Northeast Syria | Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI)

1-8 January 2025

MARKET OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

To facilitate humanitarian cash programming, **the Northeast of Syria Cash Working Group** (NES CWG), in collaboration with **local and international NGOs**, carries out a monthly Joint Market Monitoring Initiative in Northern Syria. This initiative (JMMI) assesses **the availability and prices of basic commodities** typically sold in markets and consumed by the average Syrian household. These include food, water, and non-food items such as fuel, shelter and clothing.

Among these, 18 components (measured by 24 items) form **the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB),** which signifies the minimum culturally adjusted **items necessary to sustain a household of 6 individuals for a month.**

Coverage

4	Assessed governorates
10	Assessed Districts
27	Assessed sub-districts
46	Assessed communities
1892	Shops surveyed

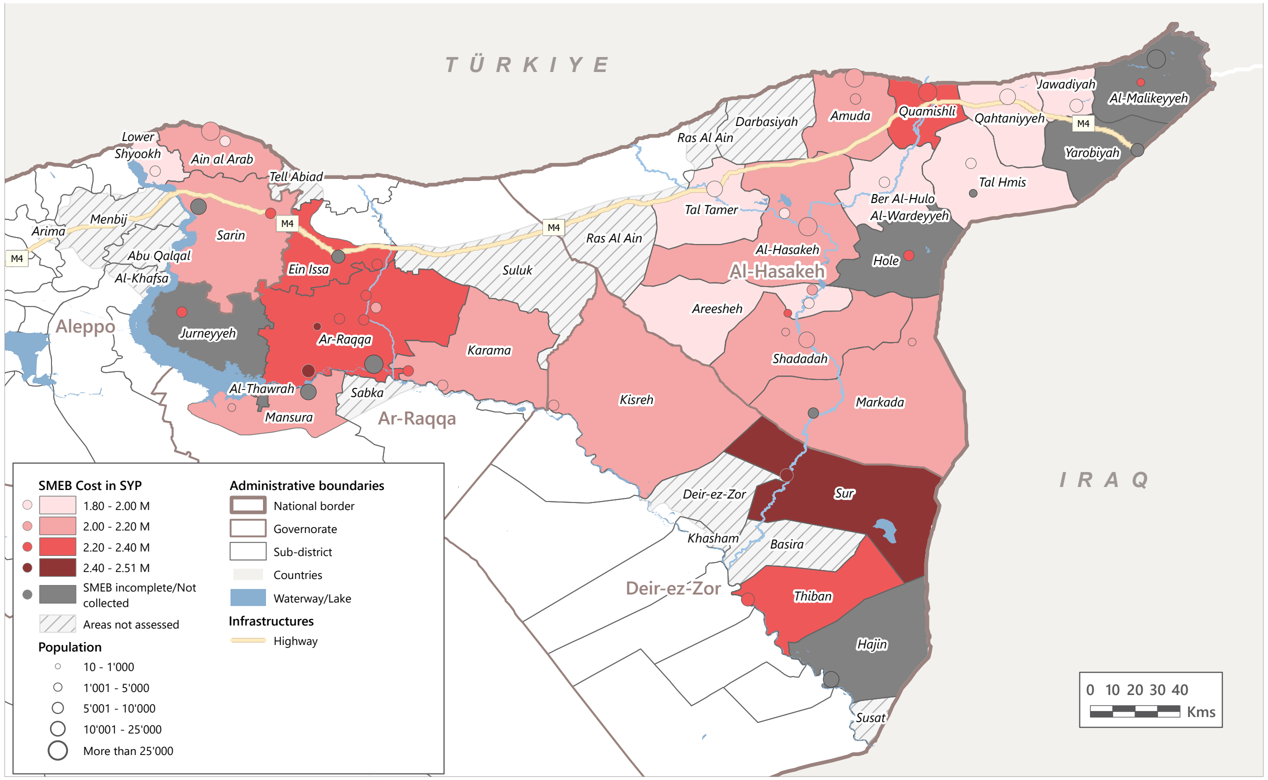
KEY INDICATORS

Cost of SMEB
2,054,598 SYP -15% ▼
164.4 USD +52% ▲

Cost of SMEB Food
1,532,458 SYP -14% ▼
123 USD +14% ▲

SYP/USD
informal exchange rate
12,500 SYP -24% ▼

Cost of the SMEB, Sub-districts in Northeast Syria, SYP



KEY FINDINGS

- The **informal regional median SYP/USD exchange rate decreased by 24%** compared to the December 2024 JMMI data, driven by political developments that reportedly affected business operations.
- The **cost of the SMEB food component decreased** across all assessed subdistricts in Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, Deir-Ez-Zor, and Ar-Raqqa, likely reflecting the greater impact of recent developments in Syria on these areas at the time of data collection.
- In line with seasonal trends, **the prices of several monitored fresh food items fluctuated significantly.** Tomato, cucumber, and onion prices increased by 43%, 34%, and 4.3%, respectively, while potato prices declined by 25%.
- **25% of vendor KIs** reported that **security issues** had **negatively impacted** their business in the 7 days before data collection **with Deir-ez-Zor experiencing the highest impact.**
- A significant percentage of interviewed **vendors reported price inflation as a common supply challenge, with 77% in Deir-ez-Zor, followed by 57% in Al-Hasakeh, 36% in Ar-Raqqa, and 35% in Aleppo.** Rising supplier costs continue to hinder vendors' ability to sustain their current level of operations.

Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB)

The SMEB is a tool designed by the Cash-based responses Technical Working Group (CBR-TWG) for Northern Syria. The first version of the SMEB was developed in 2014 and formed the basis of the northern Syria joint market monitoring, a partnership between CBR-TWG member NGOs & REACH. The current SMEB is based on the 2017 Revision. The SMEB is designed as an indicator of the cost of the minimum, culturally-appropriate items that a family of 6 needs to survive for one month, while meeting basic standards for nutritious food, water use and hygiene in Northern Syria. The cost of the SMEB can be used as a proxy for understanding the financial burdens that households face in different locations.

SMEB Contents

Food	
Bread	37 kg
Bulgur	15 kg
Chicken	6 kg
Eggs	6 kg
Ghee (kg) / Vegetable oil (L)	7kg / L
Red Lentils	15 kg
Rice	19 kg
Salt	1 kg
Sugar	5 kg
Tomato paste	6 kg
Vegetables	12 kg
Hygiene (NFI)	
Bathing soap	12 bars
Laundry / dish soap	3 kg
Sanitary pads	4 packs of 10
Toothpaste	200 kg
Other items	
Cooking fuel	
Water trucking	15 L
Phone data	4500 L
Float (other costs)	1 GB

Exchange rate trends

After a period of relative stability, the regional median informal exchange rate saw a sharp 24% decline between December 2024 and January 2025, dropping from 16,400 SYP/1 USD to 12,500 SYP/1 USD. However, this fluctuation does not indicate lasting improvement, as rapid and unpredictable currency movements continue to undermine economic stability. Due to this uncertainty, households are increasingly turning to alternative assets—such as precious metals and foreign currencies—to preserve the real value of their savings, as reported by REACH field staff.

This volatility is largely driven by localized conflict dynamics, political instability, and economic disruptions, making it difficult for vendors to plan or operate reliably. Many traders have reported struggling to set prices or secure supplies, leading to inconsistencies in market activity. Furthermore, as of mid-January, the exchange rate has remained at 12,500 SYP/1 USD, according to REACH Rapid Market Monitoring data**, though its stability remains uncertain given the broader economic and political climate.

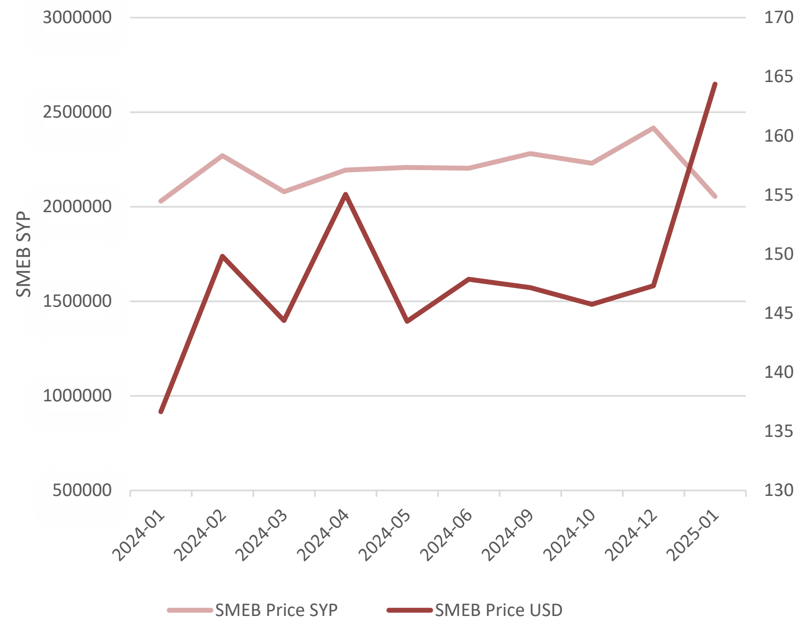
16%▲

The value of the SYP has improved by 16% in the past year.

