

1-8 April 2024

2	Participating agencies
4	Assessed governorates
27	Assessed sub-districts
49	Assessed communities
1408	Shops surveyed

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humanitarian action

## 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 the financial burdens facing households 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
Toothpaste	200 kg
Sanitary pads	4 packs of 10

#### Other items

Cooking fuel	15 L
Water trucking	4500 L
Phone data	1 GB
Float (other costs)	7.5 % of total

## Exchange rate trends

Between March and April 2024, the regional median informal exchange rate in NES appreciated by 2%, leading to a moderate recovery in the prices of monitored items. After experiencing rapid currency depreciation in the latter half of 2023, the exchange rate has shown signs of stabilizing in recent months. Monitoring this trend in the coming months will be crucial to determine whether this stabilization will lead to an actual currency recovery and potentially ease price inflation. Currently, the regional cost of the SMEB is more than double what it was a year ago, putting enormous pressure on households to meet their basic needs.

According to reports, most shopkeepers prefer to conduct business in U.S. dollars to avoid constant price increases caused by exchange rate fluctuations. Although the majority of people in NES earn their salaries in SYP, vendors are increasingly demanding USD to import goods and cover associated fees and taxes. REACH field teams reported that local authorities have issued a directive requiring vendors to accept both SYP and USD in their shops to counter the increasing dollarisation, which is affecting households' ability to purchase goods.<sup>2</sup>

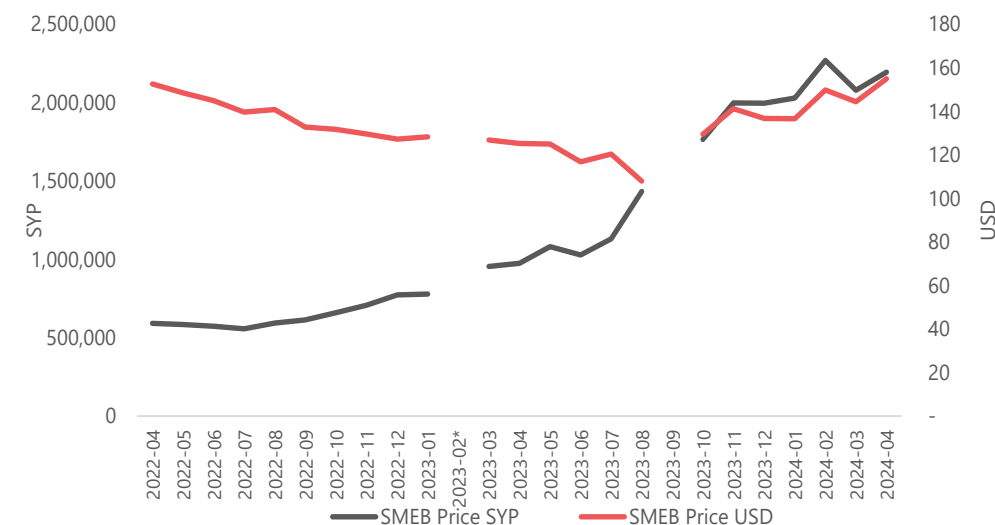
**84% ▼**

The value of the SYP has depreciated by 84% in the past year.

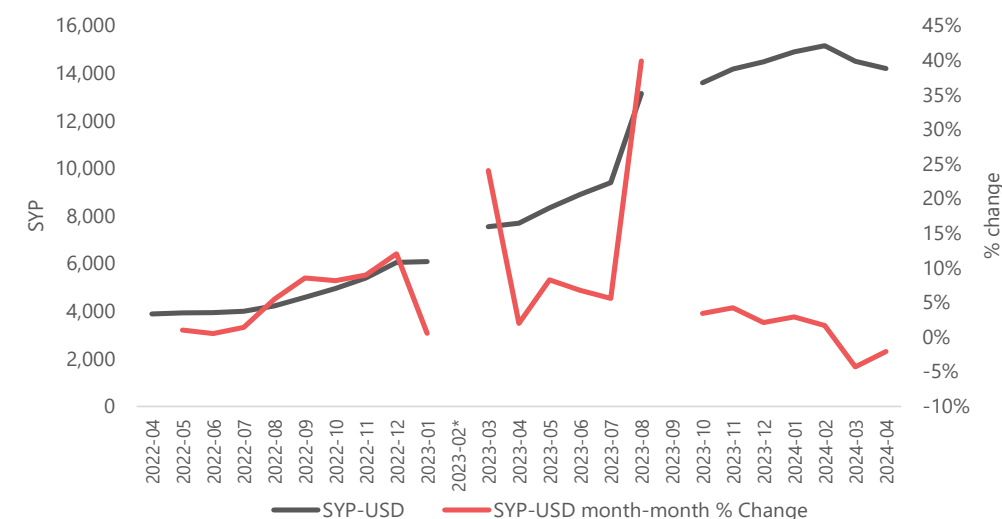
**125% ▲**

The cost of the SMEB in SYP has more than doubled in the past year.

