

Libya Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI)

1 - 13 August 2021

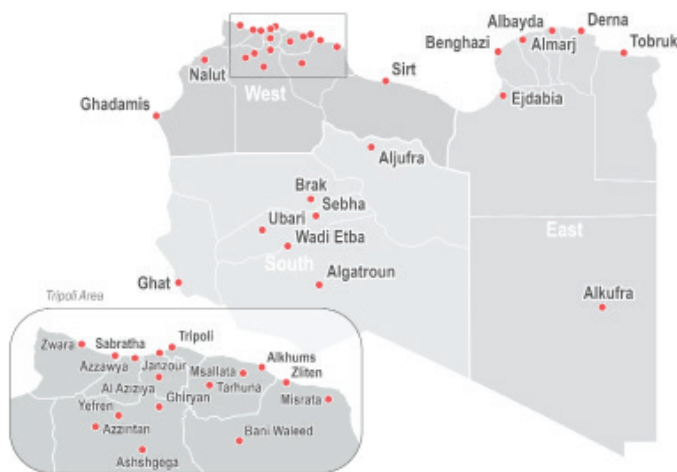
INTRODUCTION

- In an effort to inform cash-based interventions and better understand market dynamics in Libya, the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) was created by the Libya Cash & Markets Working Group (CMWG) in June 2017. The initiative is led by REACH and supported by the CMWG members. It is funded by the Office of U.S. Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).
- Markets in key urban areas across Libya are assessed on a monthly basis. In each location, field teams record prices and availability of basic food and non-food items (NFIs) sold in local shops and markets. This factsheet presents an overview of price ranges and medians for key food items and NFIs in the assessed areas, as well as the costs associated with key elements of the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB).
- REACH has also conducted analysis highlighting economic vulnerability for at-risk population groups that can be accessed through an [interactive dashboard](#).

METHODOLOGY

- Field staff familiar with the local market conditions identified shops representative of the general price level in their respective locations.
- At least **four** prices per assessed item were collected within each location. In line with the purpose of the JMMI, only the price of the cheapest available brand was recorded for each item.
- Enumerators were trained on methodology and tools by REACH. Data collection was conducted through the KoBoCollect mobile application.
- Following data collection, REACH compiled and cleaned all partner data, normalised prices, cross-checked outliers and calculated the median cost of the MEB in each assessed market. Qualitative information was also gathered from both local sources and economic experts through key informant (KI) interviews.
- During the August 2021 round, a collection of liquidity items was done. Enumerators have surveyed both vendors and customers from a number of shops to ask questions focused on access to cash and alternative payment modalities.
- REACH has extracted prices on a daily basis from the website, "Open Souq" and conducted KI interviews with property market professionals to better understand the rental market in Libya.
- More details are available in the Methodology section of the Appendix.

COVERAGE



Libya Cash Working Group

REACH Informing
more effective
humanitarian action

JMMI KEY FINDINGS & CONTEXT

- The cost of the MEB across Libya increased overall by 8.3% between July and August 2021 (see page 2).** This overall increase was associated with an increase in the cost of the food proportion of the MEB (+7.2%) and the hygiene portion of the MEB (+15.7%). **The cost of the MEB in August 2021 was 24.2% higher than pre-covid levels in March 2020.**
- According to local KIs, the increase of the exchange rate caused an increase in price for a good number of imported goods such as tuna (+25.1%), eggs (+20.8%), flour (+12%) and sugar (+4.3%).** The largest increase in the cost of the MEB was observed in western cities such as **Misrata (+42.8%), Al Khums (+38.3%), Sirt (+28.6%) and El Ghadamis (+20.4%).** The increase in the cost of the hygiene portion of the MEB was mainly driven by the increase in price of some imported items mainly hand sanitiser (+116.1%), toothpaste (+23.1%), and handwashing soap (42.9%). However, sanitary pads showed a decrease in price by -14.6%.
- Between July and August 2021, some pharmaceutical items such as **paracetamol (+12.5%), vitamin B (+9.8%) and amoxicillin (+2.4%)** showed an increase in price. Since March 2020, the prices of vitamin B and metoclopramide have increased by 50% and 42.9% respectively (see page 4).
- The cost of the fuel proportion of the MEB showed an increase overall by **15.8%.** Considering regions, it showed an increase in both **east (+22.4%) and west (+9.4%)** and a decrease in the **south (-4.2%).** According to KIs, during the month of August there was a shortage in terms of fuel. This created parallel markets to appear in both east and west (less important than in the southern part of the country). In addition, the non-stability within the National Oil Company (NOC) might have impacted the transportation logistics.
- From July - August 2021, **unofficial Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinder prices** rose overall by +20%. The reported median prices for an 11-kg LPG cylinder, across Libya, in August 2021 and July 2021 were 22.50 LYD and 18.75 LYD respectively. Considering **pre-covid levels in March 2020**, the unofficial LPG cylinder prices showed a decrease (-35.7%) overall.

JMMI KEY FIGURES

Data collection from 1 - 13 August 2021

2 participating agencies
(REACH, WFP)
37 assessed cities
56 assessed items
711 assessed shops