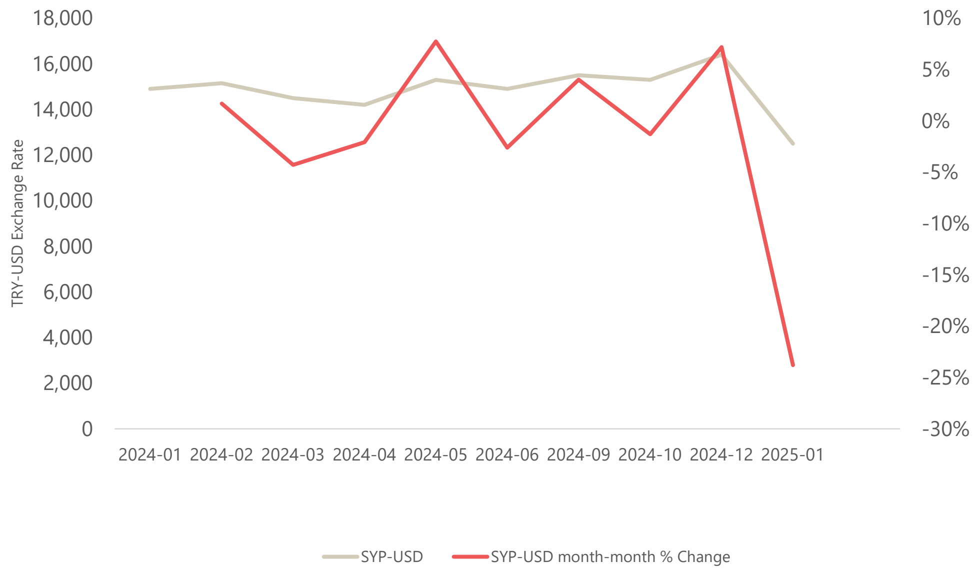
1%▲

The cost of the SMEB in SYP has increased by 1% in the past year.

Regional median SMEB prices, SYP and USD*

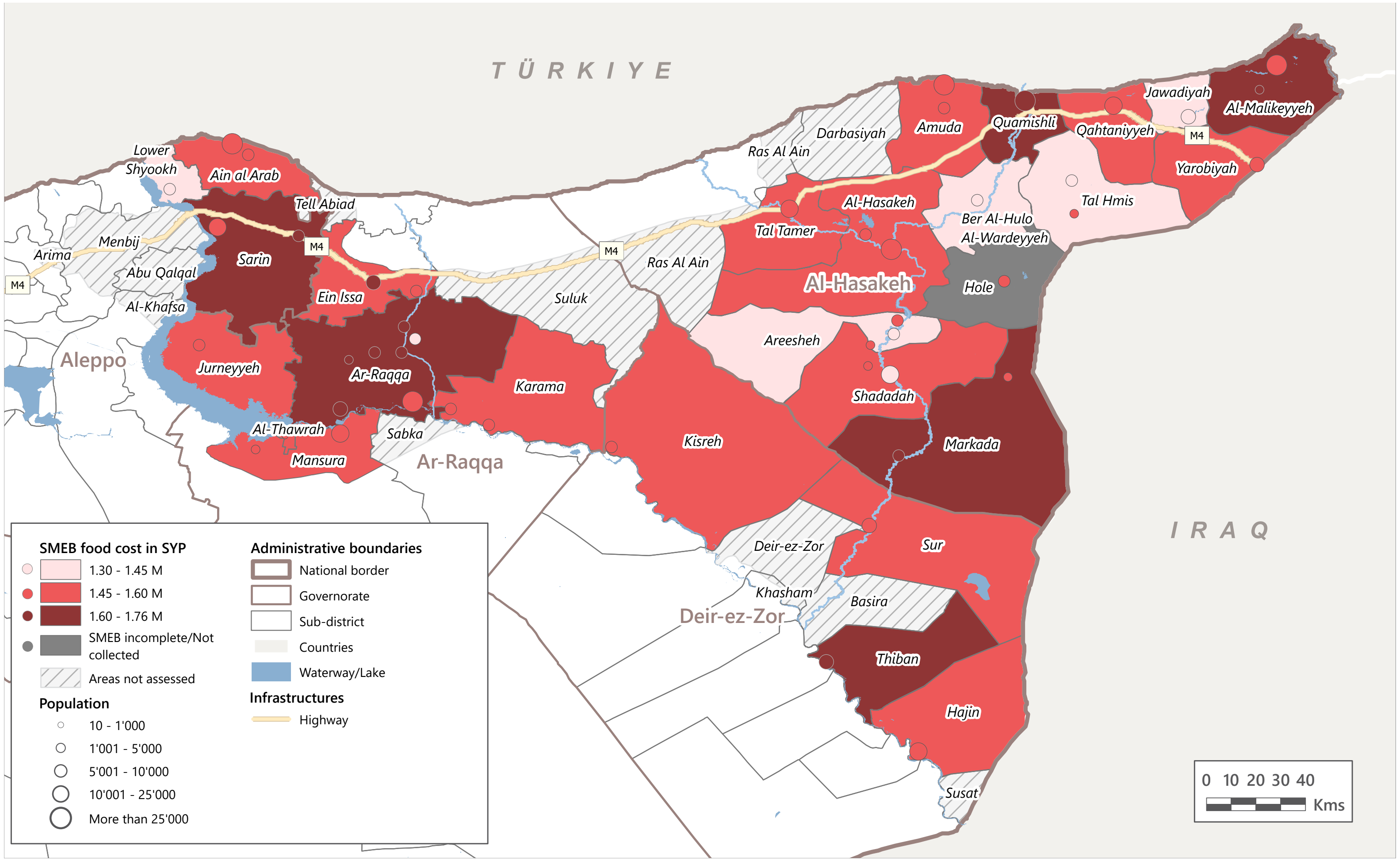


Regional median USD/SYP informal exchange rate trends*



* No data was collected in July, August and November 2024.
** Northeast Syria, Rapid Market Assessment