## Regional median SMEB prices, SYP and USD\*

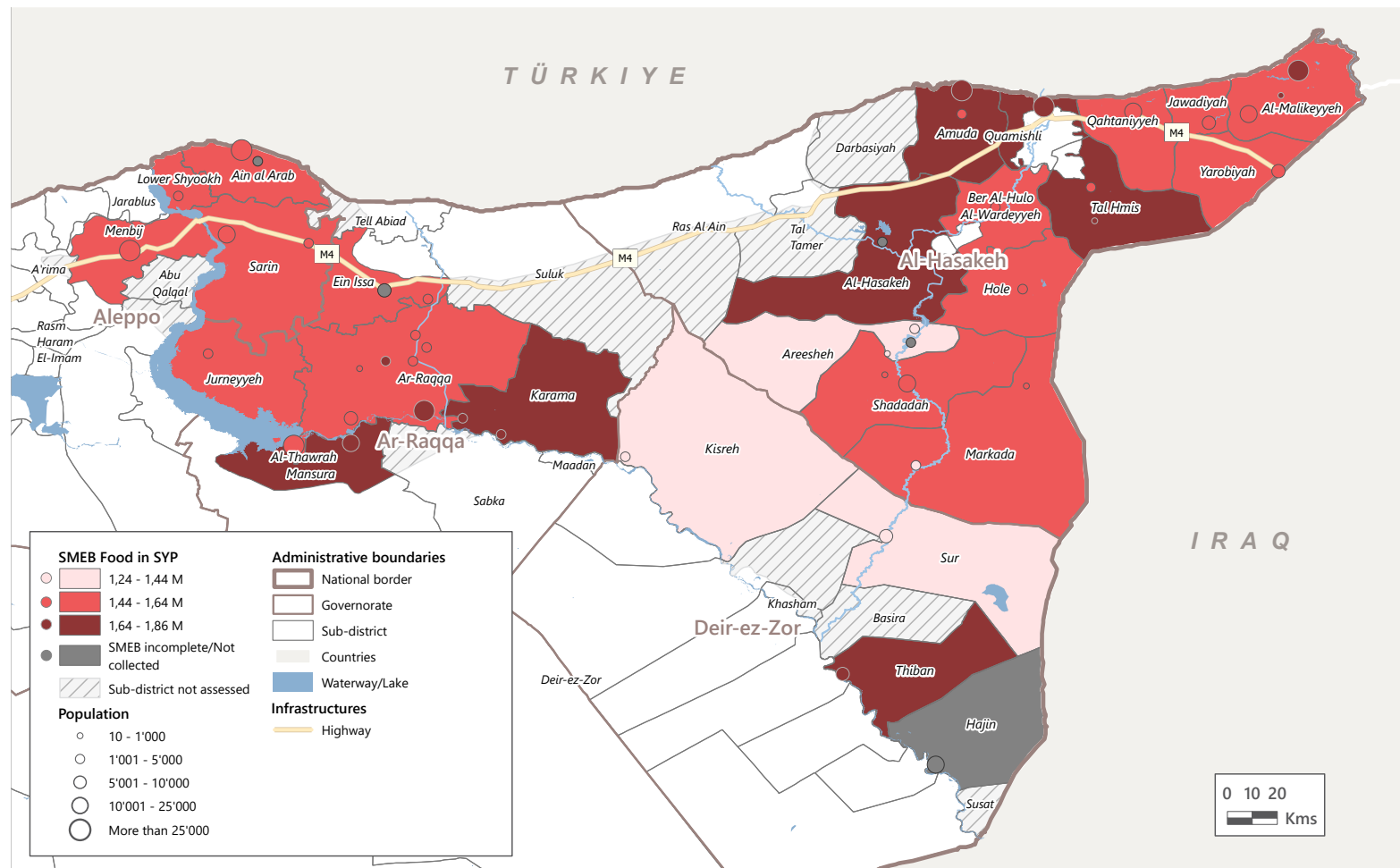


## Regional median USD/SYP informal exchange rate trends\*



\* No data was collected in February and September 2023.

