



المركز السوري Syrian Center For
لبحوث Policy
السياسات Research

SCPR'S

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX IN SYRIA

OCTOBER 2020 - JUNE 2022

November 2022

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------------|--|
| AA | Autonomous Administration |
| CBS | Central Bureau of Statistics in Syria |
| COICOP | Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose |
| CPI | Consumer Price Index |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GoS | Government of Syria |
| HIES | Household Income and Expenditure Survey |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| M-o-M | Month on month |
| SCPR | Syrian Centre for Policy Research |
| SIG | Syrian Interim Government |
| SYP | Syrian Pound |
| SSG | The Syrian Salvation Government |
| TRY | Turkish Lira |
| UNOCHA | United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs |
| USD | United States Dollar |
| WFP | World Food Programme |
| WHO | World Health Organization |
| Y-o-Y | Year on year |

Acknowledgments

SCPR would like to express its gratitude for of all supporters, experts, and field researchers who have made great efforts in conducting the monthly price survey successfully over a period of 21 months.

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Executive Summary

The Syrian Center for Policy Research's¹ Consumer Price Index in Syria provides a complex index to monitor and analyze consumer prices, inflation and the cost of living at the level of local economies in all Syrian governorates across the different areas of control. It is the outcome of two years of continuous work surveying prices in Syria.

The report uses a methodology for developing a consumer price index in Syria based on updated weights and provides a price analysis during the period between October 2020 and June 2022, based on data collected by the field research team. The report monitors inflation rates according to the International Labor Organization's Consumer Price Index methodology (ILO, 2020); it measures the general level of prices in the main consumption groups and subgroups that make up the index at the local level.

The SCPR's Consumer Price Index in Syria is unique in that it is based on a consumption pattern that is representative of the current period in Syria. The selection of the consumer

basket was based on the 2009 Household Income and Expenditure Survey and adjusted following SCPR's multipurpose surveys in 2020 in all governorates; the year 2021, a recent year that represents the local markets and economies affected by the conflict, was selected as the base year; data were collected monthly by specialized researchers; all areas of control in Syria were covered, including the Syrian countryside; and new goods or goods the demand on which increased due to the conflict including electricity from neighbourhood generators, off-grid water (tanker water), and unsubsidized energy (diesel, domestic gas, and gasoline) prices.

The Index measures the monthly and annual general inflation at the national, area-of-control and governorate levels, measures inflation by main consumption groups and sub-groups, and determines the percentage of each group's contribution to inflation.

The report reached the following key findings:

¹ SCBR will be used as an abbreviation for the Syrian Center for Policy Research in this paper.

A- Analysis of inflation in Syria

Syria is currently in a state of high inflation; the general price index (according to the Paasche index 2021) increased 6 times between 2019 and mid-2022, and food prices increased 6.7 times. The overall price index in Syria recorded annual inflation **(Y-o-Y)** of 113.46 per cent in 2020, 110.90 per cent in 2021 and 55.71 per cent in the first half of 2022 (compared to 2021). Food inflation reached 132.99 per cent in 2020, 110.47 per cent in 2021 and 56.71 per cent in the first half of 2022 (compared to 2021).

Distinctive aspects of local economies are clearly visible in Syria across various areas of control (GoS area, SIG and SSG areas and AA areas); prices, inflation rates and causal factors, cost of living, wages and poverty levels vary from one area to the next. During the reporting period, the overall price index was rising in all areas of control. The time series of inflation is similar for both GoS and AA areas since both of them use the Syrian pound as a trading currency. SIG and SSG areas, on the other hand, have a different scenario due to the use of the Turkish lira and being influenced by the Turkish economy.

The highest general and food inflation during the reporting period (October 2020 to June 2022) was seen in the GoS areas, followed by the AA areas and then the SIG and SSG areas. In 2021, the general inflation level was the same in all three areas of control, but food inflation was higher in AA areas compared to other areas. In

the first half of 2022, however, the SIG and SSG areas suffered the highest rates of both general and food inflation, followed by GoS areas and the AA areas.

B- Inflation analysis by consumption groups

Inflation rates varied among the main consumption groups; housing, water, electricity and gas ranked first at the level of the whole of Syria (with average monthly inflation of 6.4 per cent throughout the survey period). These were followed by household furnishings, equipment and maintenance (with an average monthly inflation of 5.9 per cent), transport (with an average monthly inflation of 5.7 per cent), and food and non-alcoholic beverages (with an average monthly inflation of 5.5 per cent). With an average monthly inflation of 6.4 per cent, the group of housing, water, electricity and gas had the highest average inflation in the GoS region. In SIG and SSG areas, the transport group had the highest inflation rate (with an average monthly inflation of 6.8 per cent), and the clothing and footwear group had the highest inflation rate in AA areas (with an average monthly inflation of 5.6 per cent).

The contribution rate of the primary consumption groups to inflation differed as well. During the reporting period, the group of food and non-alcoholic beverages contributed the most (43.6 per cent) to monthly inflation at

the national level for Syria, with differing rates in various control areas (51.4 per cent in AA areas, 44.8 per cent in the GoS areas, and 37.0 per cent in SIG and SSG areas). The Housing, water, electricity and gas group came in second, with a 29.2 per cent contribution to monthly inflation in Syria over the same period (31.5 per cent in SIG and SSG areas, 28.7 per cent in the GoS areas, and 22.1 per cent in AA areas).

C- Poverty lines

Further examination of price trends during the conflict period reveals that food prices climbed at a higher rate than the pace of the overall price index; food inflation increased about 91 times (between 2009 and mid-2022), as opposed to the overall index, which increased by roughly 76 times (a difference of 15 times). This suggests that the greatest effects of Syria's deteriorating economy are most clearly felt in the country's accelerating loss of food security and the transformation of its poverty structure, with Syrians moving from poverty within the upper-bound or lower-bound poverty lines to poverty below the extreme poverty line. More people will fall into extreme poverty as long as prices rise at the same rate, and significant patterns of extreme poverty, such as hunger, will appear.

In the first half of 2022, the extreme poverty line per household -which denotes a deprivation

of food- was set at SYP 645 thousand; the lower poverty line per household -which denotes an inability to meet basic survival needs- was set at about a million SYP, and the upper poverty line per household was roughly SYP 1.4 million. The SIG and SSG areas had the highest value of poverty lines, followed by the GoS areas and then the AA areas.

Wages have failed to catch up with the poverty lines and the gap has widened during the research period. Due to the dominance of conflict economies, the severity of wage disparities has grown throughout Syria, within control areas, and between the employment sectors (public, private and civil), reflecting a state of fragmentation, inequality and injustice.



Section I:
**Methodological
Framework**

I: Introduction

Price-related information is of interest to economists and humanitarian workers, and price stability is a key goal of economic and social policies due to its significant implications for markets and living conditions. Price indices are critical in understanding the conflict's dynamics and implications, such as the absence of the rule of law, the dominance of the conflict economies, geographical divisions and difficult flow of goods within the country, internal boundaries between conflicting actors, siege and looting policies, the spread of monopoly and royalties, difficulties of movement and access, and sanctions, among other factors.