SMEB food prices, SYP



Price of SMEB Food, sub-district, SYP

Location	Median Price SYP	Change since Dec 2024	Median Price USD
Aleppo governorate			
Ain al Arab	1,509,800	-23% ▼	121
Lower Shyookh	1,434,375	-9% ▼	115
Sarin	1,658,764	-10% ▼	133
Al-Hasakeh governorate			
Al-Hasakeh	1,577,310	-15% ▼	126
Al-Malikeyyeh	1,609,950	-8% ▼	129
Amuda	1,521,667	-14% ▼	122
Areesheh	1,384,750	-14% ▼	111
Be'r Al-Hulo Al-	1,386,500	-22.5%	111
Hole	No data	No data	No data
Jawadiyah	1,379,200	-15% ▼	110
Markada	1,645,000	-6% ▼	132
Qahtaniyyeh	1,476,000	-13% ▼	118
Quamishli	1,665,009	-11% ▼	133
Shadadah	1,462,000	-13% ▼	117
Tal Hmis	1,385,250	-19% ▼	111
Tal Tamer	1,479,000	-19% ▼	118
Ya'robiyah	1,546,750	-10% ▼	124
Deir Ez-Zor			
Hajin	1,572,167	-14.6%	126
Kisreh	1,452,000	-12.4%	116
Sur	1,492,429	-10% ▼	119
Thiban	1,602,227	-9% ▼	128
Ar-Raqqa			
Al-Thawrah	1,581,775	-25% ▼	127
Ar-Raqqa	1,612,340	-20% ▼	129
Ein Issa	1,565,571	-23% ▼	125
Jurneyyeh	1,543,250	-9% ▼	123
Karama	1,573,241	-12% ▼	126
Mansura	1,490,750	-16% ▼	119

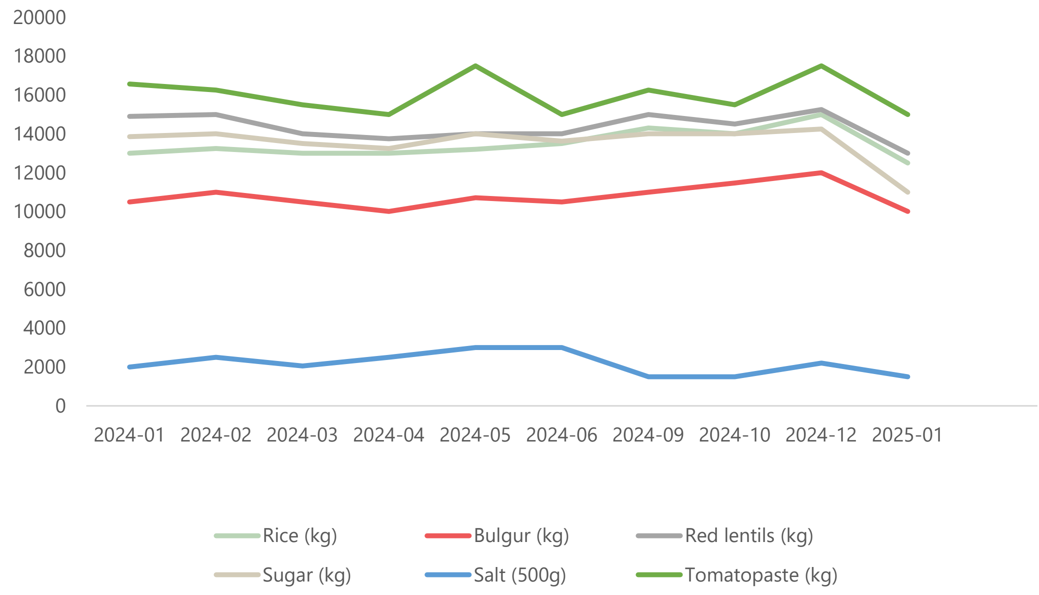
INTER-AGENCY CWG CASH WORKING GROUP NorthEast Syria (NES)
REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