## SMEB food prices, SYP



## Price of SMEB Food, sub-district, SYP

Location	Median Price SYP	Change since Mar 2024	Median Price USD
<b>Aleppo governorate</b>			
Menbij	1,516,347	+9% ▲	107
Ain al Arab	1,601,589	+11% ▲	113
Lower Shyookh	1,537,198	-5% ▼	108
Sarin	1,569,178	+13% ▲	111
<b>Al-Hasakeh governorate</b>			
Al-Hasakeh	1,653,775	+26% ▲	115
Shadadah	1,506,000	-18% ▼	106
Markada	1,442,500	-12% ▼	102
Be'r Al-Hulo	1,584,514	-3% ▼	112
Areesheh	1,279,500	-16% ▼	90
Hole	1,450,000	No Data	102
Quamishli	1,730,044	+20% ▲	123
Tal Hmis	1,690,750	+5% ▲	119
Amuda	1,689,427	+16% ▲	119
Qahtaniyyeh	1,525,139	+2% ▲	107
Al-Malikeyyeh	1,574,750	+7% ▲	111
Jawadiyah	1,473,750	-3% ▼	103
Ya'robiyah	1,517,875	-2% ▼	105
<b>Deir Ez-Zor</b>			
Kisreh	1,416,750	-7% ▼	100
Sur	1,328,250	-7% ▼	94
Hajin	NA	NA	NA
Thiban	1,642,600	+14% ▲	116
<b>Ar-Raqqa</b>			
Ar-Raqqa	1,588,188	+12% ▲	113
Karama	1,676,333	+16% ▲	118
Ein Issa	1,560,444	+8% ▲	110
Al-Thawrah	1,570,607	0%	111
Mansura	1,649,000	+6% ▲	116
Jurneyyeh	1,522,250	-12% ▼	108



72%

KIs in 72% of communities assessed in the Humanitarian Situation Overview of Syria during April round reported that food markets were functioning<sup>3</sup>

91%

Unaffordability was the most commonly reported barrier reported by KIs in 91% of HSOS assessed communities in March<sup>3</sup>

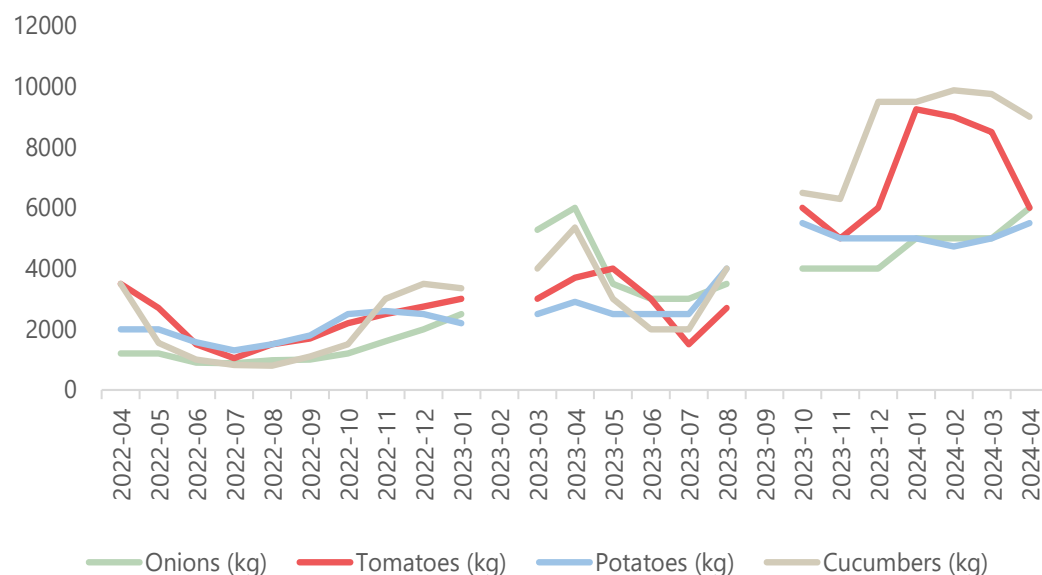
## Food price trends

Between March and April 2024, the regional median prices of monitored bulk food items showed varied trends. The overall increase was primarily driven by a significant rise in salt prices, which surged by 22%. In contrast, prices for bulgur, tomato paste, red lentils, and sugar decreased by -5%, -3%, -2%, and -2%, respectively.