The official institutions' production of data and statistics has decreased for political and technical reasons, as has the quality of such data and statistics. In general, the statistics do not cover the whole of Syria, and indices are delayed or not released at all. New institutions have emerged in the various control areas, but in most cases, these organizations have published data and indices related only to their respective areas. Some indices are produced by the United Nations, particularly those related to humanitarian assistance (UNOCHA), agriculture (FAO), food (WFP) and health (WHO).

For researchers and actors involved in the Syrian economy, the lack of data and indices is an obstacle to understanding the current situation, identifying challenges and priorities, and assessing the impact of interventions. To fill this

statistical void, independent research centres and civil society institutions had to create their own tools. For example, the Syrian Center for Policy Research (SCPR) published estimates of the GDP, trade balance and fiscal indicators, conducted qualitative surveys such as the 2014 Population Survey, and multipurpose surveys in 2020 and 2021, and produced the Consumer Price Index in Syria. These were created with a focus on high quality and research ethics.

The SCPR Consumer Price Index aims to create and publish a price index in the context of conflict regularly. It also aims to assess the levels and changes in the prices of goods and services consumed by households at the level of local economies to monitor unexpected price increases, estimate food and non-food living costs, and identify food, lower and higher poverty lines for households in local economies.

The SCPR Consumer Price Index in Syria tracks the monthly prices for 112 goods and services in 59 Syrian markets. It reflects the prevailing consumption pattern in Syria in 2020 by introducing consumption basket weights to reflect the relative importance of goods and services as measured by their share of the overall household expenditure. Several reasons prompted the Syrian Center for Policy Research to develop the consumer price index in Syria. The first was to represent the current conflict-affected consumption pattern; the consumption pattern has changed during the conflict due to several factors, including the

decline in real income, the increase in the spread and intensity of poverty, and the State's reduced role in the provision of public services. As a result, new commodities were not widely available in Syria before the conflict emerged; these are alternatives to public services such as electricity from neighbourhood generators (locally known as amperes), water from water tankers, and oil derivatives (heating diesel, domestic gas, and gasoline) sold at unsubsidized prices as alternatives to subsidised oil derivatives. Food assistance provided by civil society organizations has also been included because they contribute to the consumption pattern during the conflict. This approach differs from the Central Bureau of Statistics' methodology, which continues to use the pre-conflict consumption weights pattern while ignoring new goods and services.

The second reason was to cover all control areas (the Syrian Government (GoS), Autonomous Administration (AA), Interim Government (SIG)² and the Salvation Government³ (SSG)) in order to highlight the status of local economies related to political forces and the factors causing inflation in each of them, as well as to develop a price index that covers the entire country and monitors rural economies and determines their divergence from urban economies given the current state of fragmentation due to the conflict.

The third reason was to monitor monthly changes in the cost of food and basic needs at the local and national levels, to track the households' national

poverty lines (extreme, lower and upper) and exchange rate fluctuations, and to publish results promptly to enable civil society organizations, communities and public actors to develop their policies based on an accurate assessment of the cost of living.

The fourth reason was to calculate the cost of living for households and the gap between wages and poverty lines at the local level, as well as to identify wage inequality to provide an indicator that can be used to improve living standards and wages and reduce disparity.



² Syrian Interim Government.

³ The Syrian Salvation Government.

II: The methodology of SCPR's Consumer Prices Index in Syria

1.

Consumer basket

The Consumer Price Index surveys track the most important goods and services that represent the 2020 consumption pattern, as classified according to the International Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose (COICOP). Based on SCPR's multipurpose surveys in 2020 and the Household Income and Expenditure Survey in 2009, the index measures the levels of and changes in the prices of goods and services purchased by the reference household in Syria. The consumer basket consists of (11) subgroups and (112) goods and services that were carefully selected to contain the most significant goods and services in the basket used in the 2009 Household Income and Expenditure Survey; it constitutes about 78 per cent of the overall household expenditure.

The new commodities that appeared during the conflict were incorporated into SCPR's consumer price basket and were weighted based on their estimated consumption relative to alternative goods in the area studied. These include diesel, gasoline and gas purchased at the unsubsidized price, and electricity and water from alternative sources. Neighbourhood generators are the only source of electricity in western Deir Ezzor and an important source in Aleppo, al-Hasakah and several other governorates. The governorate of Idlib relies heavily on tanker water, which is also a significant source of water in the governorates of al-Hasakah, Deir Ezzor, and Raqqa. Also included was private university education, which during the conflict accounted for a portion of household expenditure.

2.

Basket weights

The Revised Consumer Basket of 2020 was weighted in three stages:

1. choosing the top 112 commodities and services from the main categories of the

consumer price basket used in the 2009 Household Income and Expenditure Survey, accounting for 78 per cent of the weighted 2009 basket;

2. adjusting the weights of the selected goods basket of 2009, by deriving the weights of the sub-expenditure groups in SCPR's multipurpose surveys of 2020 and reflecting them on the goods of the selected basket according to the distribution of these goods within their groups in the 2009 survey;
3. adjusting the weights of some subcategories in the selected basket based on SCPR data and secondary data, such as: rents, whose weight was adjusted based on SCPR's preliminary data on estimated rents in 2020; communications, whose weight was adjusted based on the communications companies' revenues in 2020; and electricity, gas and other fuels, whose weight was adjusted based on estimates of consumption and prices for 2020.

As a result, the Modified Consumer Basket for 2020, a revised basket of consumer prices, was created. Weights were assigned by governorate and by control area; for example, in the governorate of Aleppo, different weights were assigned for the city of Aleppo under the Syrian government's control, and the northern and northwestern countryside of Aleppo under the Syrian

Interim Government's control.

As Table 1 shows, the SCPR's adjusted consumer basket for 2020 differs from the baskets for 2009 household income and expenditure and the Central Bureau of Statistics in that it assigns relative weights that reflect the prevailing consumption pattern in 2020 (conflict-affected consumption pattern); a greater relative weight is given to health and education, and lower relative weight to clothes and footwear.

Compared to the 2009 consumption basket, the 2020 SCPR basket has higher relative weights for education, transportation, health and communications. The relative weight of education expenditure increased because spending on private universities was not included in the 2009 survey; the share of spending on transportation increased in conjunction with the increase in energy prices; the share of spending on health increased due to the deterioration of the population's health conditions; the share of spending on communications increased due to the population dispersion and heavy reliance on the Internet. Compared to CBS' basket of 2010, the SCPR's basket assigns higher relative weights to food, housing, fuel, health, and education to use a more accurate approach to the 2020 consumption pattern (conflict-affected pattern), which includes increased spending on food and basic commodities.

