

Northwest Syria | Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI)

1-9 October 2024

MARKET OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

To facilitate humanitarian cash programming, the **Northwest of Syria Cash Working Group** (NWS CWG), in collaboration with **local and international NGOs**, carries out a monthly Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) in Northern Syria. This initiative 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

3	Assessed governorates
10	Assessed districts
37	Assessed sub-districts
89	Assessed communities
2160	Shops surveyed

KEY INDICATORS

Cost of SMEB

4,771 TRY -1.4% ▼
139 USD -2% ▼

Cost of SMEB Food

3,552 TRY -0.4% ▼
104 USD -1% ▼

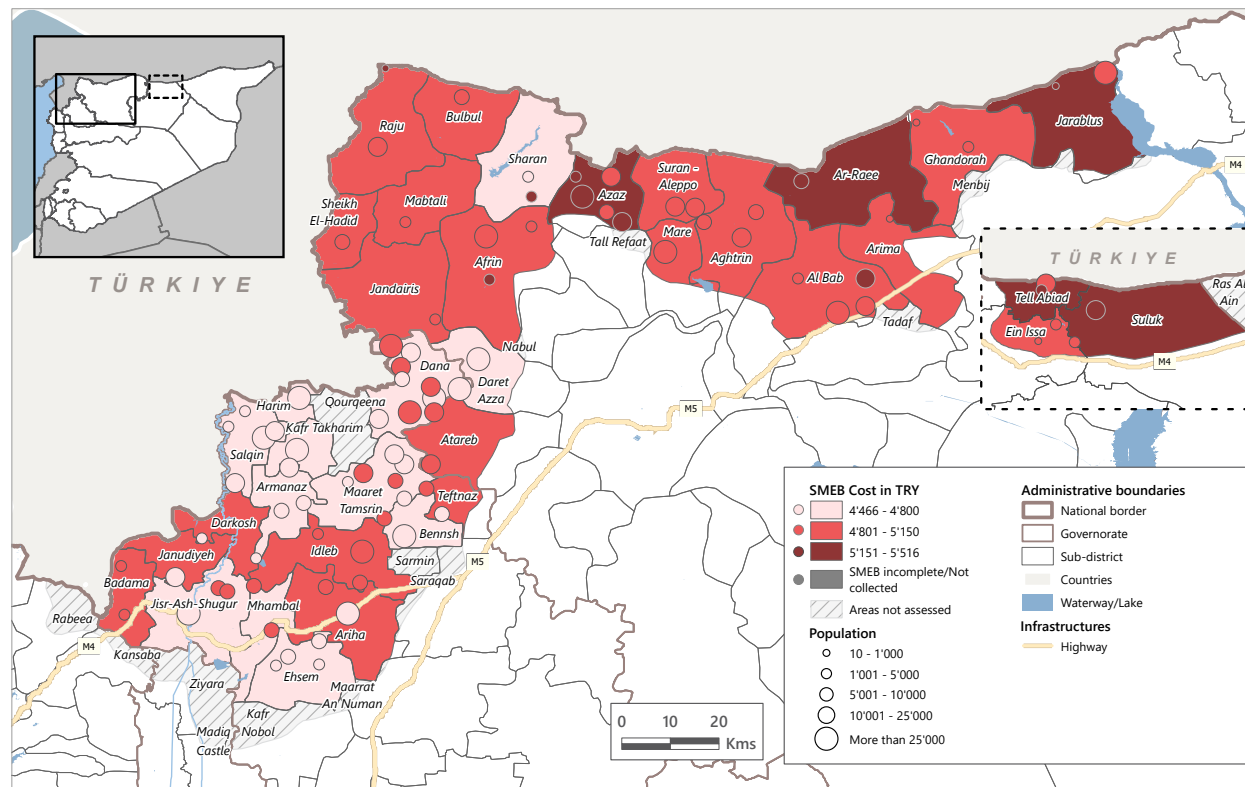
USD/TRY

informal exchange rate
34 TRY +0.6% ▲

KEY FINDINGS

- The **regional median SMEB value** slightly **decreased** compared to the September JMMI data, including the SMEB food component. However, this is in the context of the **SMEB cost rising 20%** in 12 months, and with 90% of the population in NWS in need of humanitarian assistance, any small month-on-month increase in the SMEB value can have major consequences for households struggling to meet their basic needs.
- This continues a **slower rate of increase in the overall SMEB value in 2024** than 2023, which may be attributable to greater **stability in the TRY/USD exchange rate**, **increased cross border commercial activity**, and **fewer major shocks** to date (e.g. conflict escalations, natural disasters etc.).