Food price trends

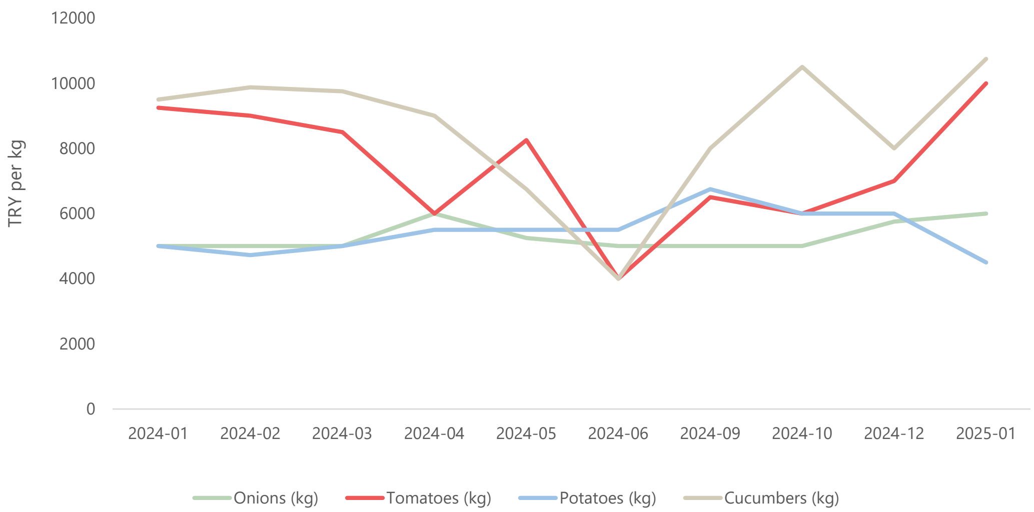
During the winter months, households in Northeast Syria struggle to secure basic food needs as seasonal expenses—such as heating and clothing—further strain already limited resources. This winter 2024-2025, these challenges have been worsened by recent political and territorial shifts following the opposition's takeover of Syrian Government-controlled areas, adding uncertainty to markets and livelihoods.

Between December 2024 and January 2025, the regional median for monitored food items dropped by 15%, reducing the annual price increase to 1.23%, down from 15% in the previous round. SMEB food prices fell across all assessed subdistricts, with bulk food items experiencing the most significant reductions. The regional median price of salt decreased by 32%, possibly reflecting fewer supply chain disruptions in early January. However, despite these declines, the financial strain on households remains significant due to persistent winter-related expenses and the economic uncertainty stemming from recent developments. The seasonal demand for heating and other essentials continues to limit household purchasing power, making even reduced food prices insufficient to provide meaningful relief. Moreover, not all food items followed the downward trend—vegetable prices continued to rise, with tomatoes, cucumbers, and onions increasing by 43%, 34%, and 4.3%, respectively—highlighting ongoing market volatility and the uneven impact of price fluctuations.

Regional median price of bulk food items, SYP*



Regional median price of vegetables, SYP*



Food price changes

Item	Unit	Median Price SYP	1-month change (SYP)*	Median Price USD**
Bulk food items				
Bulgur	1kg	10,000	-17% ▼	0.80
Red lentils	1kg	13,000	-15% ▼	1.04
Rice	1kg	12,500	-17% ▼	1.00
Salt	500g	1,500	-32% ▼	0.12
Sugar	1kg	11,000	-23% ▼	0.88
Tomato Paste	1kg	15,000	-14% ▼	1.20
Vegetables				
Tomatoes	1kg	10,000	+43%▲	0.80
Potatoes	1kg	4,500	-25% ▼	0.36
Cucumbers	1kg	10,750	+34%▲	0.86
Onions	1kg	6,000	+4.3%▲	0.48

* No data was collected in July, August and November 2024.

**USD values are calculated as per the median regional informal exchange rate recorded in this round of JMMI.

Non food items

Between December 2024 and January 2025, the regional median for monitored non-food items declined by 15.3%, leading to a more moderate annual price increase of 4%. SMEB non-food prices fell across the region, with mobile data and subsidized petrol remaining stable compared to the previous round. Notably, diesel and petrol prices on the parallel market dropped by 26% and 20%, respectively, potentially indicating a temporary easing of the recent fuel crisis in Northeast Syria. However, given the persistent volatility in fuel availability and supply chain disruptions linked to political and territorial shifts, this decrease may be short-lived. The ongoing uncertainty continues to pose challenges for households and businesses, particularly those reliant on fuel for transportation and heating during the winter months.