Table 1

Comparison of the weights of consumer basket subgroups as used by the SCPR 2020, the Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2009 and the CBS 2010

| Main groups and Subgroups of Goods and services | Weights of CBS 2010 | Weights of SCPR 2020 | Weights of SCPR 2020 |
|---|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| All commodities | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| Food and non-alcoholic beverages | 399.0 | 460.5 | 433.4 |
| Alcoholic beverages and tobacco | 18.7 | 19.9 | 48.5 |
| Clothing and footwear | 55.9 | 55.9 | 31.1 |
| Housing, water, electricity, and gas | 255.4 | 273.8 | 247.1 |
| Household equipment and maintenance | 40.5 | 37.8 | 32.4 |
| Health | 38.2 | 35.4 | 42.7 |
| Transportation | 70.6 | 35.8 | 59.4 |
| Communications | 42.4 | 38.3 | 42.9 |
| Entertainment and culture | 9.5 | 7.4 | 7.8 |
| Education | 15.6 | 7.1 | 22.3 |
| Restaurants and hotels | 20.7 | 28.1 | 32.5 |
| Various goods and services | 33.5 | | |

Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria, and data from the Central Bureau of Statistics.

3.

Determining the base year

A recent year (2021) was chosen as the base year for the survey to reflect the current level of prices across local economies, which differed fundamentally from the price levels of the pre-conflict period. The types of domestic and imported goods differed as well; areas that used to be of low prices before the conflict are no longer so; the price changes and dynamics resulted from

the new realities of the conflict represented by the various areas of control. Therefore, it was critical to develop a new price scale based on the new reality of local economies and the new price level of these economies. However, the downside of the chosen base year is that it was unstable and experienced high levels of inflation, but this state of instability persisted throughout the conflict.

4.

Period and Fieldwork

The fieldwork took place from October 2020 to June 2022. Twenty-one field price surveys were conducted in (59) markets at a rate of one survey per month, and verification tests were carried out to ensure the accuracy of the data. The monthly field survey was conducted in the fourth week of each month, and price data was verified while on the job. The data was then subjected to matching tests to compare the type of goods at the market, governorate, control area and country levels. Convert parameters were used to eliminate deviations caused by differences in type or the lack of goods. The data then was ready for analysis.

The price surveys were conducted by 21 field researchers who visited the target markets on a regular basis. The researchers were chosen from the residents in the study

areas to ensure effective access to the markets and allow for multiple visits during the month, if necessary. Gender was taken into account when selecting researchers. During the survey process, researchers followed research ethics, including accuracy and objectivity.

For wages, popular observations of monthly wages have been monitored in the areas studied for the following categories: Public Sector Officer (graduate, University professor, Basic Education), Private Sector Officer (company Manager, Shop assistant Worker, day laborer), Civil Sector Officer (graduated officer, Maintenance Officer), and extensive dialogue sessions with field researchers at the level of each control area to verify the figures.

5.

Geographical coverage

The surveys covered all Syrian governorates and control areas. They featured 59 markets, 26 of which were located in governorates centres and 33 of which were outside of them. Based on the following criteria, the

markets were chosen to adequately reflect the majority of Syria's geographic regions:

- Markets representing various social groups (poor, middle, and rich);

- The importance of the markets in terms of sales volume and the number of inhabitants living in the area;
- Geographical distribution so that markets cover the majority of each governorate taking into account the state of heterogeneity within the governorate, and
- Markets covering all control areas to monitor price changes related to administration and the condition of local economies; in the governorate of Aleppo, for instance, the surveys covered eight markets, three in GoS areas, and five in SIG areas (Afrin, Azaz, Jarablus, and al-Bab).

Table 2 Geographical distribution of SCPR monthly price survey markets

| | Governorate | Markets located in governorates centres | Markets located outside governorates centres | All markets |
|-----|----------------|---|--|-------------|
| 1. | Damascus | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| 2. | Rural Damascus | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| 3. | Homs | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| 4. | Hama | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| 5. | Tartus | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. | Latakia | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| 7. | Idlib | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. | Aleppo | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| 9. | Ar-Raqqah | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 10. | Deir ez-Zor | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. | Al-Hasakah | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| 12. | As-Suwayda | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 13. | Daraa | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 14. | Quneitra | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | SYRIA | 26 | 33 | 59 |

Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

6.

Formulas of the Consumer Price Index

The methodology of the ILO Consumer Price Index (ILO, 2020) has been used in developing price index formulas, by using three indices to calculate the CPI, namely: 1) the Laspeyres index based on the base year 2009 and the weights of the 2009 Household Income and Expenditure Survey, 2) the Paasche index based on the base year 2021 and SCPR's weights for 2020, and 3) the Fisher index to verify the results obtained according to the Laspeyres and Paasche indices and study the resulting differences.

The Laspeyres Index was used to measure the changes in the prices of the basket of consumed goods and services in the base period (2009), in order to measure the cost of the basket purchased by consumers in 2009 compared to the current period and measure the changes in consumer price indices over 11 years of conflict and calculate poverty lines for the current period. Furthermore, the Laspeyres Index was used to compare the indices in this research paper with those released by the Central Bureau of Statistics in 2020.

The methodology of the ILO Consumer Price Index (ILO, 2020) has been used in developing price index formulas, by using three indices to calculate the CPI, namely:

1. The Laspeyres index

based on the base year 2009 and the weights of the 2009 Household Income and Expenditure Survey

2. The Paasche index

based on the base year 2021 and SCPR's weights for 2020

3. The Fisher index

to verify the results obtained according to the Laspeyres and Paasche indices and study the resulting differences.

Laspeyres formula

P_L = sum of (prices during the observed period/prices during the previous period) × relative weight of the previous period

$$\sum_{i=1}^n \frac{p1}{p0} \times W0$$

The Paasche Index was used to measure changes in the prices of the basket of consumed goods and services in the current period by using the weights of SCPR's basket of 2020 and SCPR's prices for 2021 as a base year. The Paasche Index sought to measure the changes in price indices based on the new weights, as well as analyse the prices observed during the study period and the analysis of the consumer price index and inflation based on it.

Paasche formula

P_p = sum (prices during the observed period/prices during the previous period) × the relative weight of the current period

$$\sum_{i=1}^n \frac{p1}{p0} \times W1$$

The Fisher Index was used to validate the accuracy of the indices obtained according to Laspeyres and Paasche indices and the weights of the 2009 Household Income and Expenditure Survey and SCPR's basket for 2020.

Fisher Price index = (Laspeyres Price Index × Paasche Price Index)^{0.5}

7.