EXCHANGE RATES¹

4.518 USD/LYD official ▼ -0.2 %	5.550 USD/LYD parallel market ▼ -0.2 %	5.940 EUR/LYD parallel market ▲ +1.2 %
---	--	--

KEY MONTHLY CHANGES IN MEB

Median cost of overall MEB

770.3 LYD ▲ +59.1 LYD ▲ +8.3%

Food items	Hygiene items	Cooking fuel. ⁹
▲ +7.2%	▲ +15.7%	▲ 15.8%

MEDIAN COST OF MEB BY REGION

West	790.1 LYD	▲ +14.3%
East	692 LYD	▲ +3.2%
South	872.6 LYD	▲ +5.2%

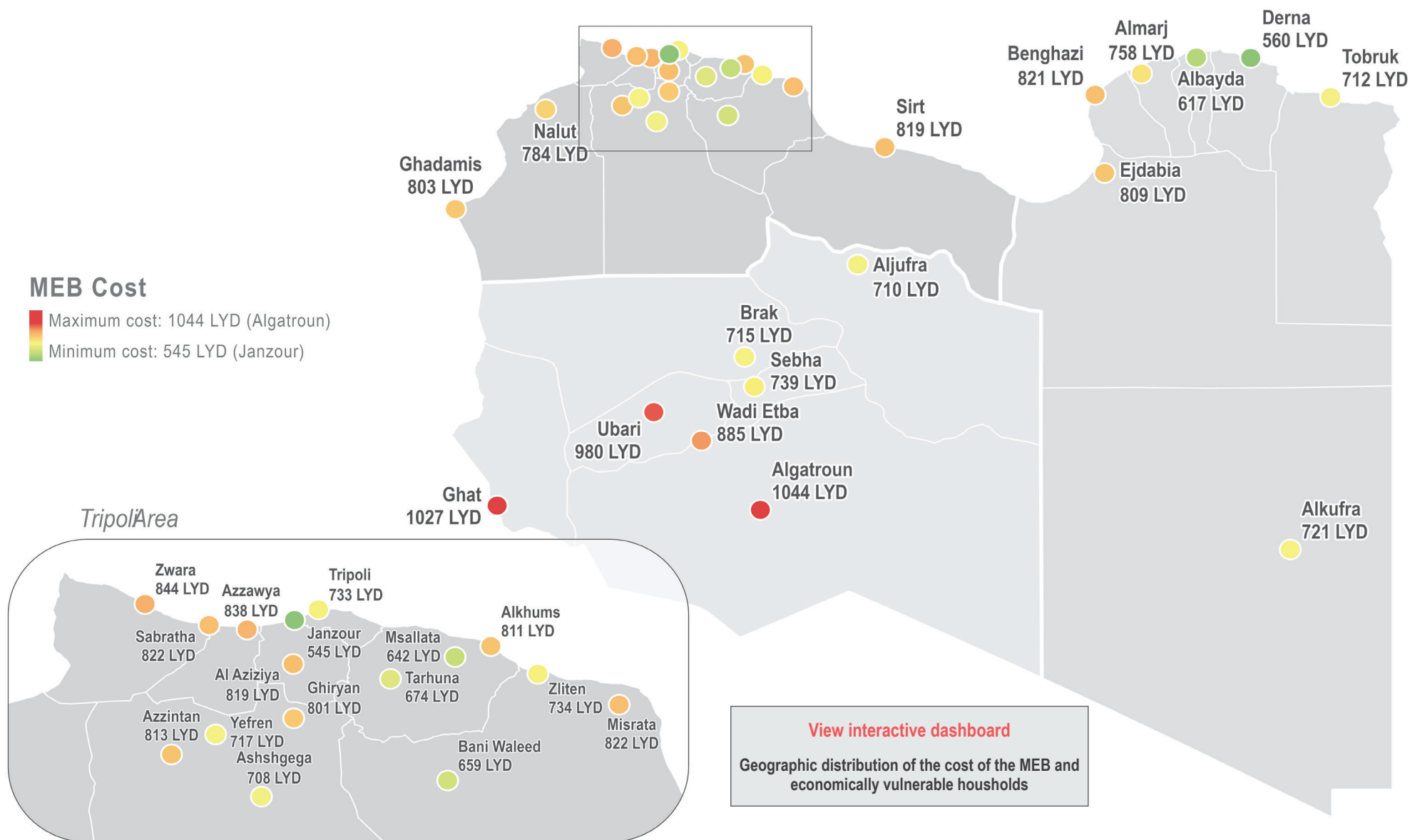
MARKET SHORTAGES

- None reported

Reported changes are month-on-month

[Access the JMMI online dashboard](#)

Cost of MEB Key Elements by Location



Liquidity and Financial Infrastructure

Methodology

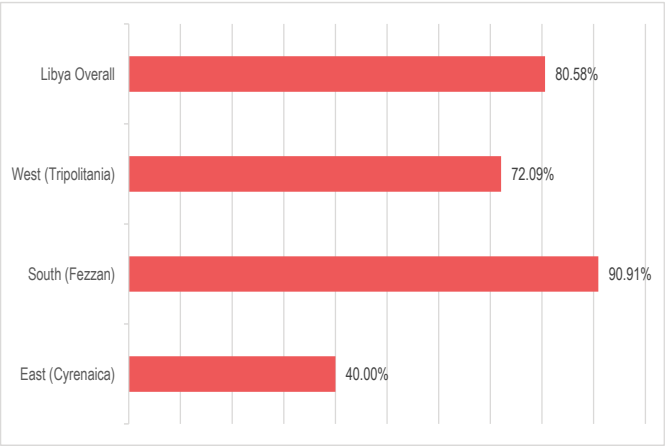
- In August 2021, JMMI collected a series of additional data on the ability to access cash and payment modalities from 398 customers (26 in the east, 133 in the west and 239 in the south) and 382 vendors (24 in the east, 164 in the west and 194 in the south) across 25 cities in Libya.
- Due to non-probability sampling, findings are indicative only. For more information on the methodology, please refer to the [appendix](#).

Key findings

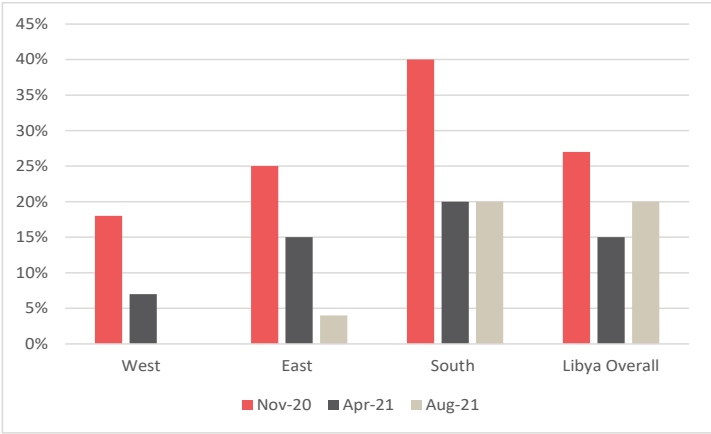
- Only 48.24 % of customers sample reported the ability or not to withdraw enough cash. In fact most of the respondents (80.58%) were able to withdraw enough cash in the 30 days prior to data collection. ¹

¹ A subset of 192 customer respondents.

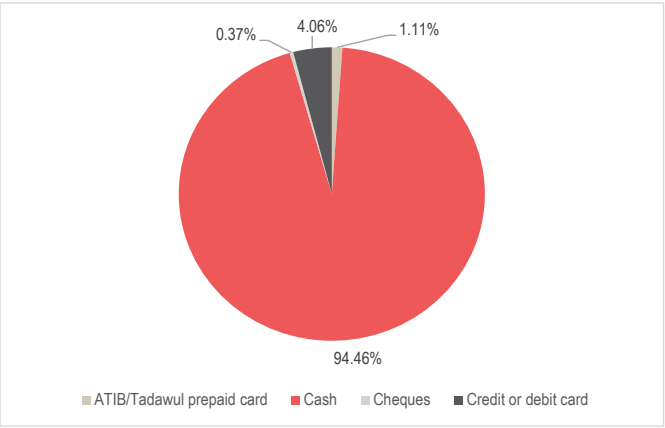
% of customer respondents reporting having been able to withdraw sufficient cash to cover for their monthly expenses in the 30 days prior to data collection, by region¹