Non-food items availability

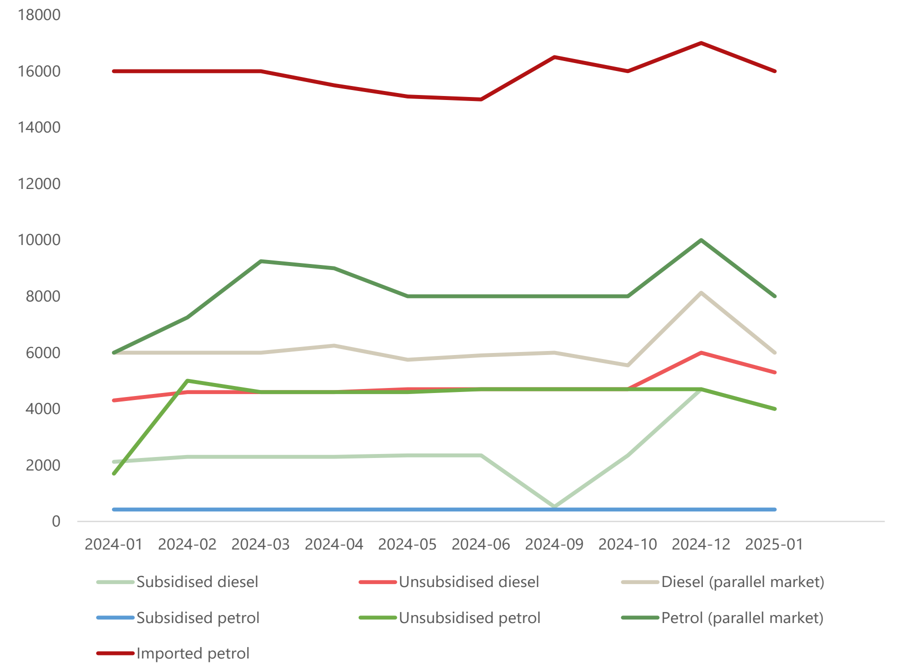
83%

of surveyed vendors reported that imported diesel fuel was unavailable in their community or neighborhood.

62%

of surveyed vendors reported that imported petrol fuel was unavailable in their community or neighborhood.

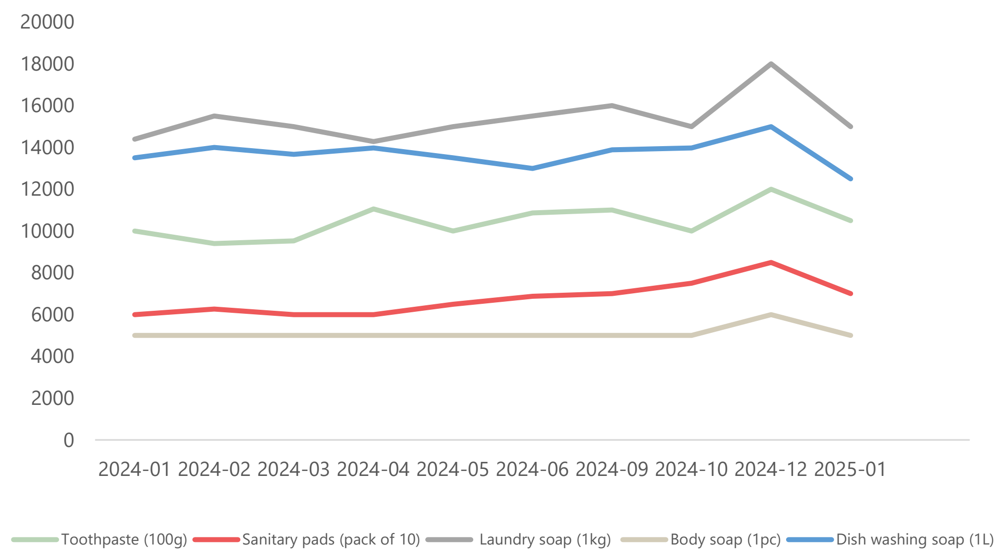
Regional median fuel price, January 2024-January 2025, SYP**