Research Limitations

This research attempted to develop methodology as well as research and analysis tools, but the team encountered several challenges that must be considered when reading and analyzing the results:

- Not all goods and services were included in the consumer basket; only 112 goods and services were selected, but these represent 78 per cent of the total expenditure items in the Household Income and Expenditure Survey for 2009.
- The index does not cover the entire period of the conflict; the first price survey was made in October 2020.
- There is no recent survey of household income and expenditure, so weighting was made based on SCPR's surveys in 2020 and 2021.
- For some commodities, multiple currencies are used, namely the Syrian pound, the Turkish lira, and the US dollar; this created difficulties in conversion and in calculating the inflation rate while eliminating deviations caused by changes in exchange rates.
- It is challenging to find identical goods in all areas of control; their qualities and attributes are constantly changing dramatically.
- Given the large price swings in Syria that have been occurring since the fourth quarter of 2019, it was challenging to establish a steady base year.
- Sharp fluctuations in prices take place in the same month.
- There are issues with the hazardous workplace, difficult access to certain areas and the restricted movement of field researchers between different areas.
- The policies of local controlling forces linked to the conflict economies and their ramifications resulted in large price differences across regions and in the obstruction of the flow of commodities, affected the availability of goods and contributed to the establishment of monopolies and the control of markets.
- The policy of foreign powers regarding the control of border crossings caused price shocks in the markets and the establishment of monopolies.

Section I I:
SCPR's
Consumer Price
Index in Syria

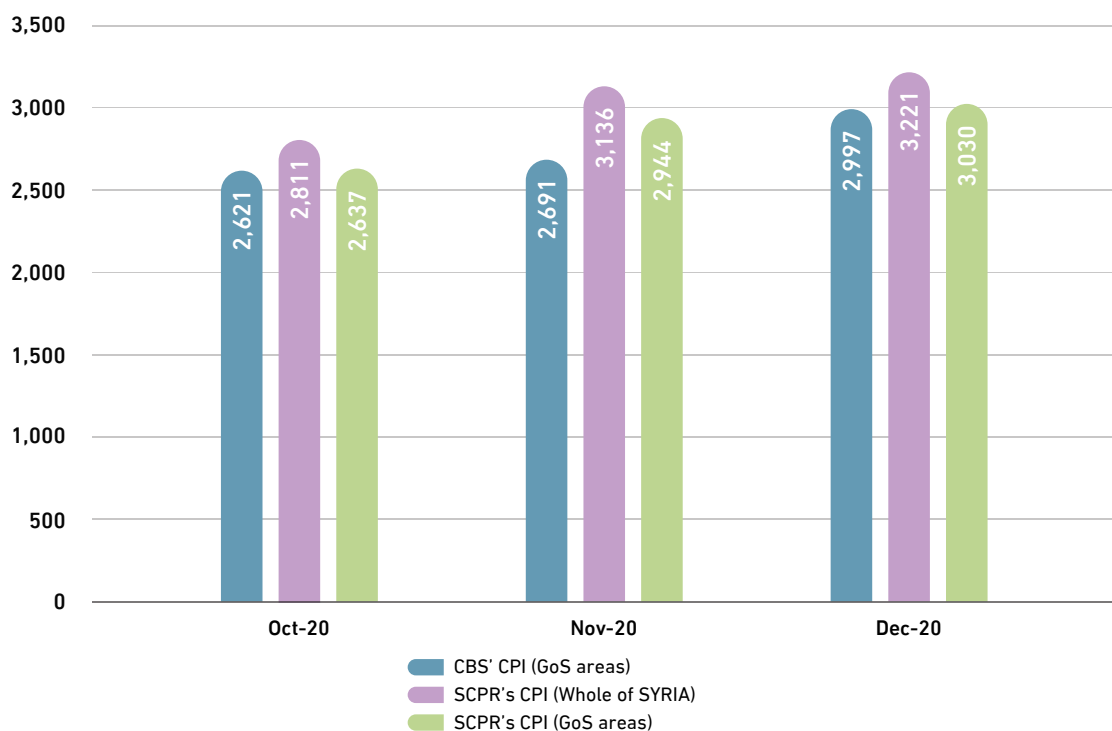
I: Comparing the Consumer Price Indices of SCPR and the Central Bureau of Statistics according to the Laspeyres Index 2009

A comparison between the SCPR's Consumer Prices Index and the CBS index shows that the overall prices of goods and services have increased by about 31.2 times according to SCPR compared to 28.97 times according to CBS in December 2020 (compared to 2009 as the base year).⁴ The difference is significant because SCPR's price survey covers all areas of control, whereas CBS'

survey only covers GoS areas. To standardize the comparison criterion, SCPR calculated the Laspeyres index of the governorates surveyed by CBS (GoS areas only); the result showed an increase of about 29.3 times in December 2020 compared to 2009, which is close to the inflation of the general index issued by CBS.

Figure 1

Consumer Price Index in Syria according to SCPR and CBS during the fourth quarter of 2020 according to Laspeyres formula (2009 = 100)



Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria, and data from the Central Bureau of Statistics.

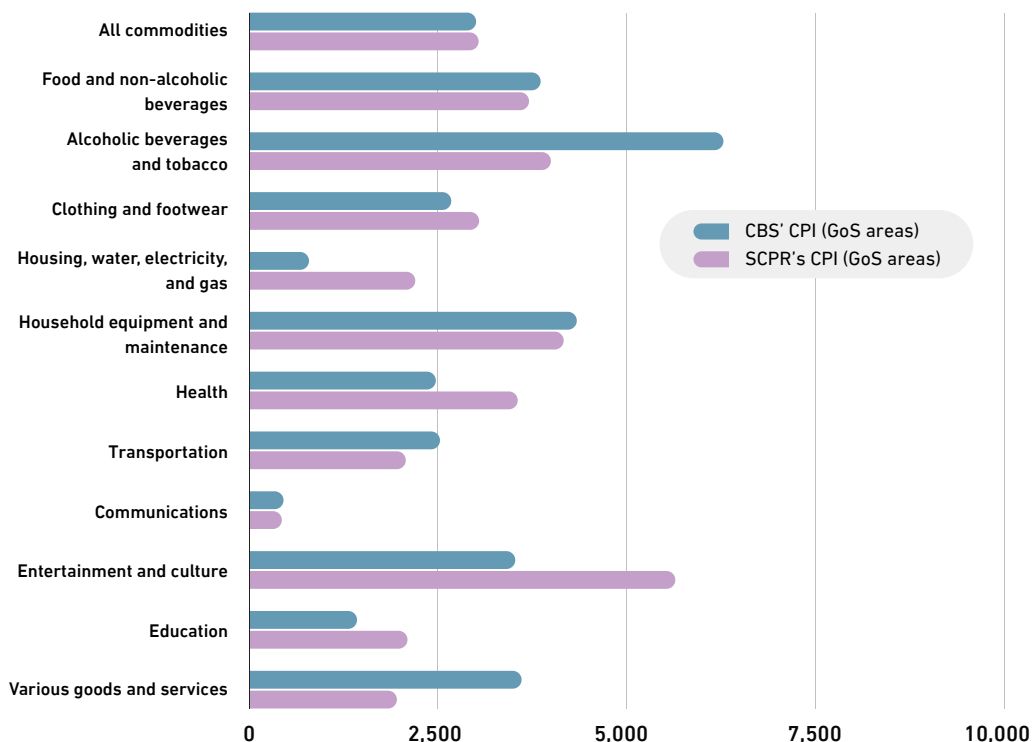
⁴ Note: The Central Bureau of Statistics published its data taking 2010 as the base year; the Syrian Center for Policy Research used 2009 as the base year, adding the inflation rate of 2010 to the index issued by the Central Bureau of Statistics.