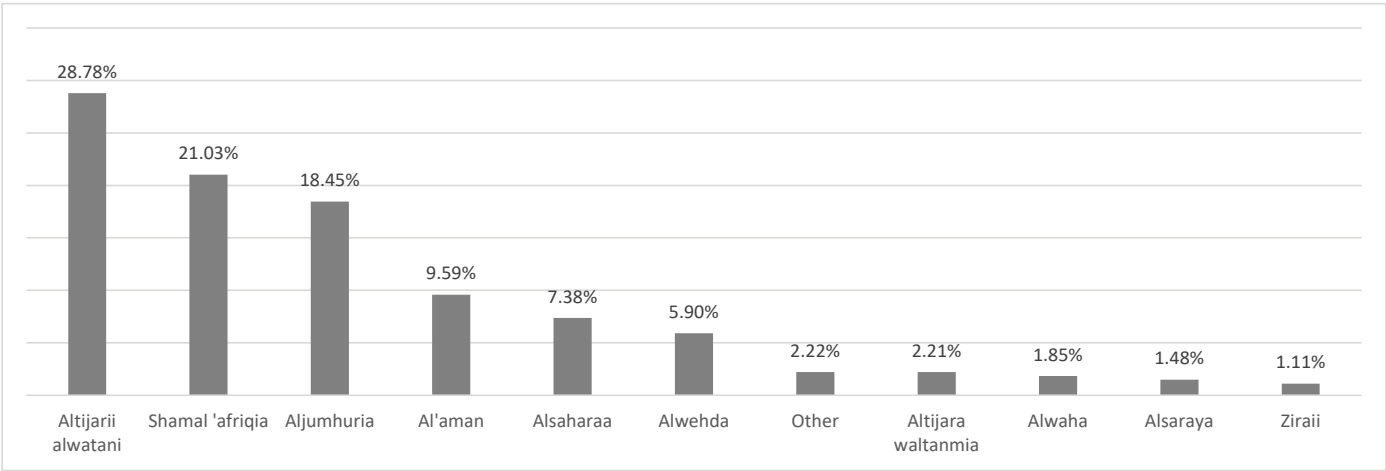
% of interviewed customers reporting using any other ways to obtain cash (outside of the banking system), per region



Payment modalities customer respondents reported to be the most commonly used, by % of customer respondents



% of interviewed customers by the bank they reported primarily using

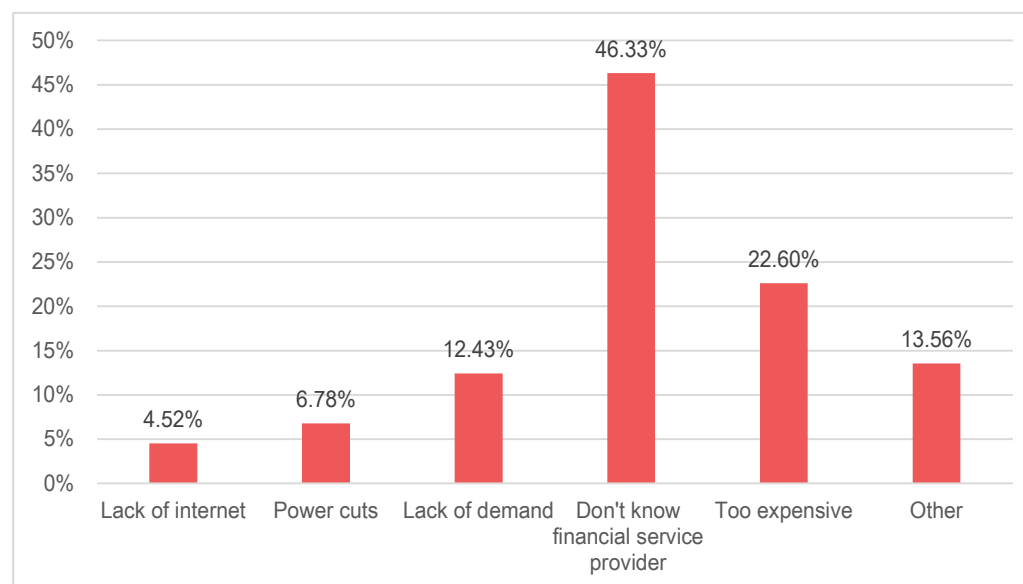


Liquidity and Financial Infrastructure

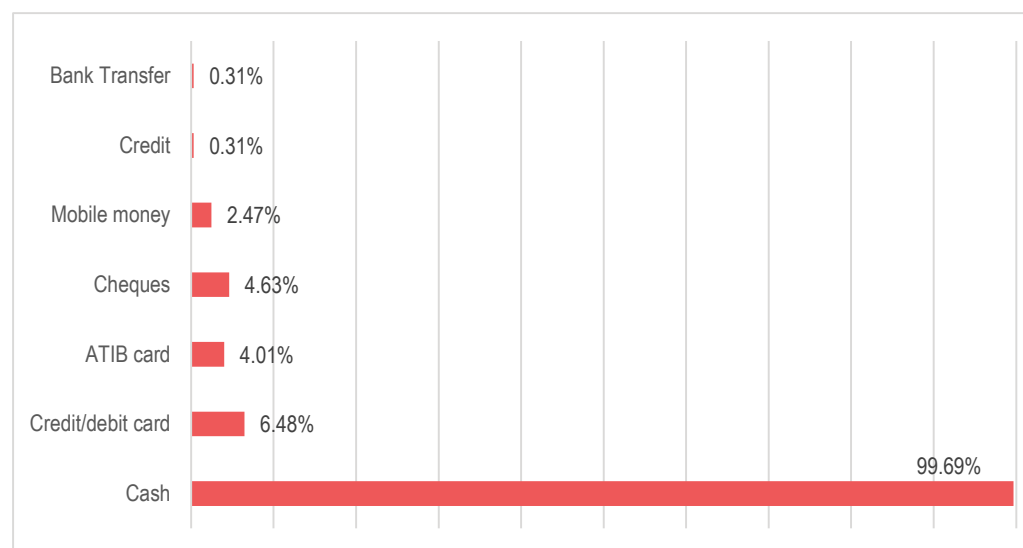
- **Almost all interviewed vendors (99.6%) reported accepting cash in their shops, making cash the most commonly reported accepted payment modality**, consistent with previous rounds of liquidity data collection in October 2020 (99.6%) and April 2021 (93%).
- Similarly, **interviewed vendors reported cash to be the most widely used payment modality (98%)**, with some regional variation. For instance, some vendors in the west reported credit/debit cards (2%) or ATIB/tawadul prepaid cards (2%) to be the most commonly used, while in the South, cheques were reported by some vendors to be the most commonly used modality (1%).
- **Only 49.21% of the vendors sample reported barriers to accepting multiple payment modalities** such as not knowing the financial service provider (46.33%), the service being too expensive (22.6%) and the lack of demand (12.43%).

- In terms of **payment modalities available to customers in shops**, findings suggest some regional variation; in the east, in addition to cash, interviewed vendors also commonly accepted mobile money (50%), while in the south, cheques (9%) and credit and bank transfer (1%) were mentioned by some vendors, and credit or debit cards (16%) or ATIB cards (9%) were reportedly accepted by some vendors in the west.