- Most monitored **fuel items increased in price** compared to the previous month as the ongoing fuel crisis in NWS shows no signs of subsiding with the winter months fast approaching. **Increased demand** over the winter months is likely to exacerbate fuel availability and affordability issues for traders, service providers, and households.
- Markets** across NWS remained **broadly functional** according to vendor KIs, with **60%** reporting that they faced **no difficulties** or supply challenges in maintaining business operations.

Cost of the SMEB, Sub-districts in Northwest Syria, TRY



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

While the Turkish lira (TRY), which has been the main currency used in NWS since 2020, has not experienced anywhere near the same levels of depreciation as the Syrian Pound (SYP) in recent years, it has consistently lost value, sometimes sharply in short timeframes, aggravating the economic challenges facing ordinary households as their purchasing power declines amid an ongoing and worsening livelihoods crisis in the region.

However, in recent months the TRY has somewhat stabilized, in part due to the Turkish Government reversing course and adopting more conventional economic policies (i.e. increasing interest rates), although the general trend of the TRY weakening persists. In line with this trend, the median regional USD/TRY exchange rate increased by 0.7% between September and October, and has increased by almost 24% over the past 12 months.

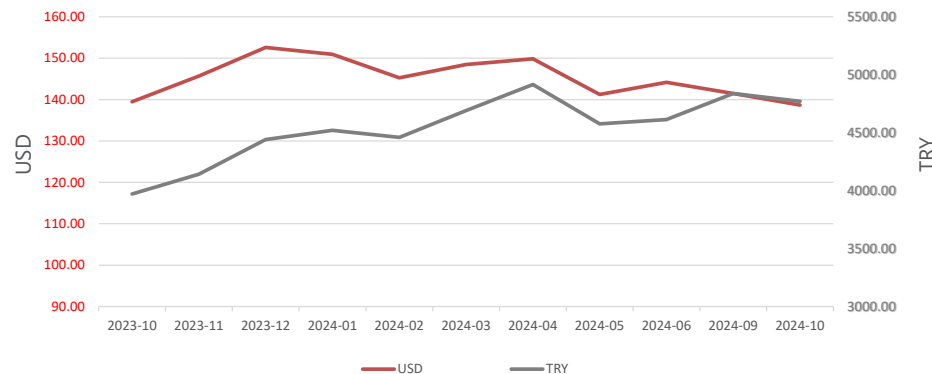
24% ▼

The value of the TRY has depreciated by 24% in the past year.