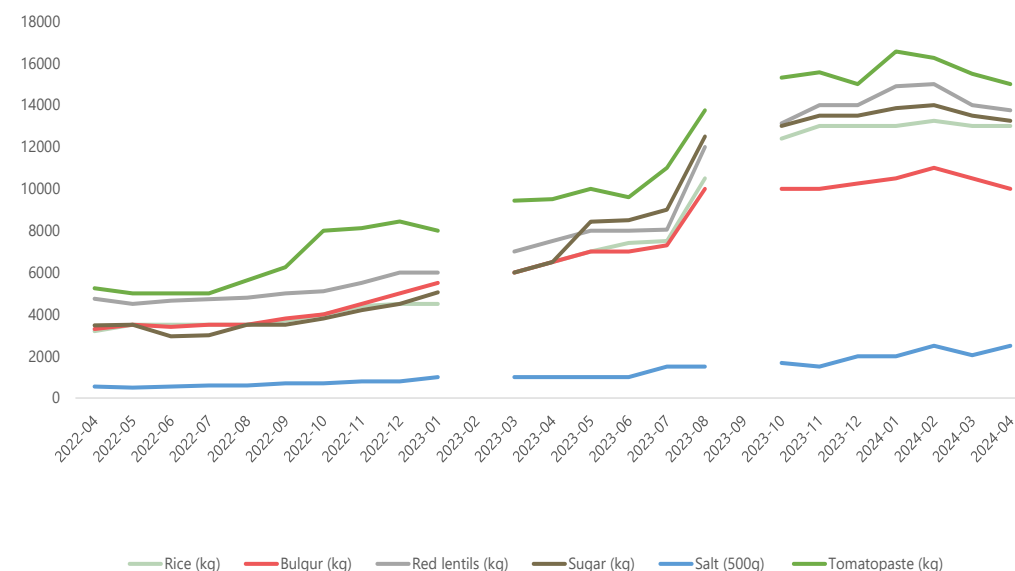
In April, JMMI data indicated that prices for monitored fresh vegetables, such as tomatoes and cucumbers, decreased as winter ended and local production increased. However, prices for onions and potatoes have risen during the same period. Notably, cucumbers and onions remain expensive, with households now paying 38% and 50% more respectively compared to six months ago at the beginning of winter. While seasonal price increases for fresh vegetables are typical, recent years have seen these increases become more pronounced due to inflated production costs and farmers' increased vulnerability to weather-related losses. This situation underscores the significant challenges households face in accessing fresh foods and highlights the potential benefits of supporting farmers in accessing and investing in greenhouses to boost local winter production.<sup>4</sup>

Airstrikes in northeast Syria have left millions without sufficient power, fuel, and water. Since January 2024, farmers in the region have struggled to irrigate their fields due to polluted rivers from strikes on oil facilities. This situation has coincided with increased variability in monthly food prices across NES sub-districts since October 2023. Disruptions in fuel distribution have worsened these challenges, impacting areas differently due to delays and limited access to subsidized fuel. Additionally, the lack of reliable power has hindered vendors' ability to store fresh foods effectively.<sup>5</sup>

## Regional median price of vegetables, SYP\*



## Regional median price of bulk food items, SYP\*



## Food price changes

Item	Unit	Median Price SYP	1-month change (SYP)	6-month change (SYP)	Median Price USD**
<b>Bulk food items</b>					
Bulgur	1kg	10,000	-5% ▼	0 %	0.70
Red lentils	1kg	13,750	-2% ▼	+5% ▲	0.97
Rice	1kg	13,000	0 %	+5% ▲	0.92
Salt	500g	2,500	+22% ▲	+49% ▲	0.18
Sugar	1kg	13,250	-2% ▼	+2% ▲	0.93
Tomato Paste	1kg	15,000	-3% ▼	-2% ▼	1.06
<b>Vegetables</b>					
Tomatoes	1kg	6,000	-29% ▼	0 %	0.42
Potatoes	1kg	5,500	+10% ▲	0 %	0.39
Cucumbers	1kg	9,000	-8% ▼	+38% ▲	0.63
Onions	1kg	6,000	+20% ▲	+50% ▲	0.42

\* No data was collected in February and September 2023.

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

## Food price trends

Between March and April 2024, the price of vegetable oil stabilized in alignment with the informal exchange rate. Since vegetable oil is imported, it is particularly susceptible to fluctuations in the exchange rate, as illustrated in the accompanying graph. Additionally, the price of ghee experienced a slight 3% increase, possibly attributed to heightened demand during Ramadan and Eid, when production of sweets typically rises.