Price changes of monitored non-food items

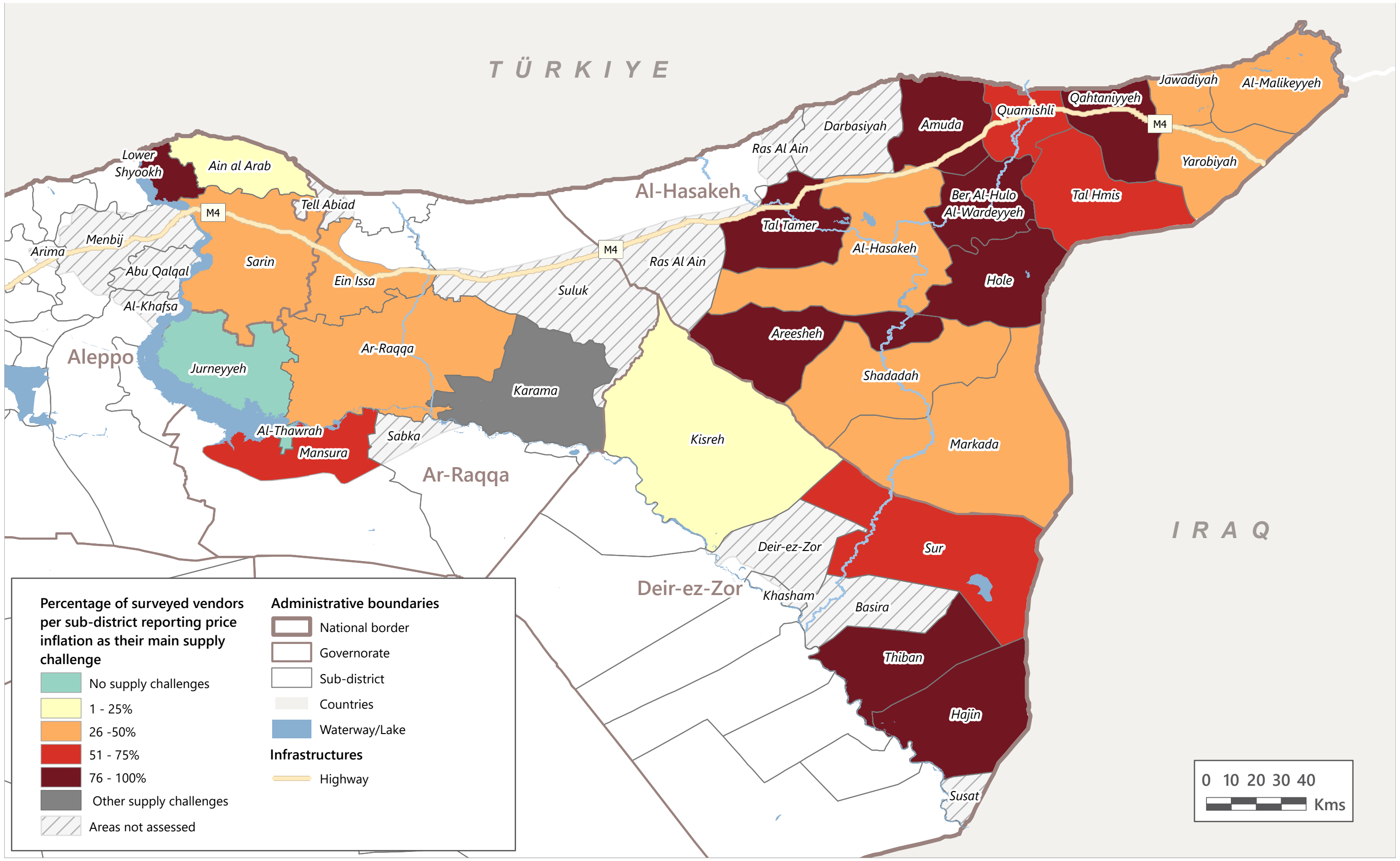
Item	Unit	Median Price SYP	1-month change (SYP)	Median Price USD*
Non-food items	SMEB			
Bathing soap	1pc	5,000	-17% ▼	0.40
Sanitary pads	10pc	7,000	-18% ▼	0.56
Toothpaste	100g	10,500	-12.5% ▼	0.84
Laundry powder	1kg	15,000	-17% ▼	1.20
Dish soap	1L	12,500	-17% ▼	1.00
Cooking fuels				
Kerosene	1L	7,000	-19% ▼	0.56
LPG gas	1L	16,429	-8% ▼	1.31
Water trucking				
Water trucking	1L	27.5	-8% ▼	0.002
Internet				
Mobile data	1gb	3,111	0 %	0.25
Transportation fuels				
Subsidised diesel	1L	4,000	-15% ▼	0.32
Unsubsidised diesel	1L	5,300	-12% ▼	0.42
Diesel (parallel market)	1L	6,000	-26% ▼	0.48
Subsidised petrol	1L	425	0 %	0.03
Unsubsidised petrol	1L	4,000	-15% ▼	0.32
Petrol (parallel market)	1L	8,000	-20% ▼	0.64
Imported petrol	1L	16,000	-6% ▼	1.28

Regional median price of hygiene items, SYP**

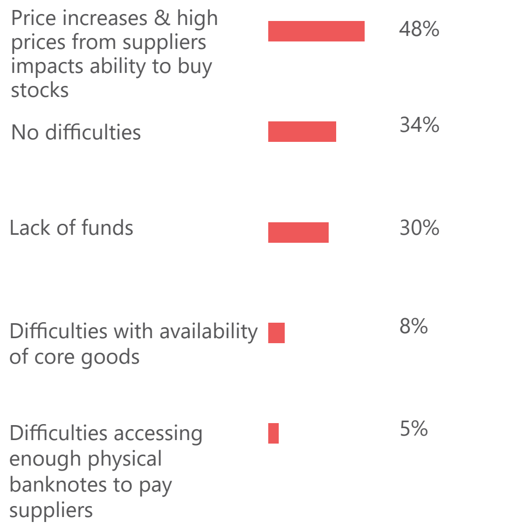


*USD values are calculated as per the median regional informal exchange rate recorded in this round of JMMI.
** No data was collected in July, August and November 2024.

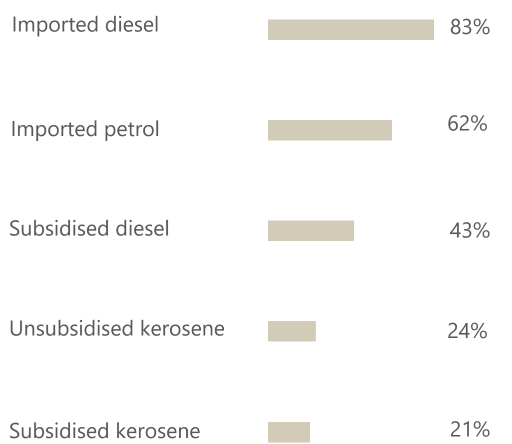
% of surveyed vendors reporting price inflation impacts their capacity to secure stocks



Top 5 reported supply challenges, % of surveyed vendors



Top 5 reported unavailable items, % of surveyed vendors



Supply challenges

According to January 2025 JMMI data, price inflation remains the most frequently reported supply challenge, reported by 48% of vendors. This underscores growing concerns over recent political and economic shifts, which have disrupted market stability and limited vendors' ability to maintain steady prices and meet consumer demand.

