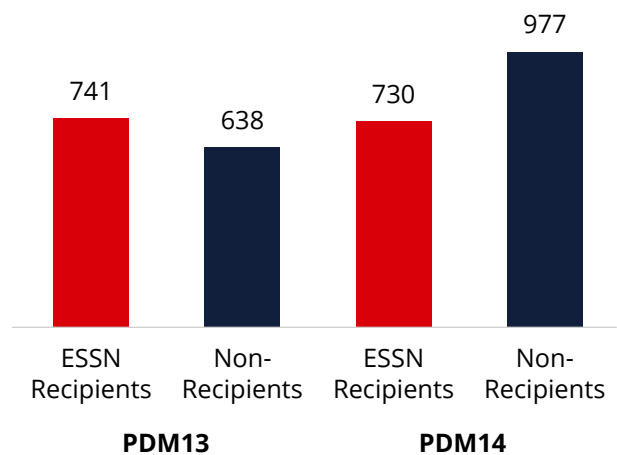
From PDM13 to PDM14, median household income increased from 2,500 TRY to 2,800 TRY for non-recipients and from 2,000 TRY to 2,200 TRY for ESSN recipients (excluding ESSN and CCTE assistance). Istanbul was the region with the highest household income, whereas the South- East region registered the lowest income for both ESSN recipient and non-recipient households. Furthermore, unskilled labour was still the main source of income for both ESSN recipient and non-recipient households. According to PDM14 results, the top three sources of income in ESSN recipient households were unskilled labour, ESSN card and skilled labour.



Expenditure

Median household expenditure reached 4,463 TRY for ESSN recipient and non-recipient households combined. Istanbul and Aegean were the regions with the highest median household expenditure for both ESSN recipient and non-recipient households. Food, rent and utilities were still the three items with the largest share in household expenditure, followed by hygiene and transportation. For ESSN recipients, median household expenditure on food went from 1,286 TRY to 2,143 TRY, while it remained stable at 1,714 TRY for non-recipient households. Sixty-four per cent of the ESSN recipient households reported expenditure below Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB), whereas it was 54 per cent for non-recipient households⁴.

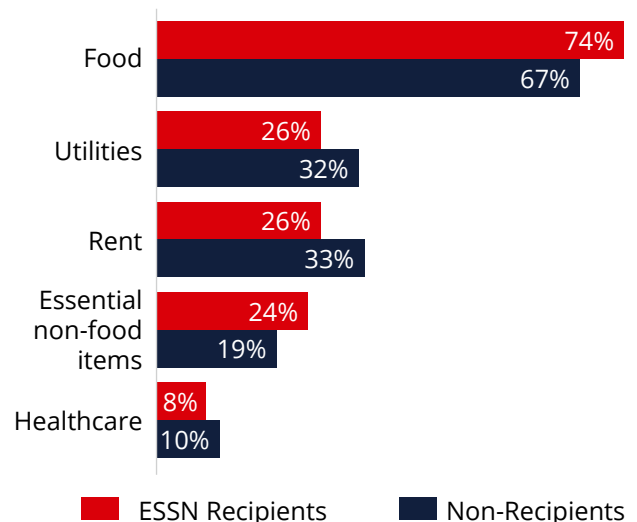
Figure 2: Per capita expenditure by ESSN status



Debt

Eighty-three per cent of the ESSN recipient households have debt, according to PDM 14 analysis results. Compared to PDM 13, the median debt amount increased from 2,500 TRY to 3,000 TRY for ESSN recipients, while it remained steady at 3,000 TRY for non-recipient households. Local shops were the main sources of debt for ESSN recipients (65 per cent) whereas friends and relatives were the main source of debt for non-recipient households (62 per cent). Moreover, ESSN recipient and non-recipient households borrowed to meet their most basic needs, namely food, rent, utilities, essential non-food items and healthcare.

Figure 3: Debt sources by ESSN status

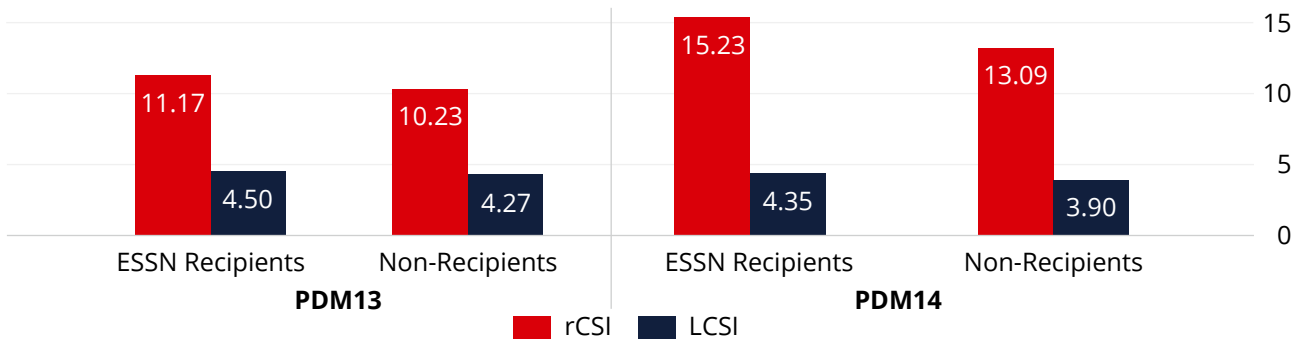


4 • The adjusted MEB calculation was used for this result, depending on ESSN status.