### 29%

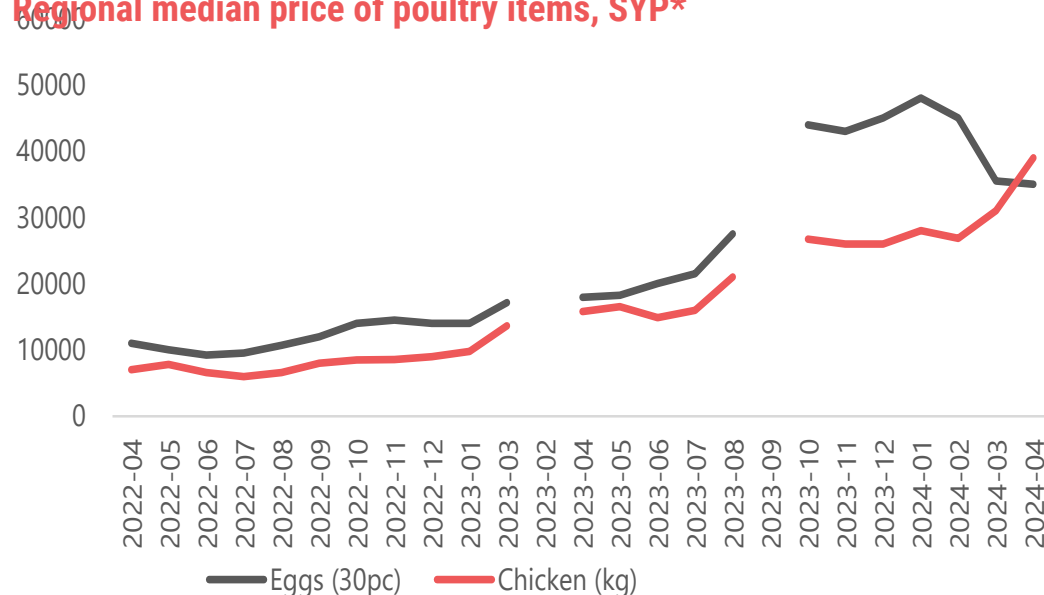
of surveyed vendors in April reported unsubsidised bread was not available in their community.



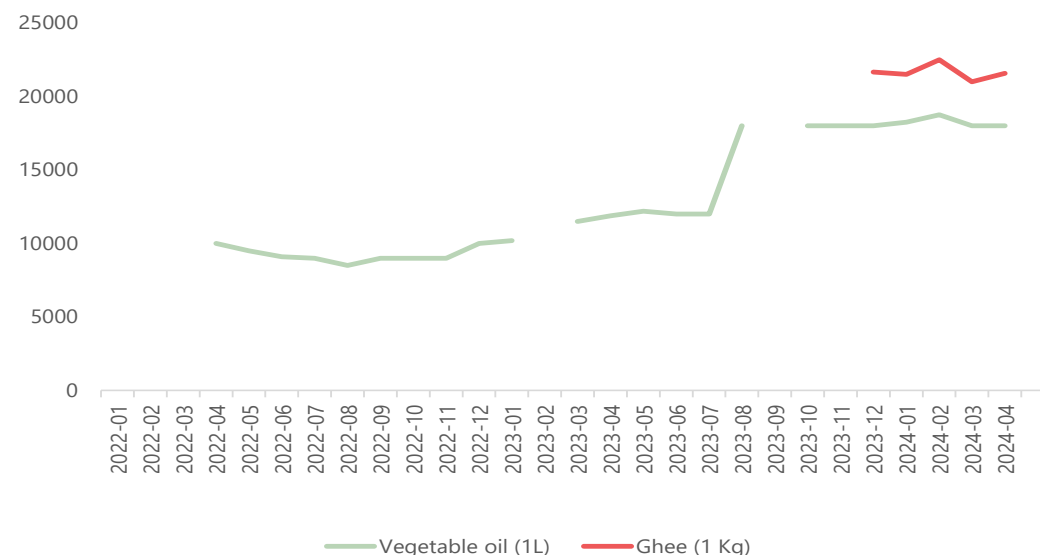
### 12%

of surveyed vendors in April reported subsidised bread was not available in their community.

## Regional median price of poultry items, SYP\*



## Regional median price of vegetable oil, SYP\*



## Food price changes

Item	Unit	Median Price SYP	1-month change (SYP)	6-month change (SYP)	Median Price USD**
<b>Cooking oils</b>					
Ghee	1kg	21,571	+3%▲	NA	1.52
Vegetable oil	1L	18,000	0 %	0 %	1.27
<b>Poultry</b>					
Chicken	1kg	39,000	+26%▲	+46%▲	2.75
Eggs	1kg	35,500	-1%▼	-20%▼	2.46
<b>Bread</b>					
Subsidised bread	8pc	1,000	0 %	NA	0.07
Unsubsidised bread	8pc	5,000	+8%▲	NA	0.35

## Poultry price trends

According to JMMI data, egg prices exhibit seasonal fluctuations, usually increasing during winter when production is lower, prompting farmers to raise prices to compensate for reduced supply. In line with this seasonal pattern, egg prices decreased slightly by 1% between March and April 2024. This decline is linked to an oversupply of eggs in the local market, with no external markets available to absorb the surplus.. Comparatively, the price of chicken increased by 26% in the last month potentially linked to higher demand during Ramadan but also reportedly attributed to an outbreak of Newcastle disease among chickens last month.<sup>6</sup>

\* No data was collected in February and September 2023.