Among the 49.21% of vendor KIs that reported barriers to using multiple payment modalities, the following barriers were reported:



% Interviewed vendors by reported types of modalities available in their shop

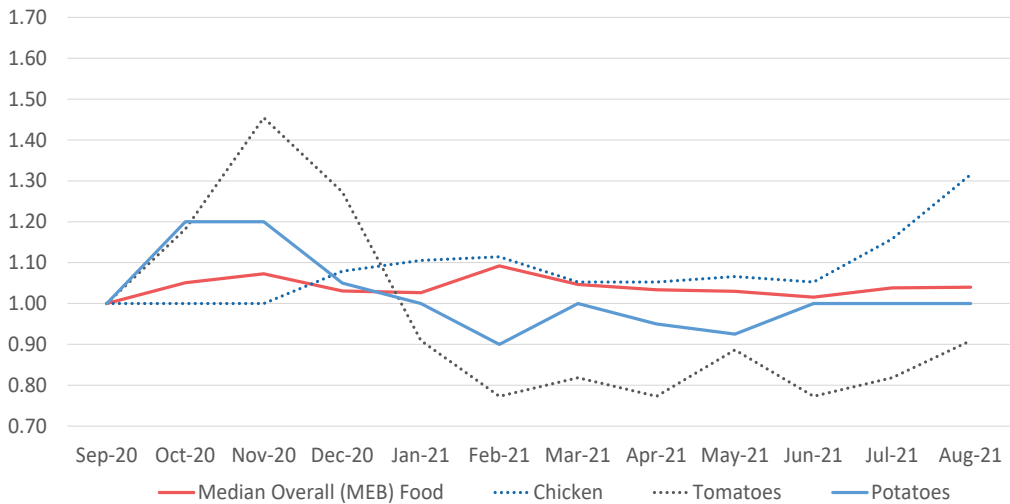


PRICES OF MONITORED ITEMS

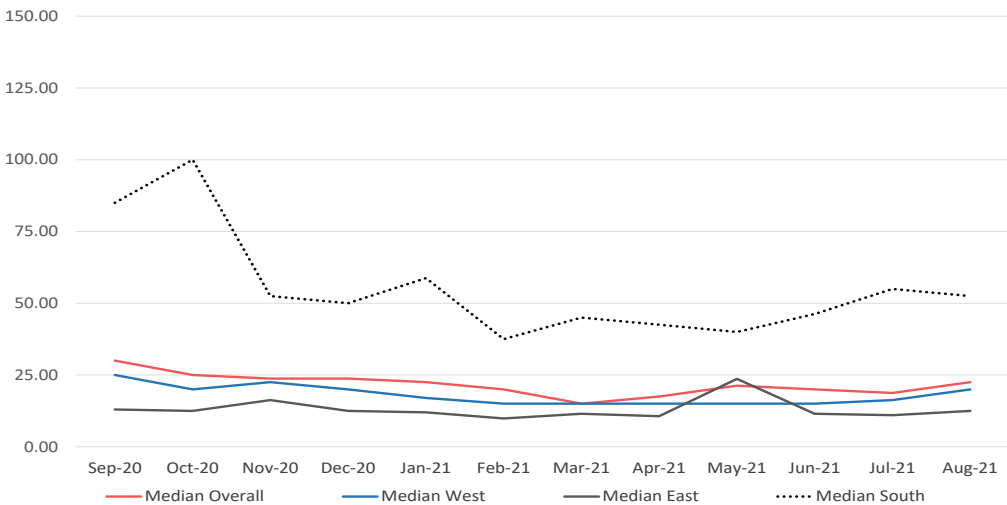
Item	Unit	Median price (LYD)	Change since July 2021	Change since March 2020
Food items				
Eggs	30 eggs	14.50	+20.8%	+45.0%
Tuna	200 g	4.19	+19.7%	+39.7%
Flour	1 kg	2.88	+15.0%	+43.8%
Chickpeas	400 g	2.50	+11.1%	+66.7%
Tomatoes	1 kg	2.50	+11.1%	+25.0%
Chicken meat	1 kg	12.00	+9.1%	+28.0%
Pasta	500 g	1.88	+7.4%	+25.3%
Black tea	250 g	6.50	+6.1%	+30.0%
Beans	400 g	2.50	+5.3%	+53.8%
Sugar	1 kg	3.00	+4.3%	+26.3%
Rice	1 kg	3.62	+3.6%	+11.5%
Lamb meat	1 kg	43.00	+3.0%	+21.1%
Bread	5 pieces	1.25	0.0%	+11.1%
Condensed Milk	200 mL	2.50	0.0%	+25.0%
Couscous	1 kg	3.75	0.0%	+7.1%
Peppers	1 kg	4.00	0.0%	0.0%
Potatoes	1 kg	2.50	0.0%	-16.7%
Tomato paste	400 g	2.75	0.0%	+37.5%
Milk	1 L	3.75	-3.2%	+7.1%
Vegetable oil	1 L	7.50	-3.2%	+66.7%
Onions	1 kg	1.88	-6.2%	-37.5%
Green tea	250 g	3.12	-10.7%	+4.2%
Salt	1 kg	1.12	-18.2%	+12.5%
Hygiene items				
Hand Sanitiser	1 L	24.00	+60.0%	No data
Handwashing soap	1 bar	2.25	+28.6%	+50.0%
Bleach	1 L	11.86	+26.5%	No data
Laundry detergent	1 L	3.12	+25.0%	+38.9%
Toothpaste	100 mL	6.00	+23.1%	+50.0%
Dishwashing liquid	1 L	4.00	+23.1%	+49.5%
Shampoo	250 mL	6.30	+19.9%	+24.0%
Laundry powder	1 kg	7.81	+7.7%	+20.2%
Toothbrush	1 brush	2.50	+5.3%	+25.0%
Baby diapers	30	18.00	+2.9%	+20.0%
Sanitary pads	10 pads	4.16	-14.6%	+19.0%
Other items				
Water	1 L	0.29	0.0%	0.0%

FOOD PRICES OVER TIME

Selected items (normalised, September 2020 = 1.00)²



PRICES FROM UNOFFICIAL COOKING FUEL VENDORS (11 KG LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS (LPG) CYLINDER)
(Since September 2020, non-normalised)

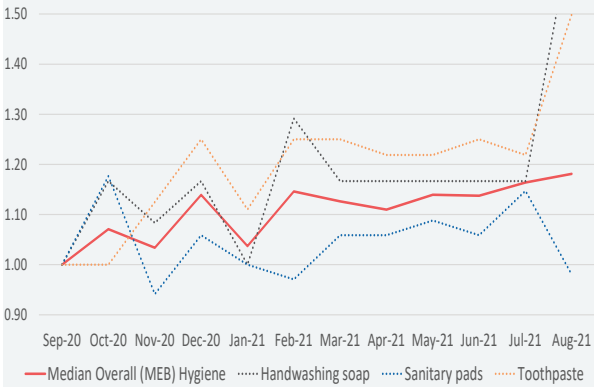


PRICES OF FUEL AND HEALTH

Item	Unit	Median price (LYD)	Change since July 2021	Change since March 2020
Fuel items				
Unofficial LPG	11 kg	25.00	+20%	-28.6%
Unofficial Gasoline	1 Litre	1.12	+12.5%	No data
Official LPG	11 kg	5.00	0.0%	0.0%
Official Gasoline	1 Litre	0.15	0.0%	No data
Pharmaceutical items				
Paracetamol	400mg [20 pack]	7.00	+16.7%	+0.9%
Vitamin B	[40 pack]	15.38	+9.8%	+50.0%
Amoxicillin	500mg [21 pack]	10.50	+2.4%	+16.7%
Metoclopramide	10mg [40 pack]	14.52	-1.6%	+45.2%
Ibuprofen	400mg [20 pack]	6.21	-11.3%	+12.9%