Comparing the indices of CBS and SCPR by the main consumption groups (in the Syrian government's areas) in December 2020 shows that there is a convergence between the two indices in food and non-alcoholic beverages, communications, transport, and clothing, and there is a difference in the housing, water, electricity and gas (an increase of 177 per cent), education (an increase of 46.7 per cent), and health (by an increase of 43.8 per cent). The

difference is due to the different weights assigned to the consumer basket, and the fact that SCPR included the prices of new goods or goods the demand on which increased due to the conflict, such as fuel sold at unsubsidized prices, electricity obtained from neighbourhood generators, and water from tankers. Besides, SCPR surveyed the prices across each governorate rather than just in the governorate's centre.

Figure 2

The consumer price index in Syria by groups in December 2020, (2009=100)



Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria, and data from the Central Bureau of Statistics.

II: The methodology of SCPR's Consumer Prices Index in Syria

1.

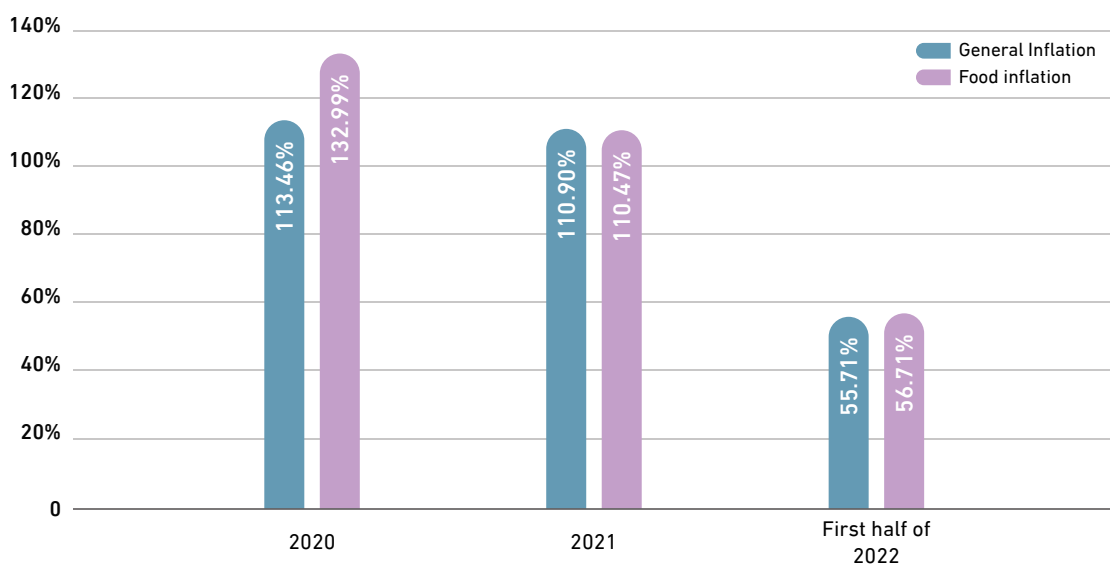
The change in annual inflation of consumer prices in Syria (2019 – June 2022)

SCPR designed the Paasche Consumer Price Index using 2021 as the base year, and SCPR's basket, as weighted in 2020, as a reference basket. Price collection began in October 2020, and the indices of the previous period (January 2019 – September 2020) were estimated using the CBS inflation rates of that period. Accordingly, the overall price index in Syria

recorded annual inflation (Y-o-Y) of 113.46 per cent and 110.90 per cent in 2020 and 2021, and 55.71 per cent in the first half of 2022 (compared to 2021). Food inflation⁵ recorded at 132.99 per cent and 110.47 per cent in 2020 and 2021, and 56.71 per cent in the first half of 2022 (compared to 2021).

Figure 3

Comparison of general and food inflation in Syria (2020 –the first half of 2022)



Source: SCPR 2022 and the Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

2.

The change in annual inflation of consumer prices in Syria (2019 – June 2022)

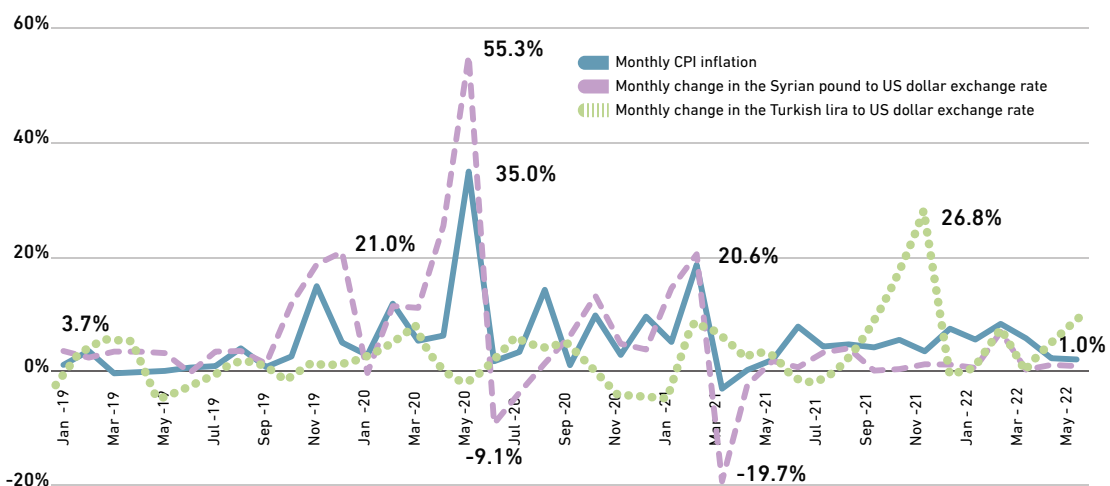
The least squares simple regression relationship between the monthly consumer prices index and the monthly average Syrian pound to US dollar exchange rate between January 2019 and June 2022 (i.e., over 42 months) shows a relationship between the two variables with a coefficient of determination of 0.87. This relationship indicates a strong correlation but does not necessarily indicate causality.

The results of the analysis show that the changes in the Syrian pound's exchange rate were greater than the changes in the consumer price index (inflation) during 2019, but between April 2021 and June

2022, changes in the price index surpassed changes in the exchange rate. Inflation cannot be attributed solely to changes in the Syrian pound's exchange rate; Syria experienced several inflation-driving factors, including continuous conflict, mismanagement in different control areas, and drought in 2021, which clearly affected food inflation in northeastern Syria (AA areas), the Covid-19 pandemic and its repercussions on global prices, the Lebanese banking crisis since the beginning of June 2020, the deterioration of the Turkish lira and its significant ramifications on the SIG and SSG areas, the rise of the global energy prices and Russia's war on Ukraine.

Figure 4

Comparing the monthly inflation of Consumer Prices with the change in the Syrian pound to US dollar exchange rate (December 2019 - June 2022)



Source: SCPR 2022 and the Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

3.

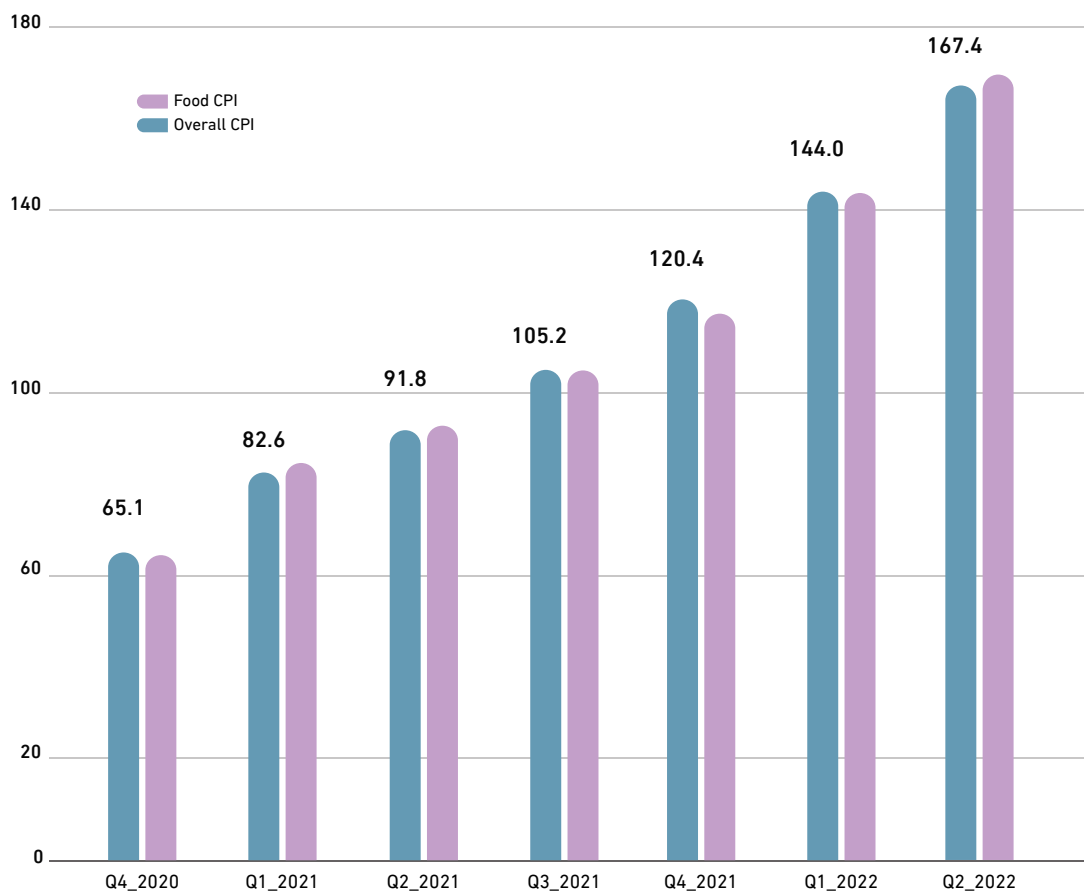
Analysis of inflation in Syria during the survey period (October 2020 – June 2022)

Tracking the changes in SCPR's overall and food price indices according to Paasche in 2021 shows that prices rose steadily throughout the survey period, with the overall price index reaching 167.4 in the

second quarter of 2022 and the food price index reaching 169.8 (with 2021 as the base year). Results reveal that the overall price index and the food price index were similar throughout the survey period.

Figure 5

Changes in the overall and food price index in Syria (Q4 of 2020 – Q2 of 2022)

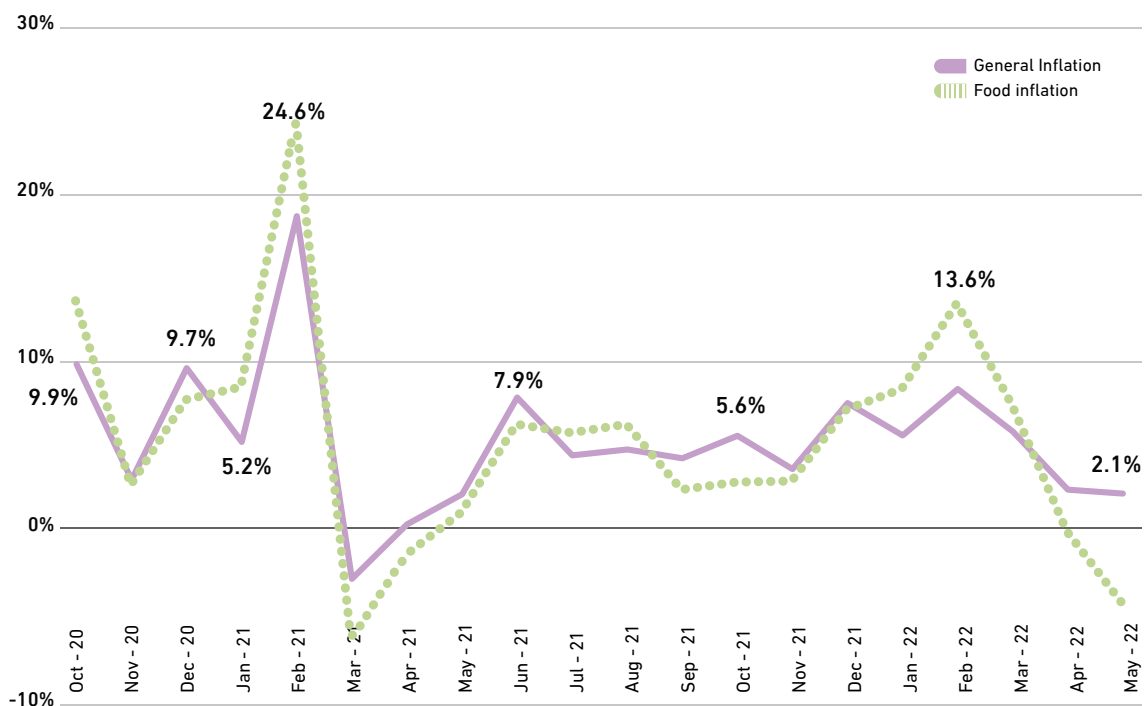


Source: SCPR 2022 and the Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

The monthly time series (M-o-M) of the general inflation rate in Syria shows that there was volatility from the beginning of the survey until June 2021 (inflation peaked in March 2021 by 18.8 per cent) and that inflation began to stabilize relatively, ranging at about 5 per cent as from July 2021. It is worth noting that the monthly average (M-o-M) general inflation recorded close levels for different periods: 5.4 per cent for the entire survey period (October 2020 – June 2022) and 5.3 per cent for 2021 and the first half of 2022. The standard error was one for the entire period, 1.5 for 2021 and one for the first half of 2022.

The monthly time series (MoM) of the food inflation rate is similar to that of the general inflation but more volatile; the first peak of food inflation was in March 2021 at 24.6 per cent, and the second was in March 2022 at 13.6 per cent. The monthly average (M-o-M) of food inflation was also at similar levels in different periods, 5.5 per cent for the entire survey period, 5.1 per cent for 2021 and 5.4 per cent for the first half of 2022. The standard error of food inflation is higher than that of general inflation because of sharp fluctuations in food prices; it was 1.5 for the entire period, 2.2 for 2021 and 2.6 in the first half of 2022.

Figure 6 Comparison of the monthly average (M-o-M) general and food inflation in Syria (October 2020 – June 2022)



Source: SCPR 2022 and the Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

III. SCPR's consumer price index in Syria per area of control based on Paasche 2021

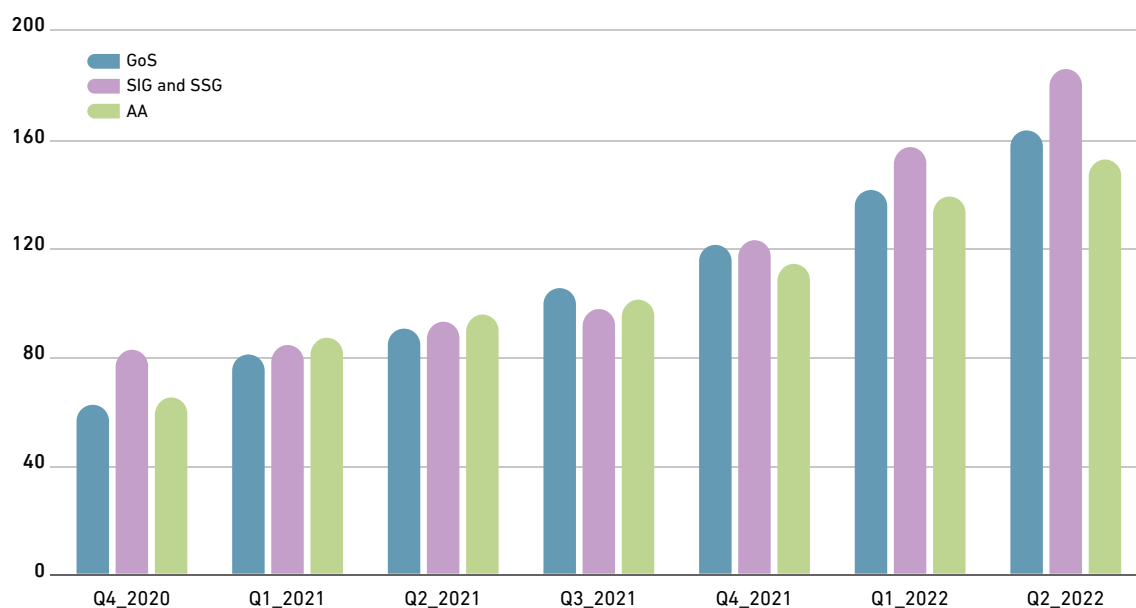
Distinctive aspects of local economies are clearly visible in Syria across various areas of control, including the GoS area, SIG and SSG areas and AA areas. Prices, inflation rates and causal factors, cost of living, wages and poverty levels differ by control area, necessitating the study of inflation and the development of a consumer price index for each control area. Syrian governorates are divided into the areas of control as follows:

- **GoS areas** encompass the governorates of Damascus, Rural Damascus, Homs, Hama, Tartous, Lattakia, Daraa, As-Suwayda, Quneitra, the southern part of Aleppo Governorate, and the western part of Deir ez-Zor Governorate (west of the Euphrates).
- **SIG and SSG areas** encompass Idlib Governorate and the northern part of Aleppo Governorate.
- **AA areas** encompass the governorates of Hasaka and Raqqa, and the eastern part of Deir ez-Zor governorate (east of the Euphrates).

Tracking the development of the general price index during the reporting period shows that it has been on the rise in all areas of control. Area comparison indicates that the highest index was recorded in the first half of 2021 in AA areas, in Q3-21 in GoS areas and in Q4-21 in SIG and SSG areas.

Figure 7

Comparative average overall price indices in Syria by control areas (Q4-20 – Q2-22)



Note: The monthly average CPI was calculated on a quarterly basis to facilitate comparison.

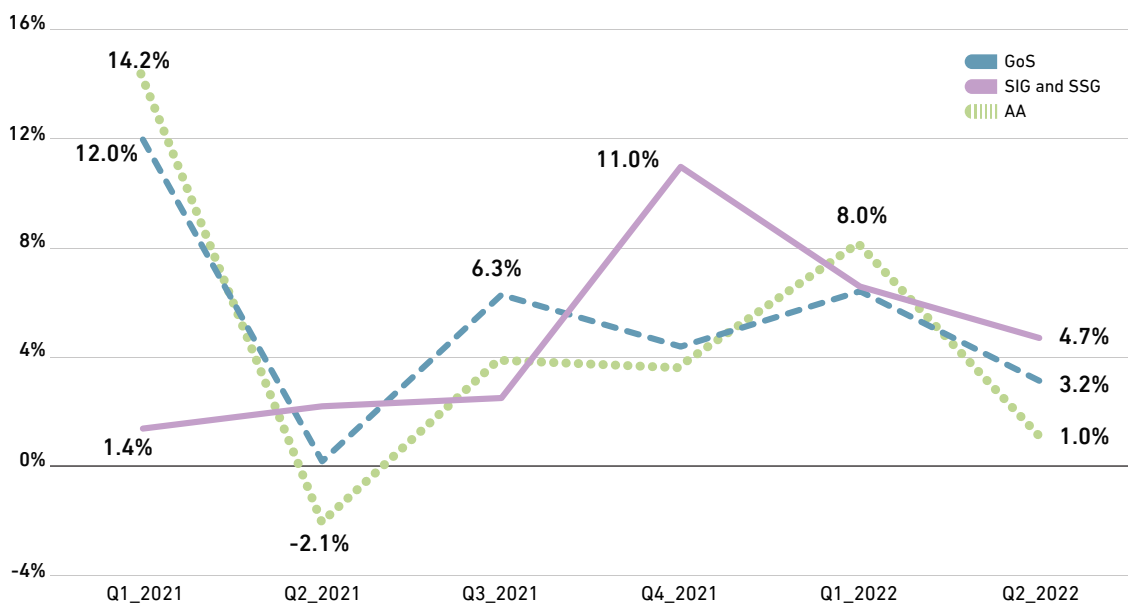
Source: SCPR 2022 and the Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

The chronological development of inflation is similar for both GoS-controlled areas and AA-controlled areas due to the fact that both of them use the Syrian pound as a trading currency. SIG and SSG areas, on the other hand, have a different scenario due to the use of the Turkish lira and the influence of the Turkish economy. Both GoS and AA areas witnessed high levels of inflation in the first quarters of 2021 (due to the depreciation of the Syrian pound) and 2022 (due to the Russian-Ukrainian war), followed by lower inflation in the following quarter. On the other hand, the SIG and SSG areas experienced the highest inflation rate in Q4 of 2021, coinciding with the deterioration in the exchange rate of the Turkish lira (the currency in circulation in these areas) and higher energy and communications prices.