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

## Non food items

Petrol has shown the most significant price impact among monitored transportation fuels. This situation has reportedly led to widespread shortages of transportation and cooking fuels across NES, with facilities operating at significantly reduced production capacity. The increasing unavailability of fuels at stations and delays in distributing subsidized fuels are forcing households, industries, and farmers to increasingly rely on the parallel market, where prices are substantially higher.<sup>7</sup>

The price of water trucking has increased by 32%, driven mainly by a 31% rise in Aleppo. This reflects significant price variations across governorates, influenced by local economic pressures and supply challenges, especially in Aleppo and Al-Hasakeh where prices have sharply risen. Reports from Hasakah attribute declining well water levels to delayed weather patterns, reduced rainfall, and disruptions in the Khabur River flow caused by Turkey over the years. This water crisis is worsened by a severe heatwave with temperatures exceeding 45 degrees Celsius.<sup>8</sup>

# 145%

In the past 6 months the price of locally produced kerosene has increased by 145%

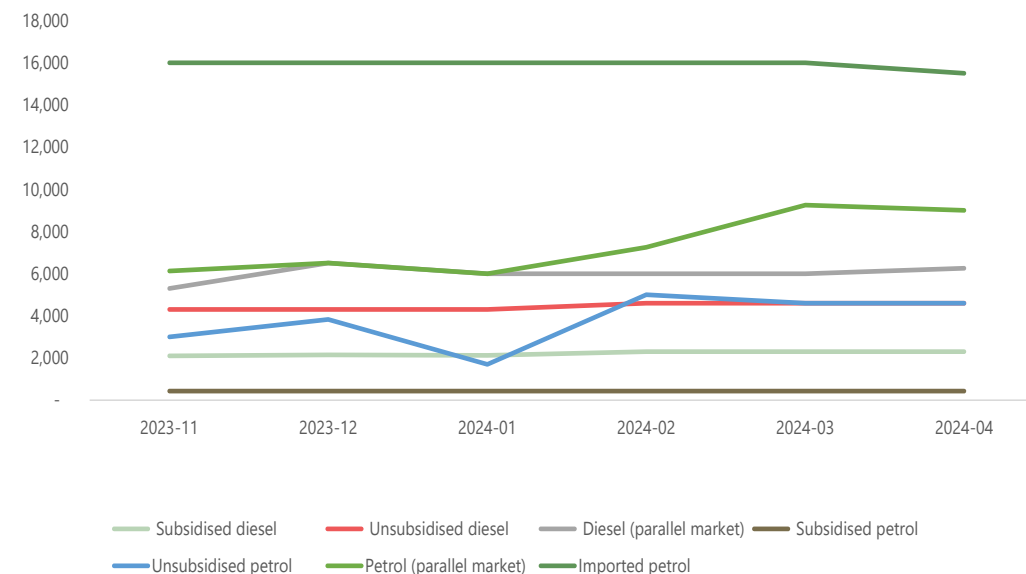
# 1144%

In the past 6 months the price of gas has increased by 1144% on average costing households more than \$10 USD for one canister of gas

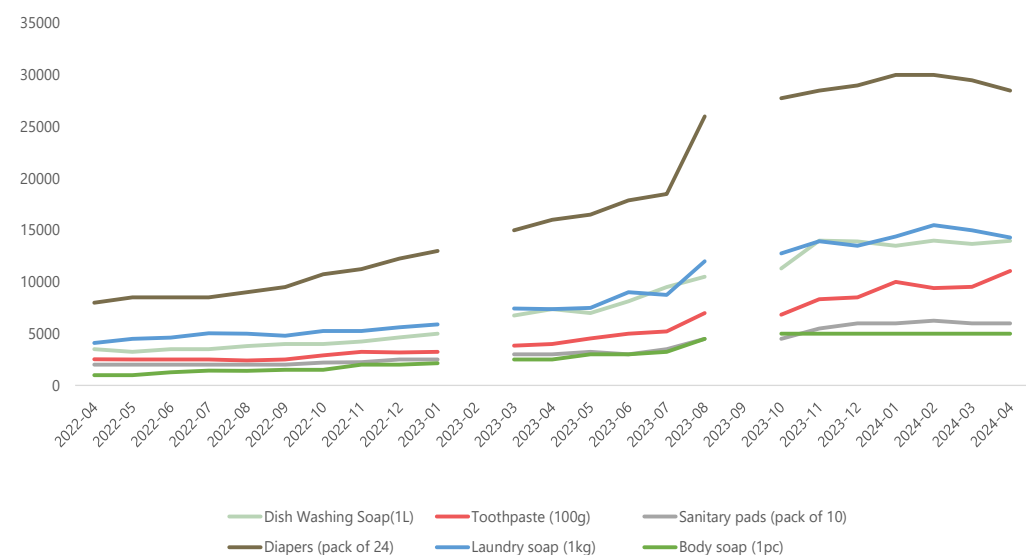
## Price changes of monitored non-food items