HYGIENE ITEM PRICES OVER TIME

Selected items (normalised, September 2020 = 1.00)³

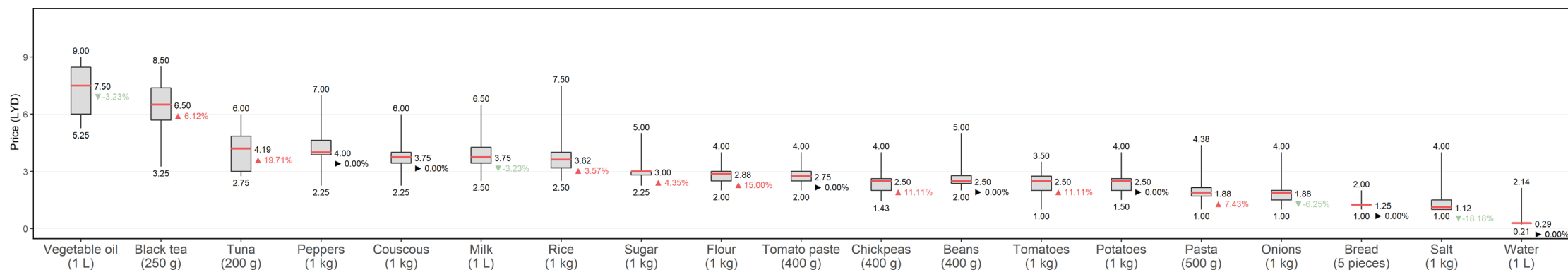


NOTABLE MONTH-ON-MONTH CHANGES

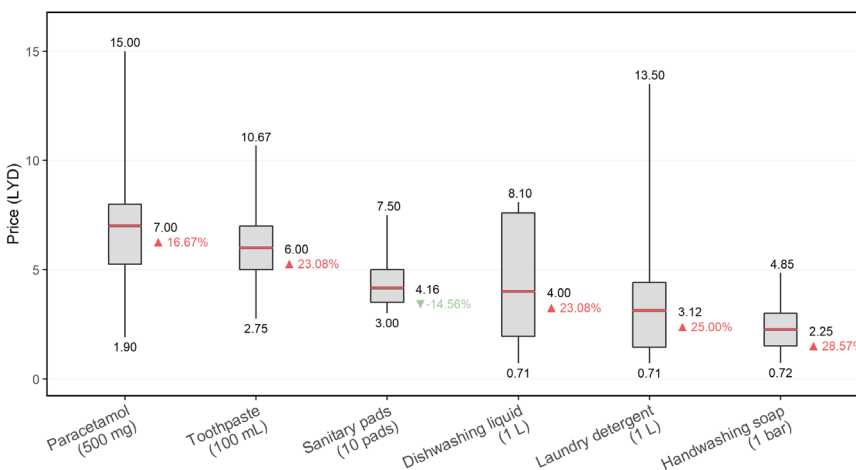
Unofficial Gasoline	▲ +33.3%
Handwashing Soap	▲ +28.6%
Bleach	▲ +26.5%
Eggs	▲ +20.8%

Distribution of Prices in Libya

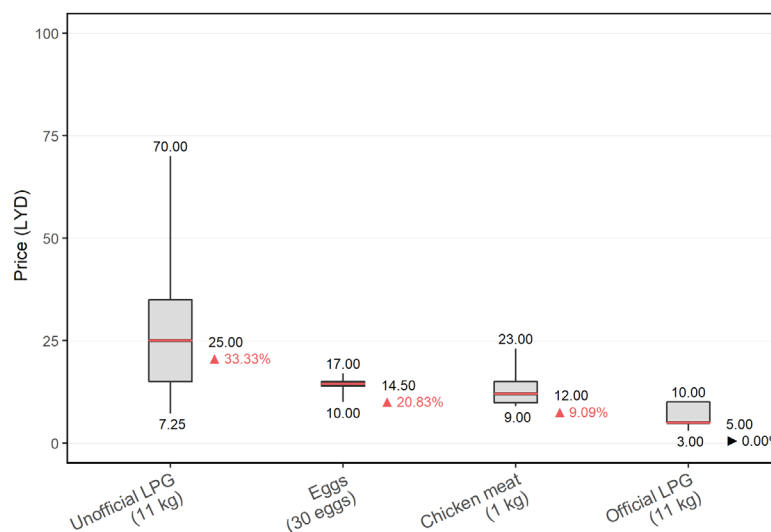
FOOD ITEMS



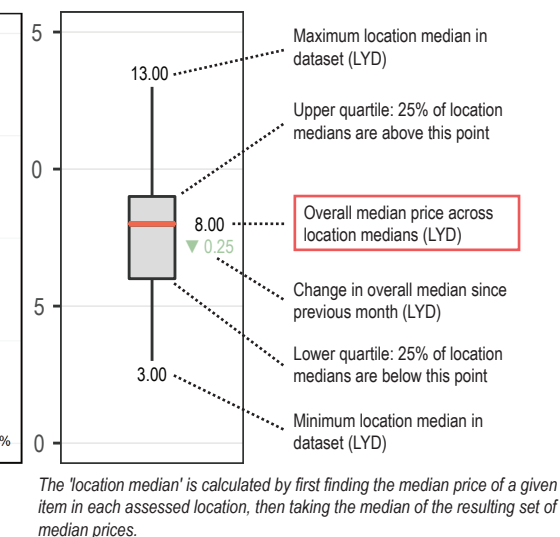
HYGIENE ITEMS



ITEMS WITH HIGHEST PRICES



How to read a boxplot



Introduction

- Ever since the onset of the conflict in and around Tripoli and Murzuq in April 2019, Tripoli has been a key displacement destination for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)⁴. Furthermore, conflict related political tensions in West Libya led large numbers of IDPs to move to eastern cities, especially Benghazi.
- REACH is therefore exploring rent monitoring as part of the JMML, in order to provide humanitarian actors with a more accurate overview of key expenditures facing IDPs in Tripoli and Benghazi.

Methodology

- From May 2020 onwards, in addition to the price monitoring of key items (MEB), REACH began analyzing rental prices, which were extracted on a daily basis from the website 'Open Souq'. **In August 2021, 2418 rental prices were collected in Tripoli and Benghazi.** The price change findings are indicative.
- In order to standardise property prices, key features were isolated through consultation with KIs to identify the average apartment specification for typical HHs in Tripoli and Benghazi. The average apartment for typical HHs was found to be a furnished, 3-bedroom apartment with 1 bathroom. All rental prices presented in this report have been standardised to this accommodation type.