Reduced coping strategy index (RCSI)

Comparing PDM13 with PDM14, the rCSI score escalated from 11.17 to 15.23 for ESSN recipients, and from 10.23 to 13.09 for non-recipient households⁵. Relying on less preferred/ less expensive food was the most frequently adopted coping strategy for both ESSN recipient (80 per cent) and non-recipient (81 per cent) households. Over 50 per cent of participant households shared that they reduced the number of meals consumed in a day.

Figure 4: Coping strategies by ESSN status



Livelihood coping strategy index (LCSI)

Overall the LCSI score was slightly lower compared to PDM 13 for ESSN recipient (from 4.50 to 4.35) and non-recipient (from 4.27 to 3.90) households.

Stress coping strategies According to PDM 14, buying food on credit (72 per cent) and borrowing money from non-relatives to meet basic needs (48 per cent) were the most adopted livelihood coping strategies by both ESSN recipient and non-recipient households.

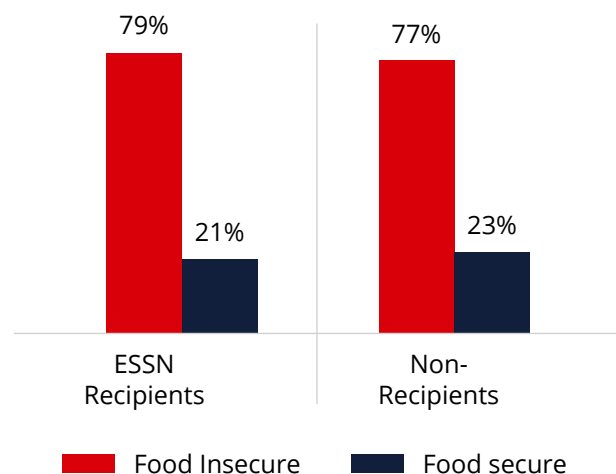
Crisis coping strategies Both ESSN recipient and non-recipient households reduced their expenditure on education (42 per cent and 24 per cent) and health (34 per cent and 37 per cent). In addition, 9 per cent of the ESSN recipient households and 5 per cent of non-recipient households withdrew their children from school.

Emergency coping strategies Involving children in income generation was the most frequently adopted emergency coping strategy (13 per cent) for ESSN recipients, while it was moving the entire household to another location (13 per cent) for non-recipient households.

Food security

Food security is defined as “when all people at all times have both physical and economic access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs for a productive and healthy life”. Two indicators were used in this study to measure participant households’ food security levels: the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) and the Food Consumption Score (FCS). Both indicate that participant households face high levels of food insecurity, ESSN recipient and non-recipient households alike.

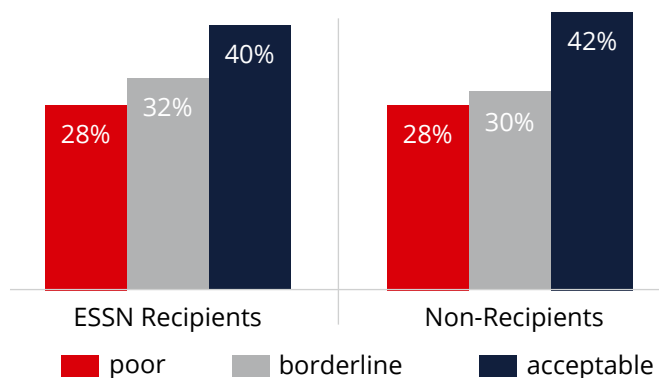
Figure 5: Household food insecurity access scale by ESSN status



5 • According to Turk Stat, the annual inflation for food and non-alcoholic beverages was 64.47 per cent; for housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels, it was 49.72 per cent. For more detailed information please visit: <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Tuketici-Fiyat-Endeksi-Subat-2022-45791>

Seventy-nine per cent of ESSN recipient and 77 per cent of non-recipient households are categorized as food insecure, relying on HFIAS index score. Similarly, less than half of both ESSN recipient (40 per cent) and non-recipient households (42 per cent) have acceptable food consumption scores. Percentage of households with acceptable FCS has decreased for both ESSN recipient and non-recipient households compared to PDM 13. This decrease was observed despite the notable increase in the food expenditure for the ESSN recipient households (1,286 TRY to 2,143 TRY) from PDM13 to PDM14.

Figure 6: Food consumption group by ESSN status



CONCLUSION

Households still struggle to meet even the most basic needs, with ESSN recipient households adopting negative coping strategies more than non-recipient households.

Household expenditure escalated even further, as did household income; however, this increase did not translate into improved well-being for ESSN recipient and non-recipient households, especially in terms of food consumption. In addition, ESSN recipient households' median debt increased.

Food insecurity continues to worsen. About 79 per cent of ESSN recipient households are food insecure, and they tend to adopt food related coping strategies to a much greater extent as high rCSI score indicates. Households suffering from severe food insecurity were more likely to adopt negative coping strategies such as purchasing food on credit, borrowing money, reducing education and health expenses.



THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES (IFRC)

The world's largest humanitarian network

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest humanitarian organization, reaching 150 million people in 192 National Societies, including Turkish Red Crescent (Türk Kızılay), through the work of 13.7 million volunteers. Together, we act before, during and after disasters and health emergencies to meet the needs and improve the lives of vulnerable people.



TURKISH RED CRESCENT (TÜRK KIZILAY)

The largest humanitarian organization in Turkey

The Turkish Red Crescent (Türk Kızılay) is the largest humanitarian organization in Turkey, to help vulnerable people in and out of disasters for years, both in the country and abroad. Millions of people currently receive support through our programmes in cooperation with the Government of Turkey. We are supporting vulnerable people impacted by disasters and other groups in need of humanitarian assistance.



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