Item	Unit	Median Price SYP	1-month change (SYP)	6-month change (SYP)	Median Price USD*
<b>Non-food items</b>					
Bathing soap	1pc	5,000	0 %	0 %	0.35
Sanitary pads	10pc	6,000	0 %	+33%▲	0.42
Toothpaste	100g	11,056	+16%▲	+62%▲	0.78
Laundry powder	5kg	14,286	-5%▼	+12%▲	1.01
Dish soap	1L	13,972	+2%▲	+24%▲	0.98
<b>Cooking fuels</b>					
Kerosene	1L	6,125	-9%▼	+145%▲	0.43
LPG gas	1L	7,464	0 %	+1144%▲	0.53
<b>Water trucking</b>					
Water trucking	1L	20	+32%▲	+24%▲	0.001
<b>Internet</b>					
Mobile data	1gb	49,525	-6%▼	N/A	3.49
<b>Transportation fuels</b>					
Subsidised diesel	1L	2,300	0 %	+10%▲	0.16
Unsubsidised diesel	1L	4,600	0 %	+7%▲	0.32
Diesel (parallel market)	1L	6,250	+4%▲	+18%▲	0.44
Subsidised petrol	1L	425	0 %	0 %	0.03
Unsubsidised petrol	1L	4,600	0 %	+53%▲	0.32
Petrol (parallel market)	1L	9,000	-3%▼	+47%▲	0.63
Imported petrol	1L	15,500	-3%▼	-3%▼	1.09