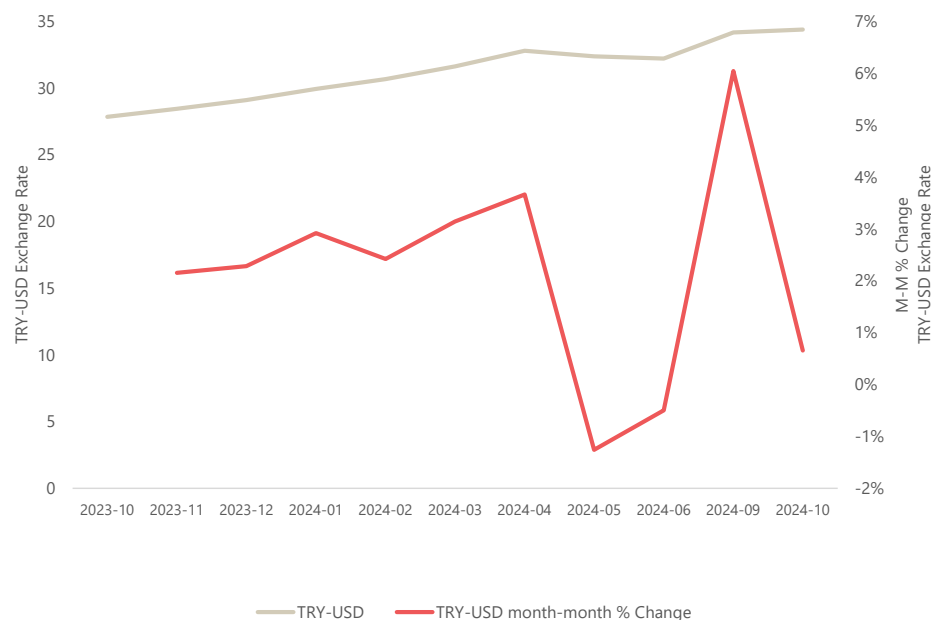
20% ▲

The cost of the SMEB in TRY has increased by 20% in the past year.

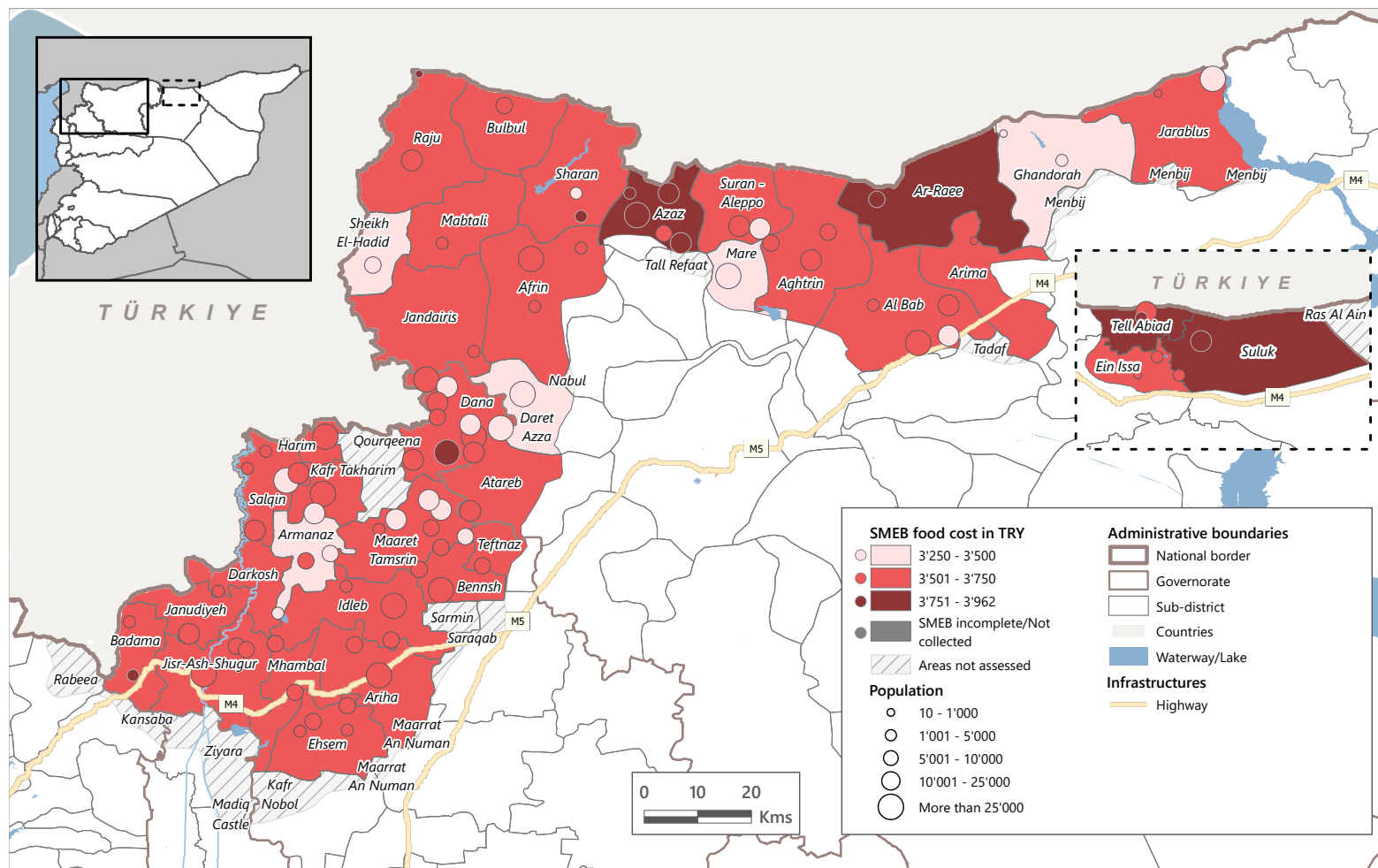
Regional median SMEB prices, TRY and USD



Regional median USD/TRY informal exchange rate trends

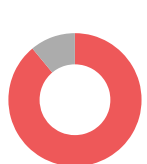


SMEB food prices, TRY



Price of SMEB Food, sub-district, TRY

Location	Median Price TRY	Change since September 2024
Aleppo governorate		
Afrin	3,552	+1% ▲
Aghtrin	3,605	-0.1% ▼
Al Bab	3,525	+4% ▲
A'rima	3,533	+7% ▲
Ar-Ra'ee	3,848	+11% ▲
Atareb	3,546	-0.4% ▼
A'zaz	3,787	+6% ▲
Bulbul	3,742	+6% ▲
Daret Azza	3,484	-3% ▼
Ghandorah	3,398	-5% ▼
Jandariss	3,670	+6% ▲
Jarablus	3,505	-1% ▼
Ma'btali	3,570	+0.04% ▲
Mare'	3,497	+2% ▲
Raju	3,694	+6% ▲
Sharan	3,510	-3% ▼
Sheikh El-Hadid	3,483	-5% ▼
Suran	3,624	+6% ▲
Idleb governorate		
Ariha	3,635	-2% ▼
Armanaz	3,490	-2% ▼
Badama	3,724	-3% ▼
Bennsh	3,504	-6% ▼
Dana	3,552	-1% ▼
Darkosh	3,536	+1% ▲
Ehsem	3,536	+0.4% ▲
Harim	3,573	+2% ▲
Idleb	3,549	-1% ▼
Janudiyeh	3,677	-1% ▼
Jisr-Ash-Shugur	3,620	-1% ▼
Kafr Takharim	3,515	-2% ▼
Maaret Tamsrin	3,524	+0.1% ▲
Mhambal	3,589	-2% ▼
Salqin	3,538	-2% ▼
Teftnaz	3,536	-5% ▼
Ar-Raqqa governorate		
Ein Issa	3,565	No Data
Suluk	3,962	+15% ▲
Tell Abiad	3,904	-3% ▼



89%

KIs in 89% of communities assessed in the Humanitarian Situation Overview of Syria (HSOS) during October round reported that food markets were functioning.*



22%

of HSOS assessed communities in October, reported that one of the most commonly cited challenge was vendors cannot afford restocking. This is especially significant as 27% of surveyed vendors reported that high supplier prices hinder their ability to purchase stock.*

* [Humanitarian Situation Overview Dashboard](#)

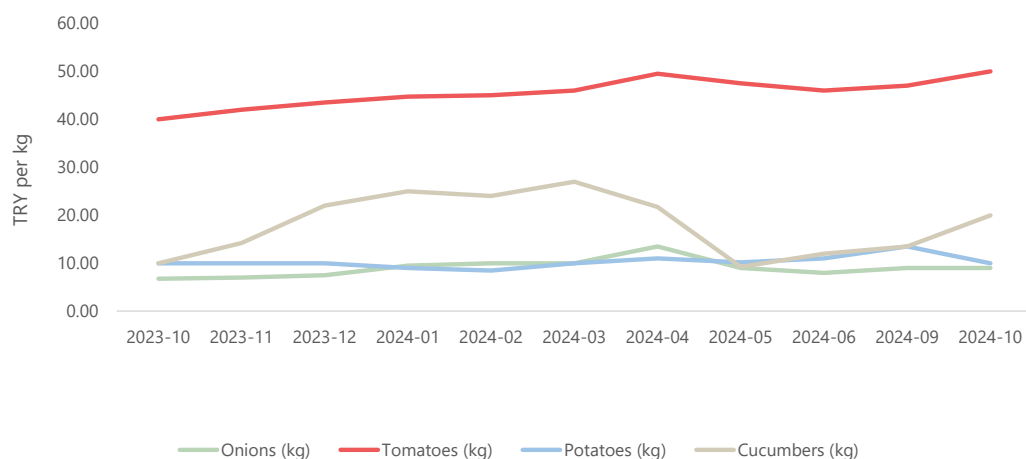
Food price trends

As consistently highlighted in REACH's regular Humanitarian Situation Monitoring Overview assessments, securing basic food needs remains a top priority need for communities across NWS. The massive reduction in humanitarian food assistance in the region, especially since the beginning 2023, has caused additional concerns about rising food insecurity and the overall humanitarian situation.

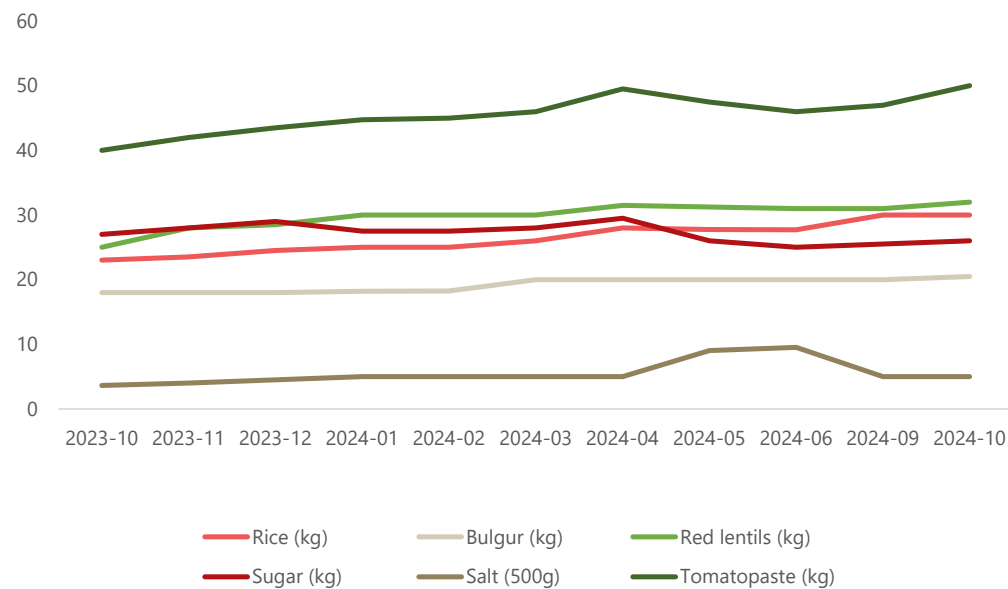
The regional median SMEB food cost saw a minor decrease between September and October in the context of a 4% increase over the past 6 months and a 23% increase over the past 12 months. The slower increase in SMEB food costs over the past six months may be attributable to several factors, such as well-functioning commercial cross border supply chains for core food items, the TRY's rate of depreciation slowing, and seasonal dynamics in the supply of fresh foods and other crops.

Most monitored food item prices were relatively stable month-on-month, although there were a few exceptions to this. Cucumbers recorded a notable 48% price increase in October, likely due to seasonal production cycles and increased/decreased local supply. A few monitored food items saw sizable decreases in price since September, including potatoes (26%) and chicken (15%).