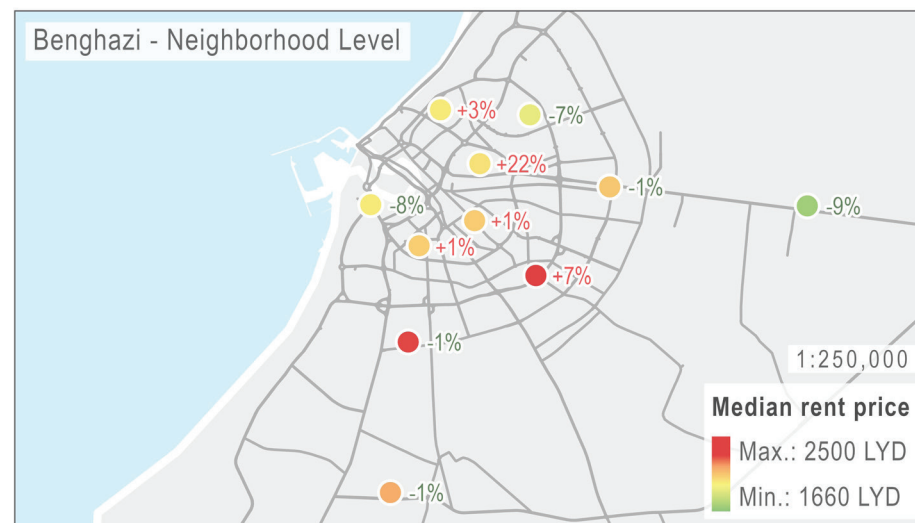
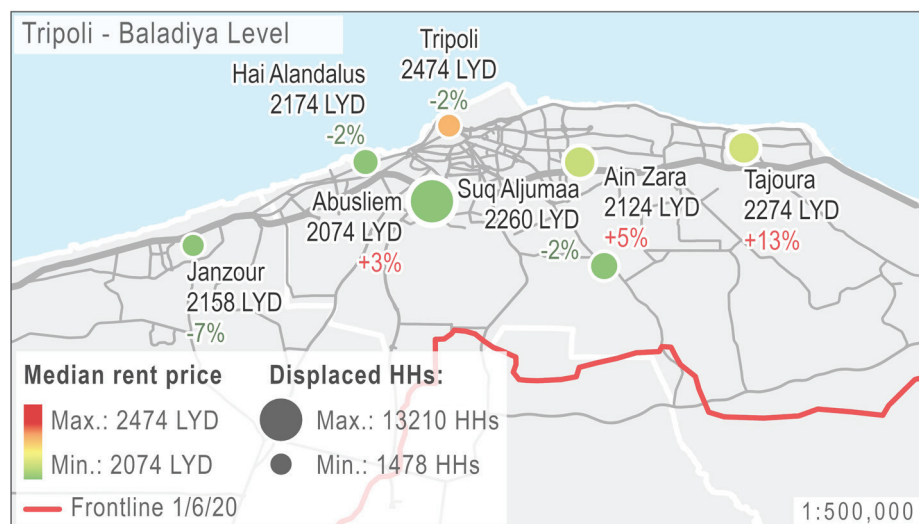
Key Findings

- Rental prices have decreased slightly since July 2021 in Tripoli (-1.6%). They have also decreased significantly compared to May 2020 (-18.9%) in this area. However compared to the same month (May 2020), the prices have increased in Benghazi (+2.4%).
- Although the change in IDP numbers between April and June of 2021 was negligible in Benghazi, the IDPs in Tripoli have increased by 21.6 %. As for Returnee numbers, during the same period, they remain the same in both of Benghazi and Tripoli.

Standardised rental prices August 2021

Location	Standard price (LYD)	Since July 2021	Since May 2020	Change in IDPs* Apr-Jun	Change in Returnees** Apr-Jun
Municipality					
Abusliem	2074	+3.4%	-22.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Ain Zara	2124	+5.3%	-27.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Hai Alandalus	2174	-1.6%	-18.9%	+378%	0.0%
Janzour	2158	-6.6%	-6.3%	+1946.5%	+5.6%
Suq Aljumaa	2260	-2.4%	-15.7%	0.0%	+6.0%
Tajoura	2274	+12.7%	-3.4%	-1.9%	-33.3%
Tripoli Center	2474	-1.7%	-17.1%	-24.7%	0.0%
Tripoli Overall	2174	-1.6%	-18.9%	+21.6%	0.0%
Benghazi Overall	2029	-2.2%	+2.4%	0.0%	0.0%

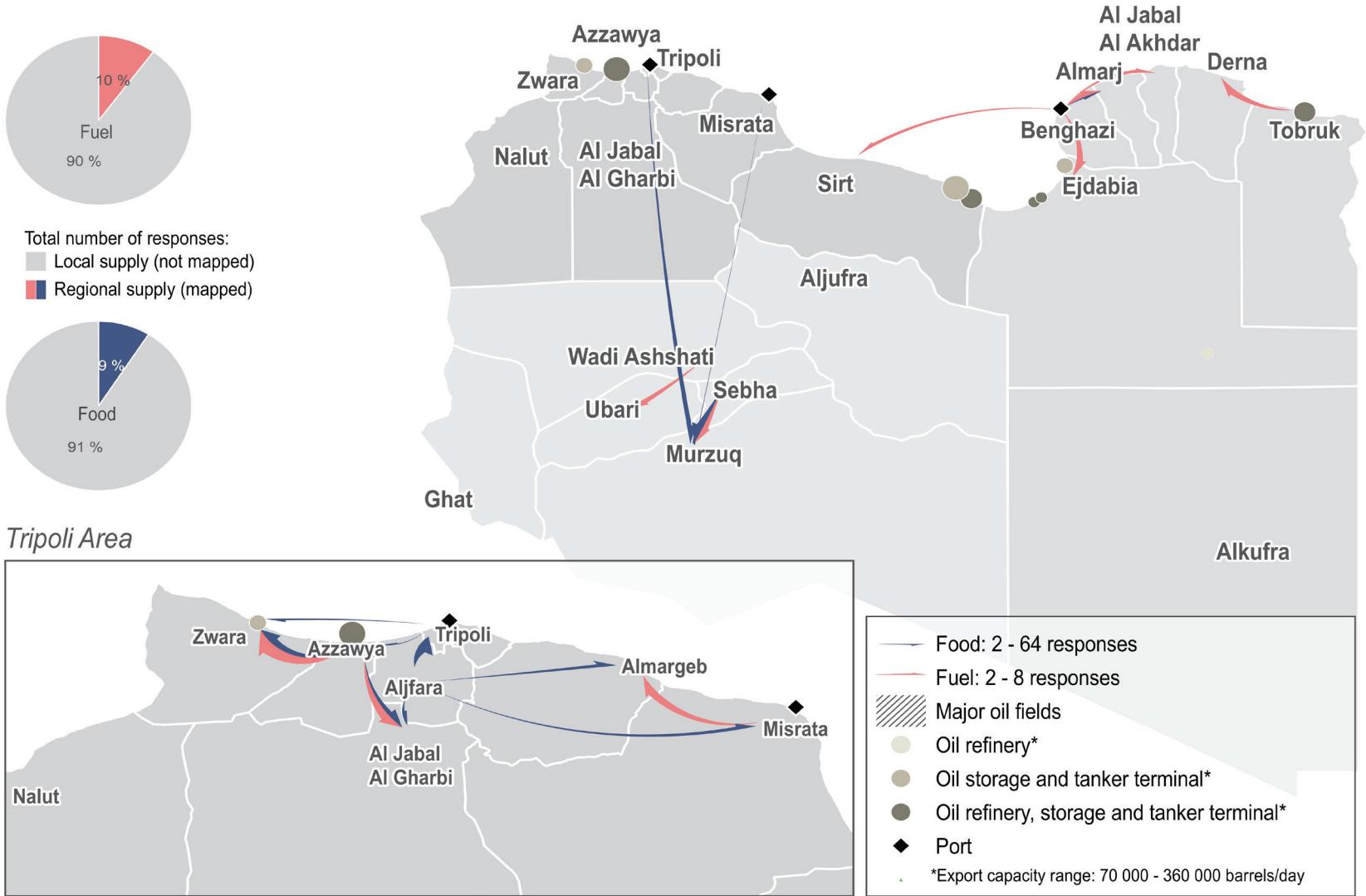
* Change in the number of IDPs and returnees are derived from the latest Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) (Round 37) from the International Organization of Migration (IOM).
 ** Numbers based on IOM-DTM numbers as well, comparing April 2021 to June 2021.



Main Food and Fuel Supply Routes

This map indicates the source and flow of transported fuel and food products according to the shop owner and vendor KIs. The arrow sizes are determined by the quantity of responses and provide an indicative scale of the reported supply routes.

The indicated supply routes only visualize the flow of goods between mantikas (on a regional level); the map does not show the trajectory of goods that are sourced more locally.



MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET

(MEB)

Key Elements: Food Items

Bread	32 kg	Tomatoes	10 kg
Rice	10.5 kg	Potatoes	12 kg
Pasta	9.5 kg	Onions	7 kg
Couscous	5.5 kg	Peppers	4.5 kg
Beans	6 kg	Tomato paste	6 kg
Chicken	7.5 kg	Black tea	2 kg
Tuna	4 kg	Vegetable oil	5 L
Eggs	4 kg	Sugar	2 kg
Milk	8.5 L	Salt	1 kg

Key Elements: Non-Food Items

Bathing soap	1.4 kg (9 150-g bars)
Toothpaste	0.5 kg (5 100-g tubes)
Laundry detergent	1.3 L
Dishwashing liquid	1.3 L
Sanitary pads	4 packs of 10
Cooking fuel (LPG)	22 kg (2 11-kg refills)

Optional Elements

Water (drinking use only)	458 L
Median rent for 3-rm flat	1 month

The **Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB)** represents the minimum culturally adjusted group of items required to support a five-person Libyan household (HH) for one month. The cost of the MEB can be used as a proxy for the financial burdens facing households in different locations. The MEB's contents were defined by the CMWG in consultation with relevant sector leads.

COST OF MEDIAN OVERALL MEB

770.3 LYD

Change since
July 2021

▲ 59.11 LYD
(+8.3%)

Change since
March 2020

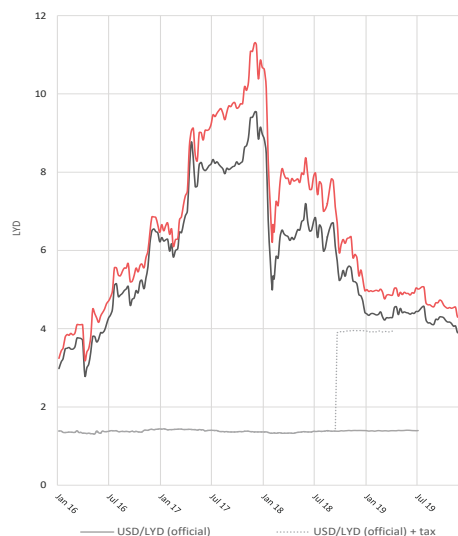
▲ + 140.81 LYD
(+22.4 %)

MEDIAN MEB COST BY LOCATION

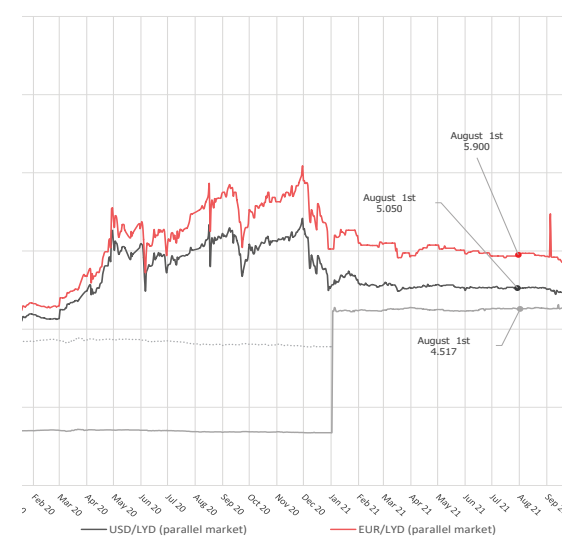
Location	Cost of MEB (LYD)	Since July 2021	Since March 2020
Zwara	844.4	+8.9%	+54.3%
Azzawya	838.3	+18.2%	+53.5%
Misrata	822.6	+49.5%	+46.7%
Sabratha	822.3	+6.1%	+47.5%
Sirt	819.8	+32.4%	+35.4%
Al Aziziya	819.5	+12.7%	+49.7%
Azzintan	813.8	-0.5%	+19.6%
AlKhums	811.6	+42.4%	+50.3%
Ghadamis	803.3	+25.2%	+17.6%
Ghriyan	801	+1.1%	+14.8%
Nalut	784.9	+1.6%	+7.2%
Zliten	734.2	+3.0%	+19.3%
Tripoli	733.7	+6.4%	+12.0%
Yefren	717.8	+2.7%	+9.5%
Ashshgega	708.7	+1.3%	+9.7%
Tarhuna	674.4	+1.3%	+14.6%
Bani Waleed	659.9	-1.6%	+10.5%
Msallata	642.2	-1.9%	+7.7%
Janzour	545.7	-7.8%	-8.0%
Median West	790.1	+14.3%	+26.5%
Benghazi	821.2	+2.5%	+34.2%
Ejdabia	809.6	+5.9%	+24.7%
AlMarj	758.6	-0.9%	+18.6%
AlKufra	721.8	-0.5%	+10.6%
Tobruk	712.1	+11.6%	+13.3%
AlBayda	617.2	-2.3%	-4.3%
Derna	560.8	-3.8%	-7.9%
Median East	692	+3.2%	+9.8%
Algatroun	1044.6	-4.0%	-7.7%
Ghat	1028	-1.7%	-10.2%
Ubari	980.3	-1.9%	-10.2%
Wadi Etba	885.6	+1.7%	+5.4%
Sebha	739.1	+6.2%	-2.2%
Brak	715.3	+4.9%	-1.9%
AlJufra	710.9	-0.1%	-7.9%
Median South	872.6	+5.2%	-0.7%
Median Overall	770.3	+8.3%	+22.4%