## Regional median fuel prices, November 2023-April 2024, SYP

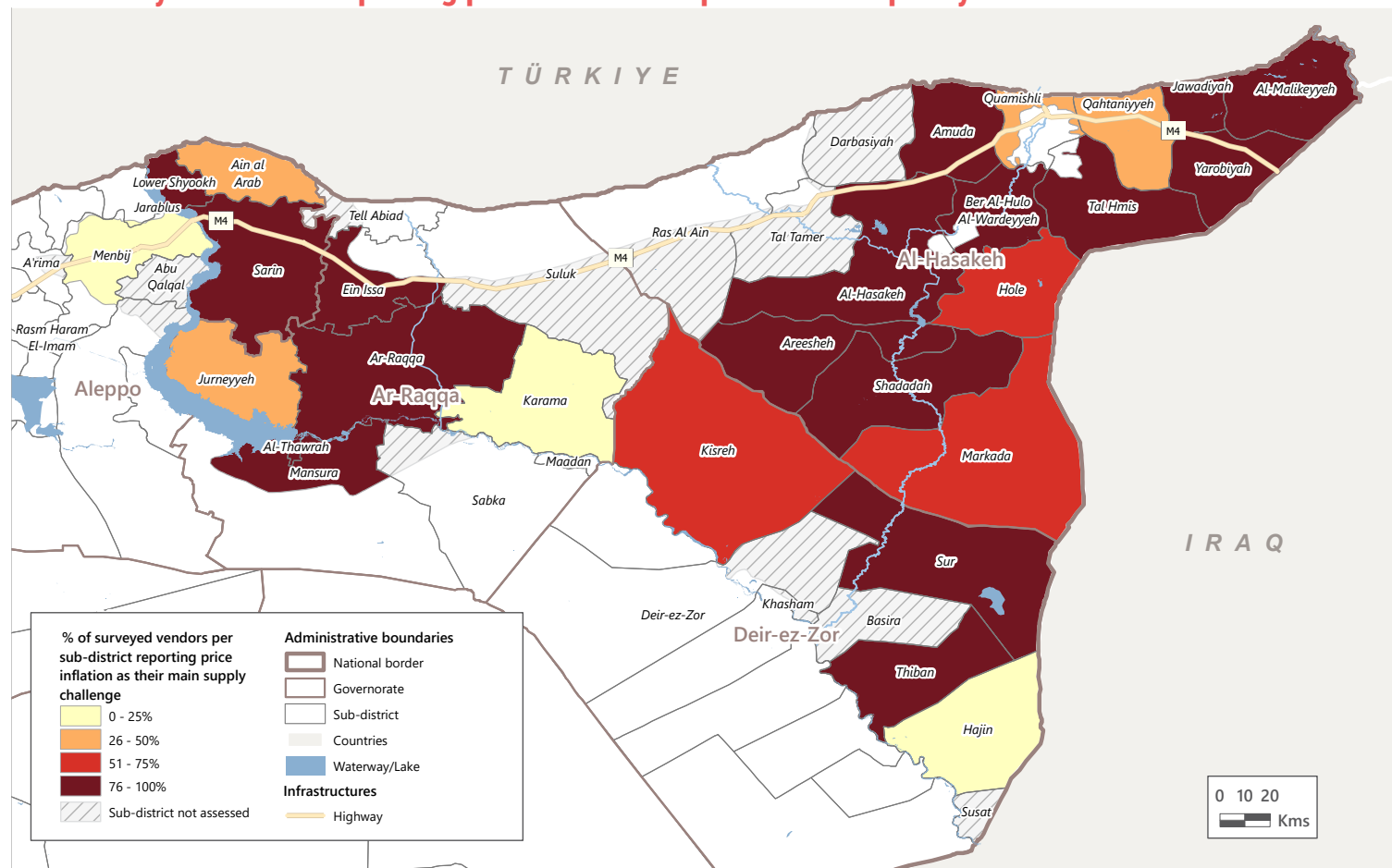


## Regional median price of hygiene items, SYP\*\*





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



### Supply challenges

Based on data from April to May 2024 in NES the most common supply challenge reported by vendors is price inflation, cited by 79% of respondents. This reflects widespread concern over rising costs, impacting vendors' ability to stabilize prices and meet market demand amidst economic instability. Additionally, 14% of vendors reported challenges with suppliers unable to meet demand, highlighting ongoing strain on

supply chains. These issues underscore the complexities faced by local businesses in maintaining stable operations and ensuring sufficient access to goods for the community. Such challenges highlight the complexities within the local economy of northeast Syria, where maintaining stable and reliable supply chains remains a critical concern for sustaining economic stability and ensuring access to essential goods for communities.

The availability of USD remains problematic throughout NES. In April 2024, a significant portion of surveyed vendors reported shortages across all USD denominations, ranging from one-third to two-thirds. Specifically, vendors in Deir ez-Zor governorate highlighted shortages of 100 USD notes. The scarcity of smaller denominations poses a significant challenge for organizations distributing cash, sometimes necessitating the distribution of part of the assistance in SYP.

### Top 5 reported supply challenges, % of surveyed vendors

Price inflation	79%
Supplier limited supply	16%
Supply cant meet demand	14%
No issues	13%
Transport roads insecure	4%
Supplier out of stock	3%
Border crossings closed	2%
Supplier does not have authorization for movement	2%
Supplier on curfew	2%
Road closures to from community	1%
No suppliers	1%

### Supply challenges in Deir ez-Zor governorate, % of surveyed vendors

Price inflation	72%
Supplier limited supply	43%
Transport roads insecure	42%
Supplier on curfew	26%
Supplier does not have authorization for movement	21%
Road closures to from community	15%
Border crossings closed	14%
No issues	9%
Supply cant meet demand	5%
Supplier out of stock	4%

## 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.

### 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 is only indicative for the time frame within which it was collected. Prices may vary between data collection rounds.
- 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. The [full dataset](#) is also available for download.

## 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).



## Endnotes

- 1 The New Humanitarian, '[Turkish airstrikes in northeast Syria leave millions short of power, fuel, and water](#)', 21 February 2024
- 2 Voanews, '[In Northeast Syrian markets, US dollar is king](#)', 5 April 2024
- 3 REACH, Humanitarian Situation Overview Syria, [Dataset](#), April 2024
- 4 North Press Agency, '[Weather Factors And High Costs. Potato Season In The Syrian Island Is Not Promising](#)', 28 February 2024
- 5 The New Humanitarian, '[Turkish airstrikes in northeast Syria leave millions short of power, fuel, and water](#)', 21 February 2024
- 6 North Press Agency, '[An Increase In The Prices Of Chicken Since The Beginning Of Ramadan In The Syrian Jazeera Region](#)', 14 March 2024
- 7 North Press Agency, '[Farmers Resort To Parallel Markets. Fuel Shortages Threaten Agriculture In Hasaka Countryside](#)', 5 March 2024
- 8 North Press Agency, '[Low water levels in wells threaten a humanitarian catastrophe in Al-Hasakah](#)', 25 June 2024

## 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](mailto:cashcoordnes@gmail.com).

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More details on the methodology can be found in the JMMI [terms of reference \(ToR\)](#). For more information about REACH, please contact the REACH JMMI focal point, Adna Maiteh, at [adna.maiteh@reach-initiative.org](mailto:adna.maiteh@reach-initiative.org) or visit the REACH Syria Resource Centre.

## Participating organisations

Each month, around 20 different organisations work together to collect market data. Participating organisations train their enumerators on the JMMI methodology and data collection tools using standard training materials developed by REACH, who is then responsible for processing the data.

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