Regional median price of vegetables, TRY



Regional median price of bulk food items, TRY



Food price changes

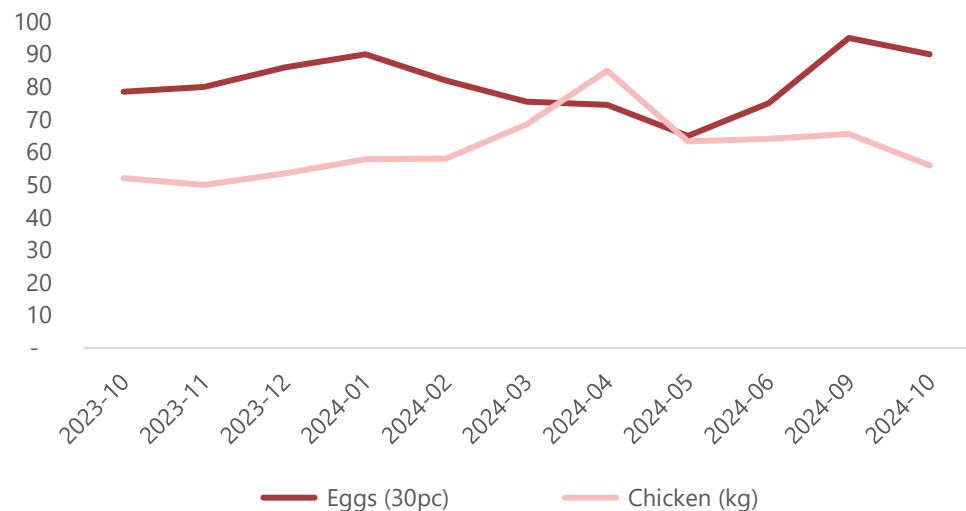
Item	Unit	Median Price TRY	1-month change (TRY)	Median Price USD*
Bulk food items				
Bulgur	1kg	21	+2.5%▲	0.61
Red lentils	1kg	32	+3%▲	0.94
Rice	1kg	30	0%	0.88
Flour	1kg	15	0%	0.44
Salt	500g	5	0%	0.14
Sugar	1kg	26	+2%▲	0.76
Tomato Paste	1kg	50	+6%▲	1.47
Vegetables				
Tomatoes	1kg	10	-9%▼	0.29
Potatoes	1kg	10	-26%▼	0.29
Cucumbers	1kg	20	+48%▲	0.58
Onions	1kg	9	0%	0.26

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

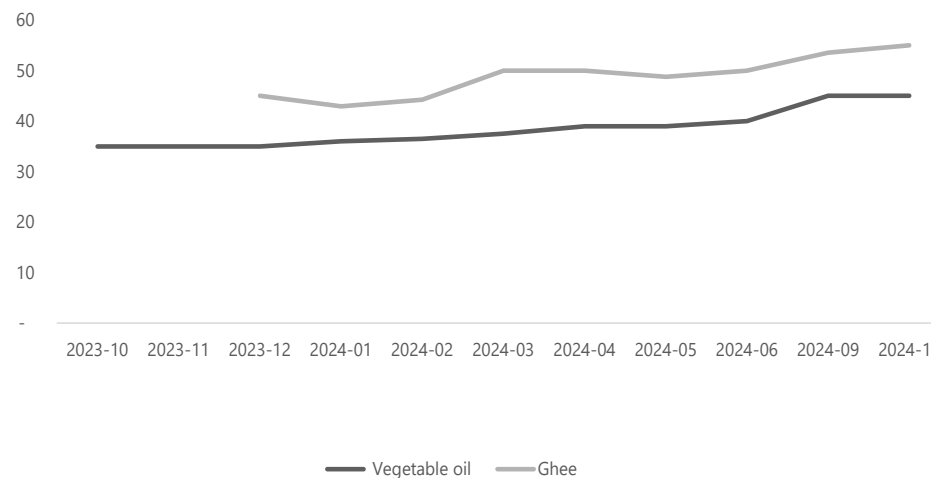
Food availability



Regional median price of poultry items, TRY



Regional median price of vegetable oil, TRY



Food price changes

Item	Unit	Median Price TRY	1-month change (TRY)	Median Price USD*
Cooking oils				
Ghee	1kg	55	+3%▲	1.61
Vegetable oil	1L	45	0%	1.32
Poultry				
Chicken	1kg	56	-15%▼	1.64
Eggs	1kg	90	-5%▼	2.64
Bread				
Subsidised bread	8pc	10	0%	0.29

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

Non food items

Challenges related to the availability and price of fuel continues to have far reaching consequences in NWS. Most monitored fuel items increased in price compared to October, and all have experienced sizable increases over the past year. If the ongoing fuel crisis deteriorates further over the coming winter months, as rising demand reduces availability and puts upwards pressure on prices, the humanitarian conditions for millions already in need will become even more dire. The increase in water prices over the past year is also primarily attributed to rising fuel costs and higher maintenance expenses for water transport vehicles. Although the cost of water decreased 11% month-on-month in September, it has increased over 27% since last October.

Non-food items availability

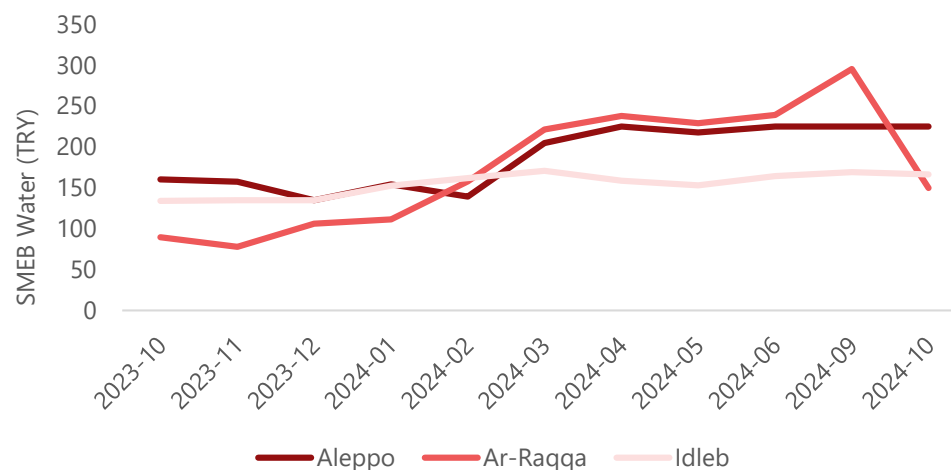
9%

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

7%

of surveyed vendors reported that LPG was unavailable in their community or neighborhood.

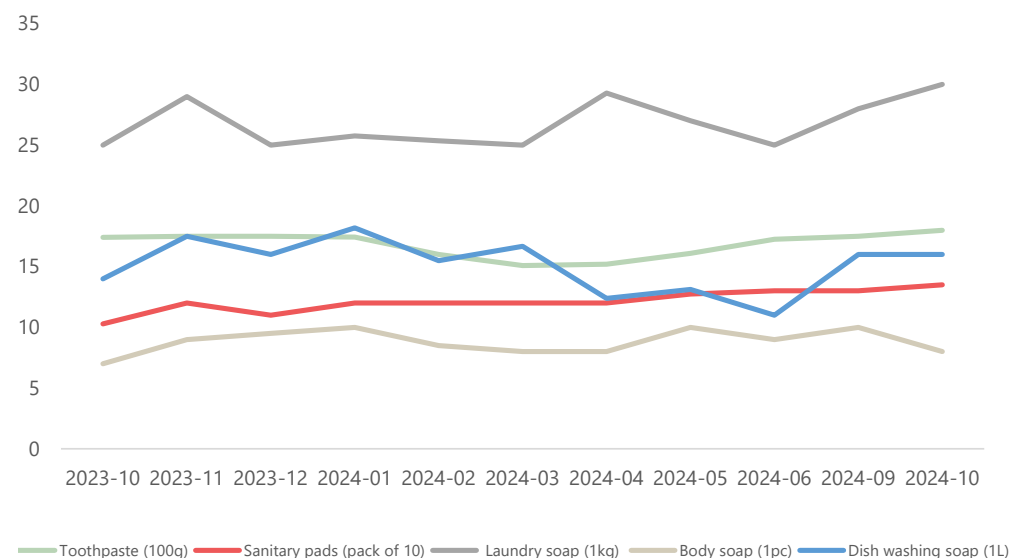
Regional median SMEB water trucking prices, TRY**



Price changes of monitored non-food items

Item	Unit	Median Price TRY	1-month change (TRY)	Median Price USD*
Non-food items				
Bathing soap	1pc	8	-20% ▼	0.23
Sanitary pads	10pc	14	+4% ▲	0.41
Toothpaste	100g	18	+3% ▲	0.52
Laundry powder	1kg	30	+7% ▲	0.88
Dish soap	1L	16	0%	0.47
Cooking fuels				
Kerosene	1L	27	+6% ▲	0.79
LPG gas	1L	60	+4% ▲	1.76
Water trucking				
Water trucking	1L	0.04	-10% ▼	0.0012
Internet				
Mobile data	1gb	37	-11% ▼	1.08
Transportation fuels				
Imported diesel	1L	35	-3% ▼	1.02
Imported petrol	1L	45	+1% ▲	1.32
Manually refined diesel	1L	24	+1% ▲	0.70
Manually refined petrol	1L	28	+4% ▲	0.82

