



ISSUE 6: SEPTEMBER 2020

EMERGENCY SOCIAL SAFETY NET (ESSN)

Thanks to European Union funding and a partnership between the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the Turkish Red Crescent Society (TRC), over 1.7 million refugees living in Turkey are receiving humanitarian support through monthly cash assistance.

September snapshot



1,789,382 individuals
reached with cash assistance



220,984,440 TRY
cash transferred to 314,881
households



31,185 individuals
included through SASF
discretionary allowance

Highlights

Measuring our impact: first post-distribution monitoring conducted under new partnership

The first post distribution monitoring (PDM) took place from August to September under the IFRC-TRC partnership, with more than 5,000 households (both eligible and ineligible for ESSN) interviewed. While most indicators remain stable, the level of debt families have significantly increased since March 2020. The final report with findings will be issued in October.

Cash transfer takes place on 30 September

On 30 September, 220,984,440 TRY was transferred to 1,789,382 individuals living under temporary and international protection in Turkey. The cash transfer included the severe disability top-up of 6,258,600 TRY.

ENHANCING ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITIES

IFRC and TRC are launching a new rumour tracking and management system in September, which will help monitor and mitigate the impact of misinformation and the spread of rumours about the ESSN. If rumours are not identified or responded to, their spread can have serious consequences, especially in an emergency context. Rumours can create confusion, anger or suffering; provoke negative behaviour; and impede the efficiency of our humanitarian programme. Considering the large scale of the ESSN, these rumours are inevitable and it is critical that they are identified, monitored and responded to. Three different types of rumours have been identified in the ESSN:

- 1. Rumours about the ESSN**, such as changes in the demographic criteria and the cash transfer value.
- 2. Rumours about the context** in Turkey, such as registrations and repatriation.
- 3. Rumours about societal issues**, such as COVID-19 and social cohesion.

A summary of the rumours can be found **on page 5**.



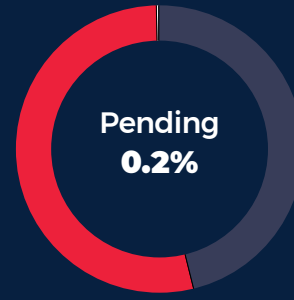
Funded by
European Union
Humanitarian Aid



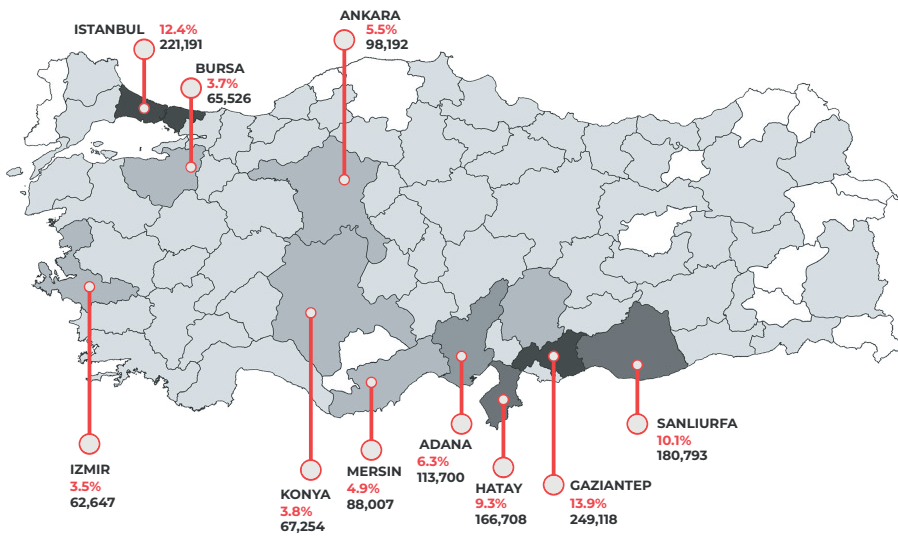
APPLICATIONS TO ESSN

From May to June, there was an increase in applications by 242.2 per cent compared to May, due to a slow opening of SASF offices receiving face-to-face applications. From June to July, applications increased by another 60.4 per cent. By August and September, applications have began to level out, aligning with average monthly applications before the pandemic.

Eligible
54.2%

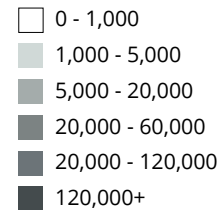


Ineligible
45.6%

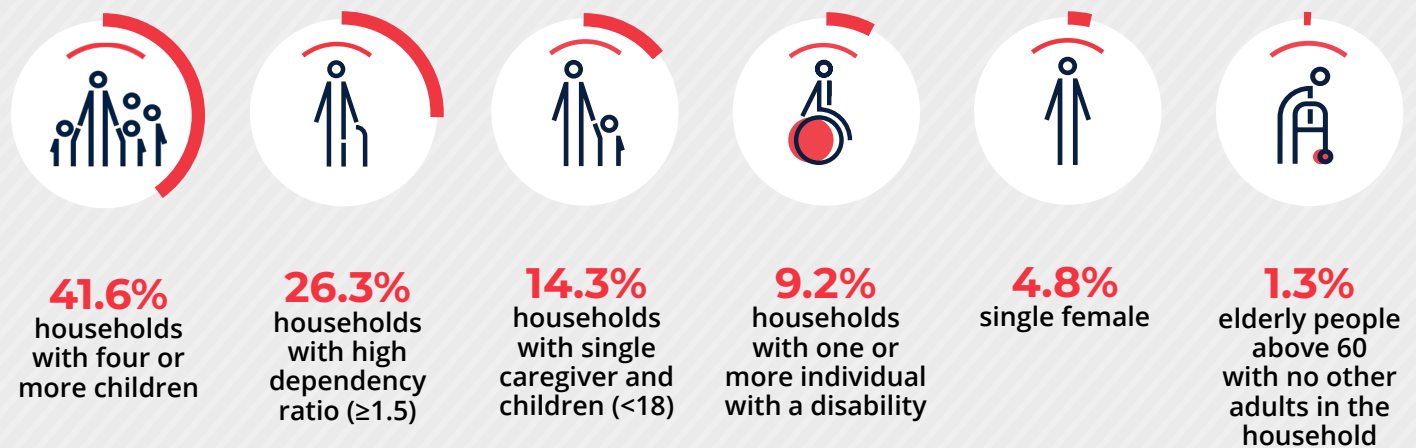


Province breakdown of ESSN recipients

Number of individuals



CRITERIA BREAKDOWN ¹



***2.5%** of households (7,778 HHs) receive the ESSN assistance within the scope of SASF discretionary allowance.

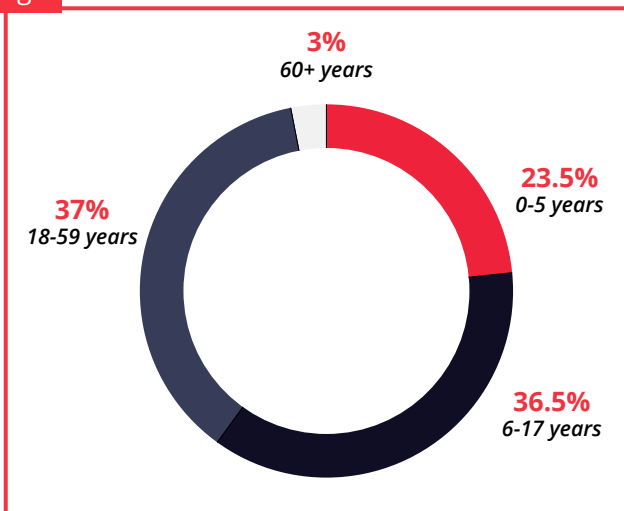
Sweepbacks: A total of 492,480 TRY sweepback transactions were realized in September from 492 uncollected cards. Before the transactions were realized, card holders on the sweepback list were sent two warning messages in July and August reminding them to collect their cards.

¹ 131,138 households with four or more children; 82,652 households with a dependency ratio equal to or above 1.5; 44,939 households with a single parent with no other adults and at least one child under 18; 28,906 households with at least one individual with a disability rate of 40%; 15,256 single females; 4,212 households with elderly people above 60 with no other adults in the household.



IN NUMBERS: DEMOGRAPHICS OF PEOPLE WE SERVE

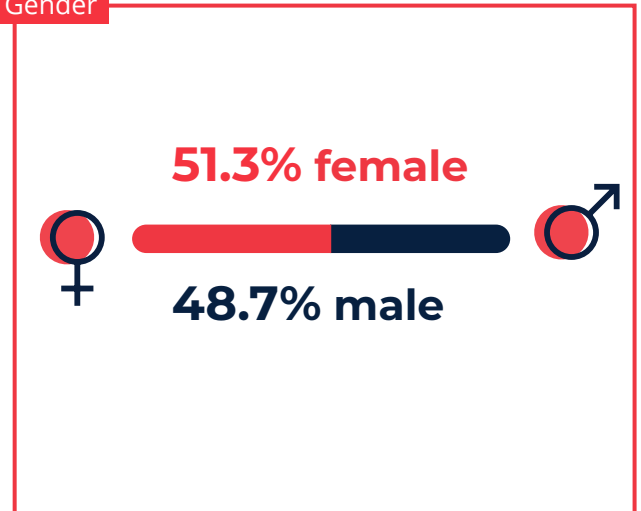
Age



Age breakdown of ESN recipients for September:

- 0 - 5 years:** 421,720
- 6 - 17 years:** 653,326
- 18 - 59 years:** 662,035
- 60+ years:** 52,301

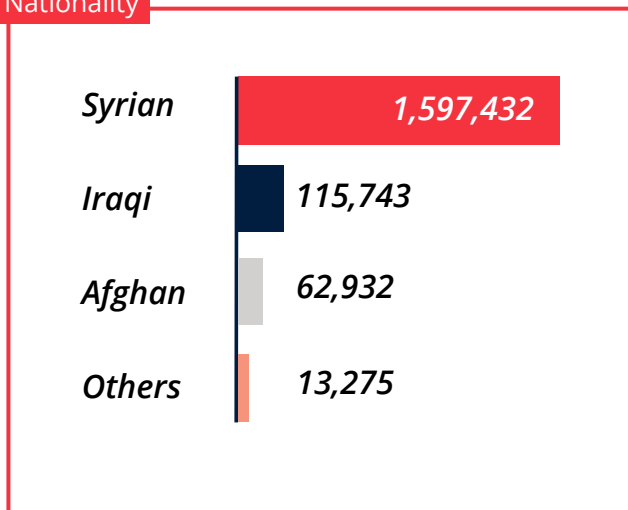
Gender



Gender breakdown of ESN recipients for September:

- Female:** 918,856
- Male:** 870,526

Nationality



Among the 'others' category are Iranian, Somali, Pakistani, Chinese and Palestinian nationals.

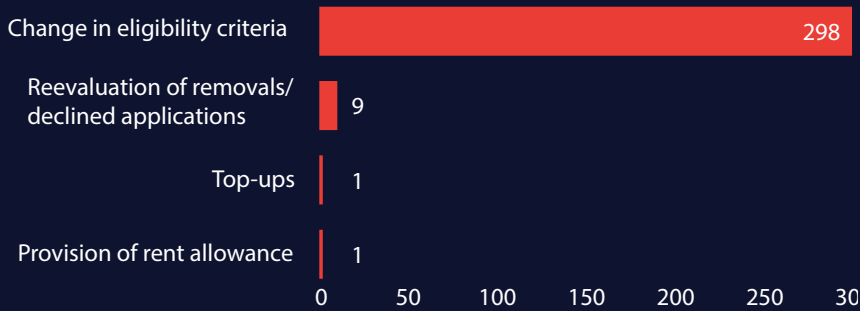
Disability



Individuals with a valid severe disability health report received an additional top-up of 600 TRY per person, totalling 6,258,600 TRY for September.

RUMOUR TRACKING IN NUMBERS

TOPICS



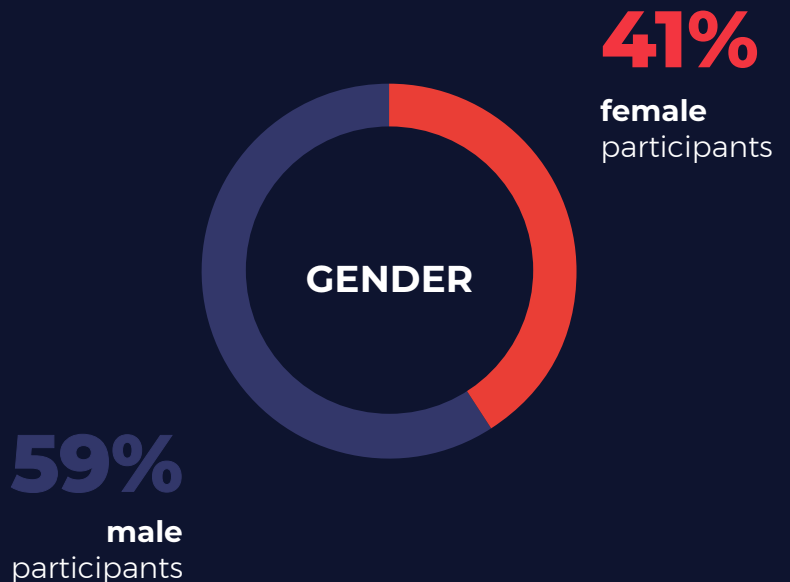
Whether families with two children would be eligible for ESSN was the main topic of the rumors.

As a response, TRC call centre operators informed the callers

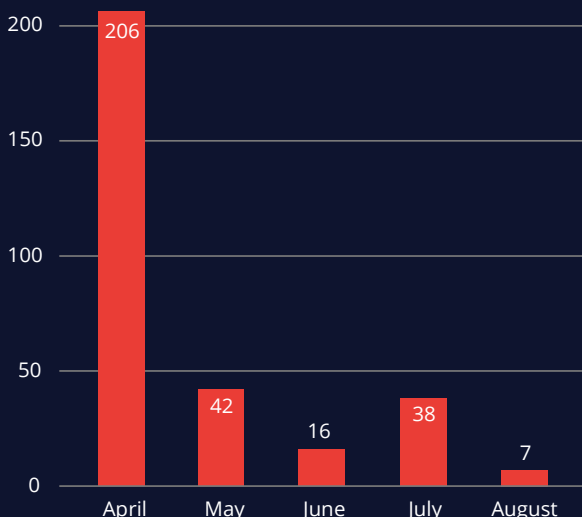
thoroughly and guided them how to receive reliable information about the program. In addition to that, IFRC and TRC utilized other communication channels such as Kizilaykart website or Facebook account efficiently and revised available information on these channels as needed to prevent further spread of misinformation.

Gender dissemination among the inquirers of the rumors is dominated by male inquirers to some extent.

However, this is in line with the dispersal of the received calls as per gender in general. All of the rumors were received by Arabic language speakers.



MONTHS



Rumors peaked in the month of April, when coronavirus cases started to increase on a consistent manner in Turkey.

However, starting as of the following month, the number of calls about rumors decreased sharply and maintained in slightly differing low manner up until August.



PROGRAMMATIC HIGHLIGHTS

Monitoring and evaluation:

The tenth PDM - and the first under the new IFRC-TRC partnership - was conducted in August and September. Initial findings indicate that most core indicators remained stable (a decreasing trend was anticipated due to COVID-19). A few factors could be impacting these stable numbers, including the two Eid holidays, which had an impact on consumption habits and assistance received. In addition, this could also show that the economic top-ups might have helped mitigate the initial impact of COVID-19 on households.

While most indicators remain stable, the level of debt has significantly increased. Supported by remote focus group discussion (rFGD) findings, it seems that loss of employment due to COVID-19 has caused higher levels of debt. Data collection for the Inter-sectorial Vulnerability Framework is ongoing.

Referrals and outreach:

Referral and outreach (R&O) continue to sensitize and advocate with local authorities on the ESSN to help remove barriers to the programme. More than 300 local authorities were visited by field teams in September. Local authorities continue their activities under certain COVID-19 measures. Certain institutions obliged their visitors to submit HES (Hayat Eve Siğar – Life Fits Into Home) codes, a personal code implemented by the Ministry of Health to track the number of travellers in a certain place at a specific time.

Uncollected cards belonging to households with disabilities were identified and delivered to their homes.

Accountability to affected populations:

Communicating with the affected populations continues through the 168 call centre, the website,

Facebook page, and rFGDs. The call centre received 9,244 calls between 1 - 19 September, 93 per cent of which were in Arabic. The majority of calls received were regarding the evaluation process of ESSN and following up on application results.

Coordination:

The latest CaLP cash podcast featured the ESSN and European Union support, hosting TRC Kızılaykart Coordinator as a guest speaker. The podcast discussed the link between social protection and humanitarian cash and voucher assistance. The link to the podcast can be found [here](#).

TRC and IFRC ESSN Coordination Teams held their first stand alone ESSN Task Force meeting cycle under the new partnership, through two separate virtual sessions, hosting a total of 82 participants from different national and international humanitarian organizations. Both meetings presented updates on the ESSN and the Conditional Cash Transfers for Education (CCTE) and announced the ESSN new rumour tracking and management system. The thematic topic discussed was mainly rFGDs.

During the Q&A discussions, the focus was on issues related to COVID-19, including ID registrations, card distribution, manipulating the ESSN demographic criteria and increasing the monthly assistance transfer.

Verification through SASFs:

Household verification visits remain on hold until further notice from the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS) due to COVID-19. However, Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations (SASFs) continue to take and assess applications for the ESSN either over the phone or on their premises under strict hygienic and physical distancing rules.