EXCHANGE RATES OVER TIME⁵

January 2016-January 2020

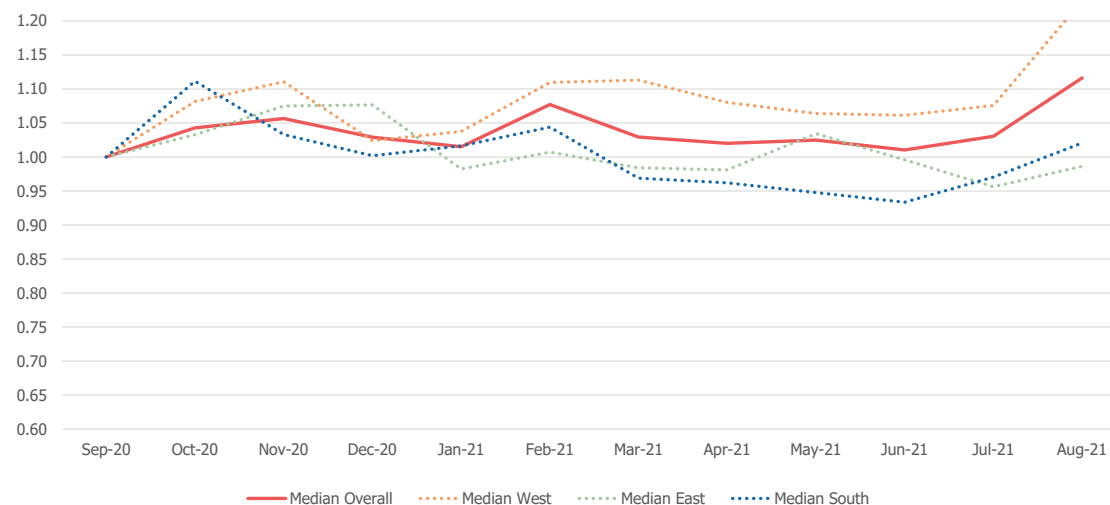


Since February 2020



MEB PRICE INDEX

Since September 2020 (normalised, September 2020 = 1.00)⁶



PREVIOUS JMMI OUTPUTS

Factsheets

Datasets

2021

July
June
May
April
March
February
January

July
June
May
April
March
February
January

2020

December
November
October
September
August
July
June
May
April
March
February
January

December
November
October
September
August
July
June
May
April
March
February
January

2019

December
November
October
September
July
June
May
April
March
February
January

December
November
October
September
July
June
May
April
March
February
January

What is the CMWG?

The Libya Cash & Markets Working Group (CMWG), established in September 2016, is a community of humanitarian actors that support and coordinate cash-based interventions in Libya. The CMWG, based jointly in Tripoli and Tunis, is currently led by UNHCR.

Methodology (cont. from page 1)

The methodology for the JMMI is based on purposive sampling. In each assessed market, at least four prices per item need to be collected from different shops to ensure the quality and consistency of collected data. Partner field teams, in coordination with the CMWG, identify shops to assess based on the following criteria:

1. Shops need to be large enough to sell all or most assessed items.
2. Prices in these shops need to be good indicators of the general price levels in the assessed area.
3. Shops should be located in different areas within the assessed city or baladiya.

In locations where it is not possible to identify four large markets that fulfil criterion (1), smaller shops, such as grocery shops, vegetable vendors, butchers and bakeries, are added to the shop list, as long as they fit criteria (2) and (3), in order to guarantee at least four prices per item of interest. Each month, price data is collected from the same shops whenever possible to ensure comparability across months.

The CMWG primarily targets urban areas throughout Libya, aiming to ensure coverage of markets that serve as commercial hubs for surrounding regions.

Data is collected via the KoBo mobile data collection application. The CMWG maintains a joint KoBo account for the JMMI. The data collection tool is published alongside the dataset every month and disseminated to the humanitarian community.

Analyses

The median prices reported in this factsheet are 'location medians', designed to minimise the effects of outliers and differing amounts of data among assessed locations. First, the median prices of all assessed items are calculated within each assessed location (city or muhalla); then, REACH calculates the median of this list of medians. All boxplots, as well as the MEB and price index calculations are created using this method.

The cost of the MEB is calculated by multiplying the median price of each item in the MEB's 'Key Elements' section by the quantity listed in the table on page 2. In cases where no median price is available for an item in a

particular location, the median price for that item across the region (west, east, or south) is substituted.

Challenges and limitations

Price data is only indicative for the time frame within which it was collected. Prices may vary during the weeks between adjacent data collection rounds.

The data is only indicative of the general price levels in each assessed location. Representativeness on the mantika (district) level cannot be claimed. Even on the city level, price data must be interpreted with caution, particularly in larger cities where there is substantial variation in neighbourhoods' socioeconomic levels.

The JMMI data collection tool requires enumerators to record the cheapest available price for each item, but does not require a specific brand, as brand availability may vary. Therefore, price comparisons across regions may be based on slight variants of the same product.

The JMMI does not intend to measure general inflation levels on Libyan markets. As per JMMI methodology, only the cheapest available price per item is collected, meaning that changes in middle-market and upmarket goods are not captured.

Rent Price Monitoring

Benghazi consists of only one municipality, therefore neighbourhoods across the city were grouped together into 11 area units.

Limitations: the data collected are new offers presented by Open Souq, therefore they may not represent the rental expenses of all IDPs, as tenants may receive cheaper offer through informal channels.

Liquidity Crisis

The respondents were vendors and customers from market places already monitored by the JMMI. Respondents were selected purposively, with an average number of 8 customers and 4 vendors per region.

The findings are indicative and not statistically representative.

Endnotes

¹ Official rate: Central Bank of Libya (27 January 2021). Parallel market rates: Ewan Libya (27 January 2021). The rates from 1 January 2021 and 1 January 2020 were used for the calculation of the monthly changes.

The National Oil Corporation achieves record revenues in June, exceeding \$2.13 billion (July 2021) [https://noc.ly/index.php/en/new-4/7059-the-national-oil-corporation-achieves-record-revenues-in-june,-exceeding-\\$2-13-billion](https://noc.ly/index.php/en/new-4/7059-the-national-oil-corporation-achieves-record-revenues-in-june,-exceeding-$2-13-billion)

² The food prices were normalised by setting June 2020 as the baseline and dividing each month's price by the price in June 2020.

³ The hygiene prices were normalised by setting June 2020 as the baseline and dividing each month's price by the price in June 2020.

⁴ Libya IDP and Returnee Report November - December 2020, DTM IOM, October 2020

⁵ Official rate: Central Bank of Libya (1 January 2021). Parallel market rates: Ewan Libya (1 January 2021). The rates from 1 January 2021 and 1 January 2021 were used for the calculation of the monthly changes.

⁶ The MEB price index was normalised by setting June 2020 as the baseline and dividing each month's price by the price in June 2020.

REACH is a program of ACTED. It strengthens evidence based decision-making by humanitarian actors through efficient data collection, management and analysis in contexts of crisis.

ACTED is an international NGO. Independent, private and non-profit, ACTED respects a strict political and religious impartiality and operates following principles of non-discrimination and transparency. Since 2011, ACTED has been providing humanitarian aid and has supported civil society and local governance throughout Libya,