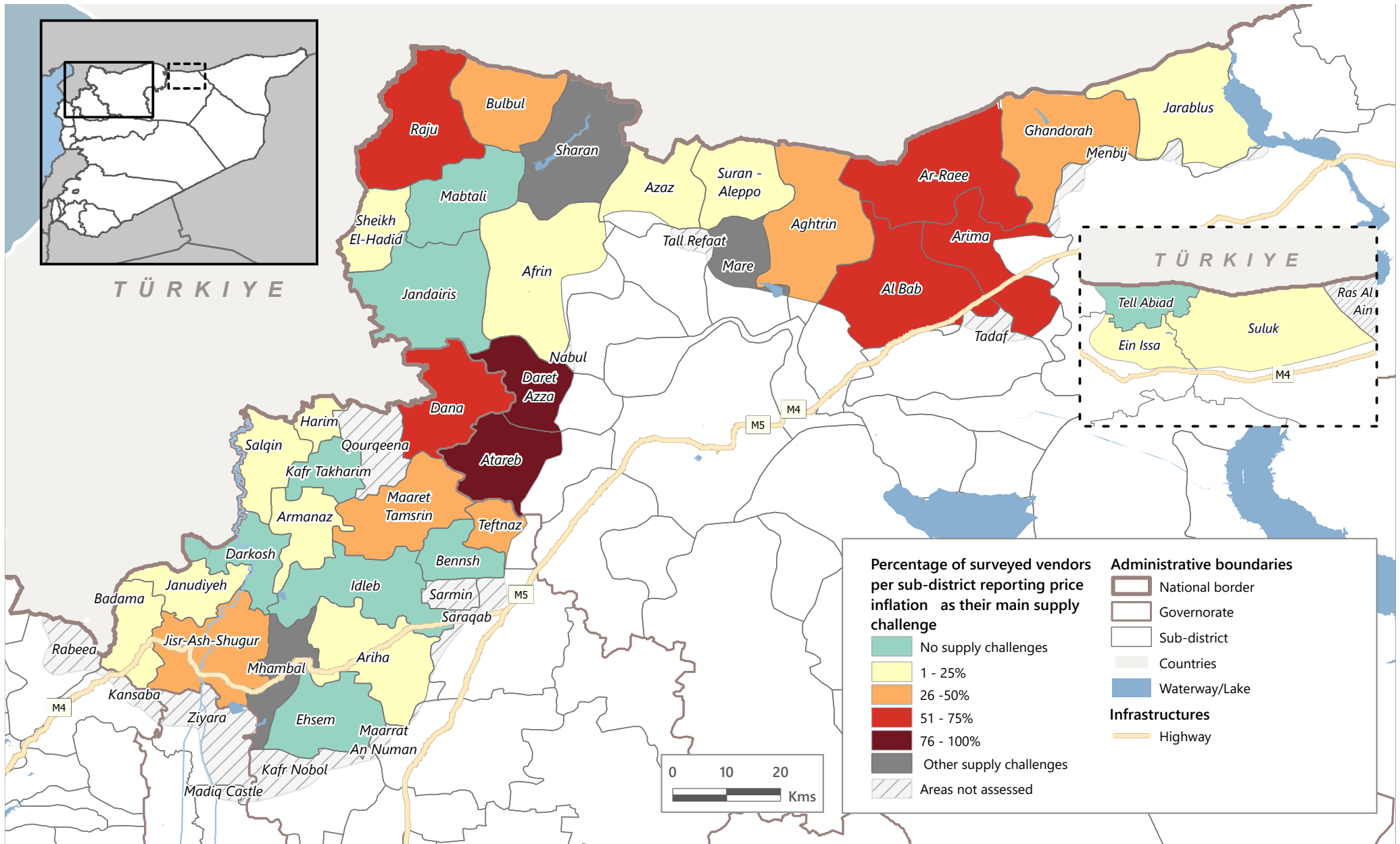
Regional median price of hygiene items, TRY



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

** Due to insufficient data, it was not possible to calculate the water trucking SMEB.

% of surveyed vendors reporting lack of funds impacting their capacity to secure stocks



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 reflects only the specific timeframe in which it was collected. Variations 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 northwest Syria (NWS), 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 NWS, please contact the cash working group coordinator at cbr.twg@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).