Market accessibility has also deteriorated, with the percentage of vendors reporting physical access barriers for consumers and traders rising from 9% in December 2024 to 17% in January 2025. This increase reflects growing difficulties in maintaining operations and restocking goods, particularly in Al-Hasakeh, which reported the highest number of disruptions.

Curfews and movement restrictions were the most commonly cited barriers (9%), alongside limited transportation options and a lack of reliable transport routes (3%). Additionally, vendors reported widespread shortages of USD banknotes across all denominations, with the most affected being the $10 (70%), $5 (63%), and $20 (62%) bills. This scarcity of small-denomination notes is further straining market transactions, complicating both vendor operations and consumer purchasing power in an already fragile economic landscape.

Methodology

The JMMI aims to inform market-based programming in Northern Syria.

Coverage

Coverage is determined through a combination of identifying key market hubs and partners' field capacity. Firstly, key market hubs are identified using the Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS), classifying all communities that 5 or more other communities report to rely on for markets as a key market hub. Secondly, these "key market hubs" are reviewed by the field teams for validity purposes. In this step, additional important markets in communities are included. These could be communities that either a) have significant markets but were not included in HSOS coverage, or b) communities that have markets that are important for people living in camps. Finally, we compare the ideal coverage with the capacity of partners and aim to ensure that key market hubs are covered. The actual coverage is, therefore, restricted to the capacity of partners.

Data Collection

In each assessed location, at least three prices (ideally 4) per food & non-food item need to be collected from different traders to ensure the quality and consistency of the collected data. In line with the purpose of the JMMI, only the prices of the cheapest, most commonly bought type of item are recorded for each product, except in cases where otherwise indicated. For example, certain NFI items specific products are monitored at the request of the shelter cluster.

SMEB Calculation:

The cost of the SMEB is determined by multiplying the median price of each item in the respective location by the quantity listed in the table on page 2.

Identification of traders

Field teams identify traders to assess based on the following criteria:

- Traders are retailers selling directly to consumers.
- Traders need to be representative of the local price level.
- Traders have knowledge of the shop operations.

To the extent possible, the same traders are revisited in every data collection round.t

Enumerators and training

The data are collected by field staff familiar with local market conditions. They undergo training on the methodology and tools provided by REACH. Training sessions occur each time a new partner joins the JMMI, at partner request, and at scheduled intervals throughout the year, such as when the assessment undergoes changes. Additionally, field teams are equipped with a JMMI Standardised Operational Procedure (SOP) offering guidance on market identification, trader assessment, and pricing. The REACH JMMI team manages the integration of partner feedback on the JMMI SOP, sharing updates, and conducting re-training with the field, as needed. Data collection is carried out using the KOBO Collect mobile application.

Data cleaning and analysis

After data collection, REACH compiles and cleans all partner data, standardizing prices, cross-checking outliers, and calculating the median cost of prices in each assessed location. Follow-ups are initiated with field teams to address data queries, including outliers, missing data, and incorrect entries. The median item prices reported in this factsheet are 'location medians,' designed to mitigate the impact of outliers and variations in data quantity among assessed locations.

Aggregation

The published data is presented at the community, sub-district, district, governorate, and regional levels. At each aggregation level, the median of all prices collected within the unit of analysis is calculated. For example, at the regional level, the median of all prices collected for a specific product in the entire region is calculated, while at the governorate level, the median of all prices collected in that governorate is calculated, and so forth. All SMEB and price index calculations utilize this method.

Challenges and limitations

- Price data reflects only the specific timeframe in which it was collected. Variations on coverage may occur between data collection rounds, and any comparisons should be regarded as indicative.
- The JMMI data collection tool requests the cheapest, most commonly bought type of each item to be recorded, as availability varies across regions. Therefore, price comparisons across regions may be based on slightly varying products.
- With current coverage, data is mostly collected from main markets, which may not be representative of rural areas.
- As the JMMI continues to expand and is extended to additional locations, the reported changes in the overall median prices may be driven by shifts in coverage rather than actual price changes.

JMMI data is updated monthly through the Interactive Dashboard where users can filter for SMEB components of interest, currencies, and assessed areas.

About the CWG

The JMMI exists within the framework of the Cash Working Group (CWG). In northeast Syria (NES), the CWG was established in May 2014 to analyse the impact of the ongoing conflict on markets in Syria and guide the implementation of humanitarian cash and voucher programmes within those markets. For more information about the CWG in NES, please contact the cash working group coordinator at cashcoordnes@gmail.com.

About REACH

REACH Initiative facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT).