



ISSUE 14: MAY 2021

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 1.8 million refugees living in Turkey are receiving humanitarian support through monthly cash assistance.

May snapshots



1,847,218 individuals
reached with cash assistance



406,937,290 TRY
transferred to 326,918 households



4,069,431,065 TRY
transferred since April 2020

Highlights

Unimpeded aid amid the 18-day full lockdown

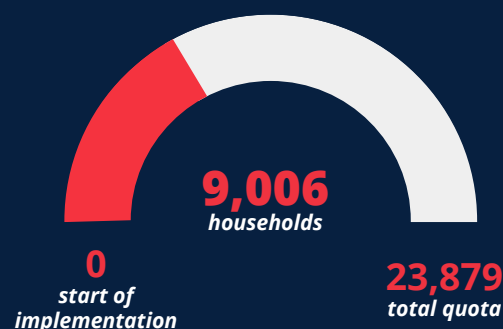
IFRC and TRC carried out all operations relentlessly with TRC HQ, TRC 168 Call Centre, TRC field offices and TRC Service Centres (SC) remaining open to ensure timely provision of assistance and services during the full lockdown across Turkey. 406,937,290 TRY, including quarterly top-ups of 113,674,700 TRY, was transferred to 326,918 households without any delay.

Socio-economic empowerment referrals began

The first systematic internal socio-economic empowerment referrals with the aim to foster self-resilience of the affected populations started as part of ESSN. The system identifies and refers the ESSN recipients to relevant vocational, language trainings; consultancy and livelihood opportunities. The first referrals were carried out in collaboration with TRC's Community Centers (CC) in April 2021.

SASF ALLOWANCE

In May 2021, 9,006 households (35,990 individuals) received ESSN assistance via the SASF allowance across Turkey. The SASF allowance continues to play an integral role in minimizing exclusion errors and including vulnerable households into the ESSN.



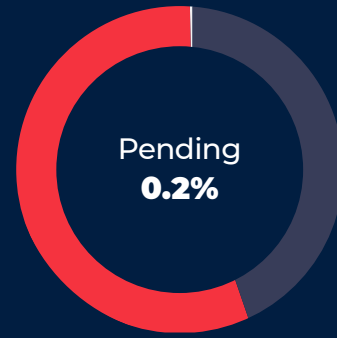
Funded by
the European Union



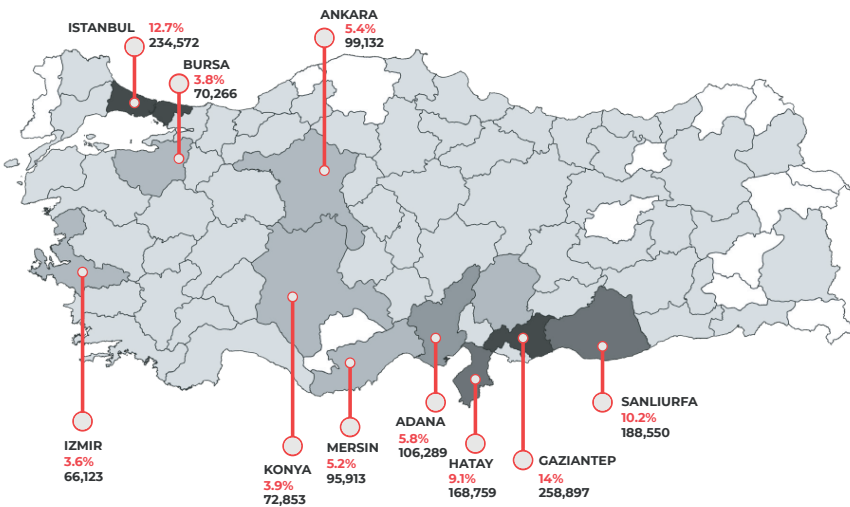
ESSN APPLICATIONS

In May 2021, a total of 1,136 household applications were received by the SASF offices and TRC SCs. The number of applications is lower than previous months, as a consequence of the 18-day lockdown. 51.8 per cent of these applications were received by TRC SCs and 48.2 per cent at SASF offices. 40,125 household applications were received since the beginning of the ESSN III Programme, 37.3 per cent of which were received by the TRC SCs.

Eligible
53%

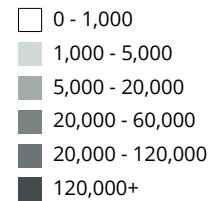


Ineligible
46.8%



Province breakdown of ESSN recipients

Number of individuals



CRITERIA BREAKDOWN ¹



41.2%
households
with four or
more children



26.5%
households
with high
dependency
ratio (≥1.5)



13.7%
households
with single
caregiver and
children (<18)



9.3%
households
with one or
more individual
with a disability



3.5%
single female



3.0%
elderly people
above 60
with no other
adults in the
household

***2.8%** of households (9,006 HHs) receive ESSN assistance within the scope of the SASF allowance.

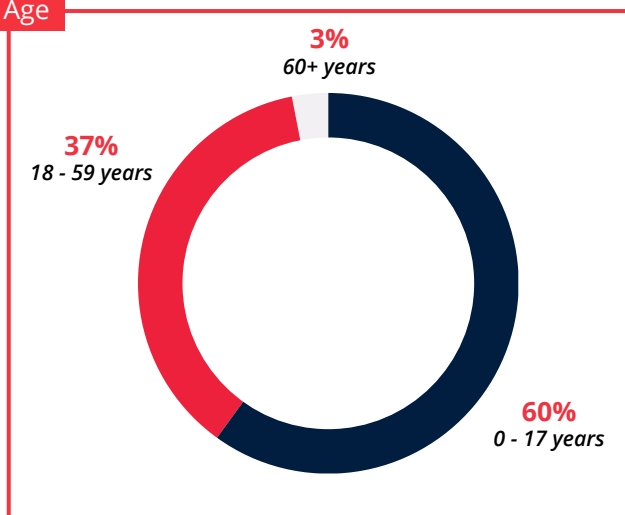
Sweepbacks: In May, 1,025,629.17 TRY was swept back in total, 239,565 TRY being swept back from 436 uncollected cards and 786,064.17 TRY from 910 dormant accounts. The total amount of funds swept back since April 2020 is 13,303,269.87 TRY.

¹ 134,815 households with four or more children; 86,495 households with a dependency ratio equal to or above 1.5; 44,753 households with a single parent with no other adults and at least one child under 18; 30,487 households with at least one individual with a disability rate of 40%; 11,399 single females; 9,963 households with elderly people above 60 with no other adults in the household.



IN NUMBERS: DEMOGRAPHICS OF PEOPLE WE SERVE

Age



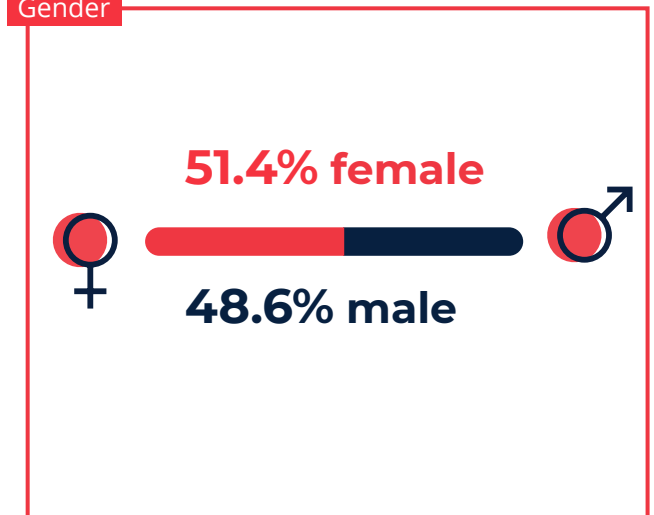
Age breakdown of ESSN recipients:

0 - 17 years: 1,104,987

18 - 59 years: 688,056

60+ years: 54,175

Gender

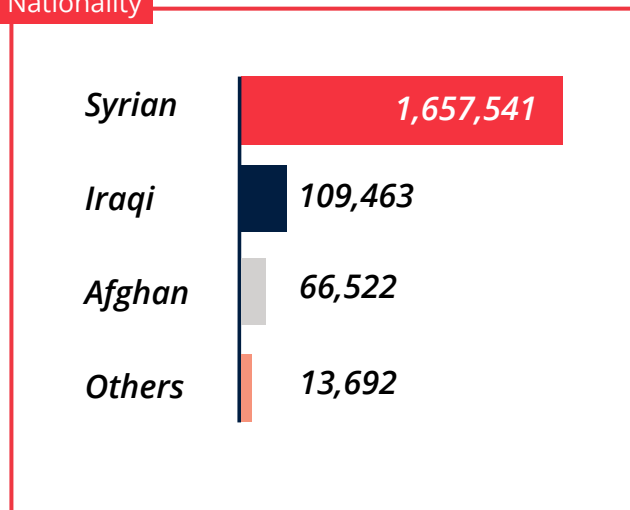


Gender breakdown of ESSN recipients:

Female: 948,512

Male: 898,706

Nationality



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

Disability



Individuals with a valid severe disability health report received an additional top-up of 600 TRY per individual, totalling 6,943,800 TRY for May.

SHOCK-RESPONSIVENESS IN THE FACE OF CHALLENGES

Rapid response to the challenges posed by the full national lockdown of 18 days restrictions reflects the capacity and adaptability of the teams and the solid cooperation and coordination of TRC and IFRC.

TRC SCs were fully operational with the required measures in place. TRC 168 Call Centre received and responded to an increased number of calls. Activities in the TRC HQ and field offices proceeded at full pace with uninterrupted field activities. The Referral & Outreach (R&O) operations encompassed the minimization of potential protection risks and access barriers for individuals with specific vulnerabilities (card distribution to elderly/disabled, remote advocacy, analysis to identify potential access barriers to assistance and enhancing referrals to available services). Efforts to update the contact numbers of refugees who were not reached throughout outbound calls were maintained.

Within the scope of the portion of the 18-day national lockdown which took place in May:

- **1,129 outbound** calls were made;
- **19 Kızılaykarts** were delivered to beneficiaries (+two during the portion of the lockdown in April);
- **26 posts** were shared on Facebook, three of which were related to the lockdown and the normalization process (made in four languages);
- **1,215 households** received in-kind assistance as a result of the referrals made by the R&O teams.



LIVELIHOOD REFERRAL TO BOLSTER SELF-RESILIENCE

End of April, the systematic socio-economic empowerment referrals, namely the livelihood referrals, have started between ESSN and TRC CCs for those seeking for opportunities to capacity development activities or socio-economic opportunities.

Referred individuals are being profiled by dedicated staff in TRC CCs and referred to the relevant socio-economic empowerment channels including language courses, vocational/skills training, consultancy on work permit and job placement opportunities based on the needs and the capabilities of the individuals.



The aim of this new initiative is threefold: to facilitate people's access to the labour market and their employment in decent conditions, to refer them to relevant activities to improve their social and professional skills to support their self-sufficiency, and to contribute the country's economy and labour market policies, via referring skilled workers according to the needs of the market.



In total, ESSN has now existing linkages with 16 TRC CCs with a livelihood referral focal point in each community centre in charge of receiving, identifying and referring individuals to relevant livelihood related activities.



To enhance socio-economic empowerment referrals within ESSN programme, the R&O unit put emphasis on making outbound calls for those who applied for in-kind assistance because of unemployment in May, since these individuals might have potential to work and experience in the labour market.



PROGRAMMATIC HIGHLIGHTS

Monitoring and evaluation:

Card distribution monitoring was conducted in a total of 19 Halkbank branches and two TRC SCs, with the new checklist used. Findings suggest that the distribution process is ongoing smoothly with, no without major issues were observed. Visited branches reported that the main problems are related to cards being swallowed by the ATMs of other banks.

The fourth round of FGDs with the theme “ESSN Satisfaction” came to an end. FGD sessions were held with male and female participants, both eligible and ineligible groups. ESSN related processes were carried out smoothly, in line with the COVID-19 measures.

Outreach and referral:

The R&O field teams continued their activities with respect to sensitizing local authorities and advocacy to competently resolve issues of individuals who encounter obstacles accessing ESSN assistance. In this regard, field teams visited more than 180 local institutions in 22 cities in May.

Due to the full lockdown that was enforced throughout Turkey for over two weeks in May, sensitization and the advocacy visits to local institutions were temporarily suspended. TRC conducted remote activities for issue identification, as well as card distribution to support individuals facing barriers prior to and during the lockdown. In addition, in-kind distribution increased a result of the R&O teams’ field activities. In-kind aid encompassed the distribution of food parcels, hygiene kits and clothing assistance, provided by the TRC.

Accountability to affected populations:

In May AAP-CEA teams continue to sensitize/inform the ESSN recipients and target group with important messages, their rights, latest news and updates about the programme including COVID-19 measures.

- During May (03-28) TRC 168 Call Center received 10,924 calls and 10,782 of them (98.7 per cent) were closed, and responses were shared with the callers. 10,310 (94.3 per cent) of the calls were received in Arabic, from 65 provinces.
- Total number of Facebook followers is 95,682, while the total number of replied questions on Facebook is 42,535.
- Total number of sent SMSs is 731,311. Message content included confirmation that the complaint was received, monthly removal for different reasons, eligibility and card distribution, discrepancy, and dormant account warning.

Questions/feedback received through the TRC 168 Call Centre and social media accounts provides valuable insight into the problems and difficulties our target group faces. Thanks to these questions and feedback, the issue that Farsi and Arabic speaking target groups have difficulty in understanding ATM screens is identified. As a response, an ATM manual has been prepared and it will be delivered to the TRC SCs.

Communication:

An animation that tells the story of a young poet and artist in her own words, voice and drawings was published on May 16, International Day of Living Together in Peace. The animation reached 476,000 people and was viewed more than 161,000 times at least for 15-seconds.

The #powertobe digital campaign which run in two separate periods of December 2020/January 2021 and April/May 2021 has been finalised. More than 20 million unique reach has been achieved across seven countries as part of the campaign. With 98% engagement rate, the campaign succeeded in getting almost every person to engage with the content.