The effects of inflation varied across areas of control, and sharply fluctuated over time as a result of Syria's fragmented economy, deepening differences among local economies based on areas of control, and the emergence of area-of-control-specific inflation drivers. It is noted that the GoS areas are the most affected by inflation in terms of general and food inflation throughout the survey period, followed by AA areas, and lastly SIG and SSG areas. These areas had the same order in terms of being affected by inflation in 2021, with the only difference being that the AA area had the highest food inflation rate due to drought. However, in 2022 (up to mid-year), SIG and SSG areas were the hardest hit by general and food inflation as a result of Turkey's currency collapse and economic inflation, followed by GoS areas and AA areas.

Figure 8

Development of the general inflation rate in Syria by control areas (Q1-2021 – Q2-22)



Note: The monthly average CPI was calculated on a quarterly basis to facilitate comparison.

Source: SCPR 2022 and the Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

IV. SCPR's consumer price index in Syria by major consumption groups based on Paasche 2021

1.

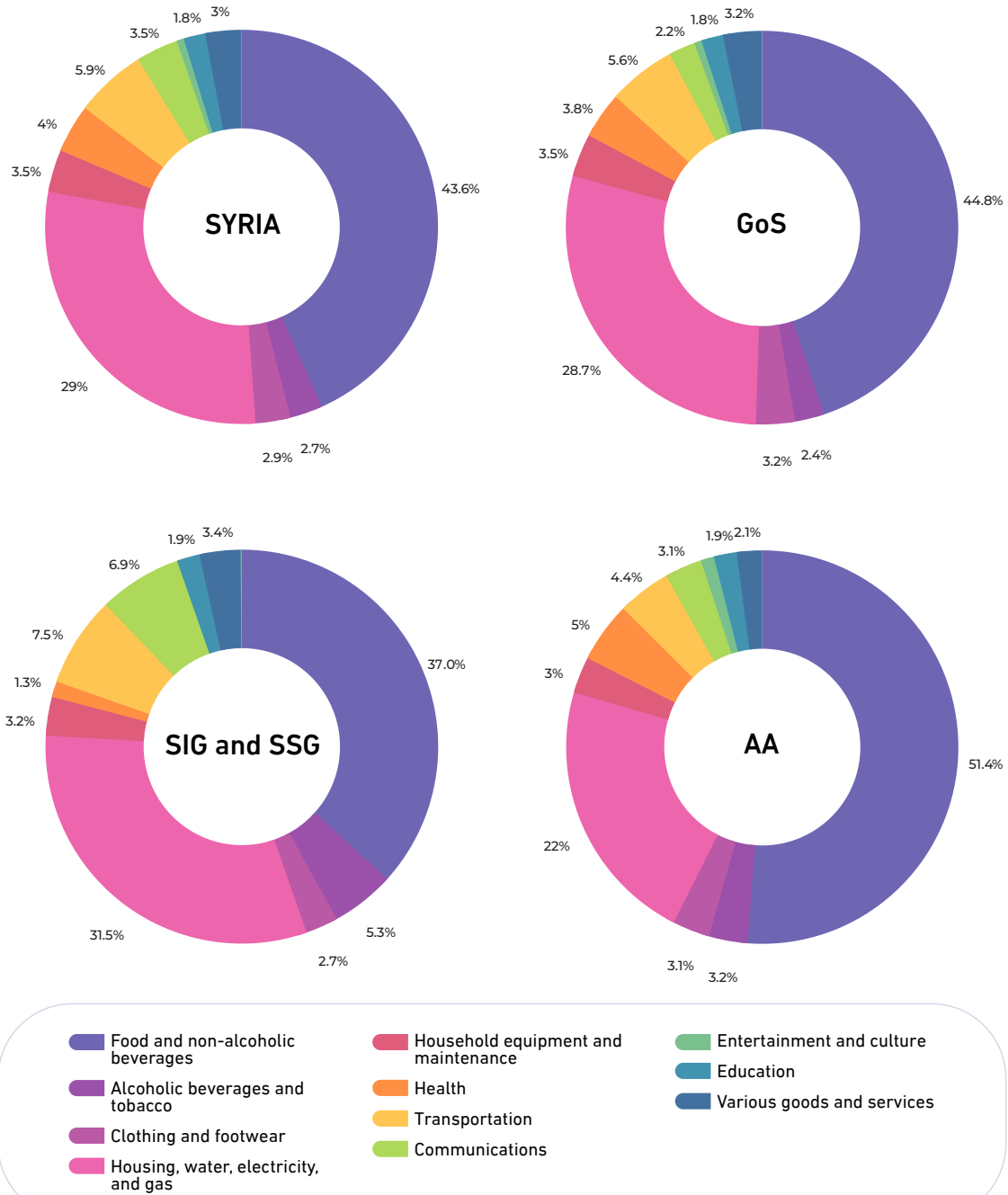
Major consumption groups' contribution to inflation during the survey period

During the survey period, the Syria-wide average monthly inflation of the overall consumer price index was 5.4 per cent. The food and non-alcoholic beverages group contributed the most to the monthly inflation in Syria, accounting for 43.6 per cent, followed by the housing, water, electricity and gas group at 29.2 per cent, and the transportation group at 5.9 per cent. The entertainment and culture group contributed the least, accounting for only 0.6 per cent of the total. The contribution share of each group varied from one area of control to another, as follows:

- **GoS areas:** During the survey period, the food and non-alcoholic beverages group accounted for 44.8 per cent of the average monthly inflation, followed by the housing, water, electricity and gas group at 28.7 per cent, the transportation group at 5.6 per cent and the health group at 3.8 per cent.
- **SIG and SSG areas:** The food and non-alcoholic beverages group accounted for 37.0 per cent of the average monthly inflation, followed by the housing, water, electricity and gas group at 31.5 per cent, the transportation group at 7.5 per cent and the communications group at 6.9 per cent.
- **AA areas:** The food and non-alcoholic beverages group contributed a high percentage of 51.4 per cent to the average monthly inflation, followed by the housing, water, electricity and gas group at 22.1 per cent, the health group at 5 per cent and the transportation group at 4.4 per cent.

Figure 9

Consumption groups' contribution to the average inflation rate in Syria (November 2020 – June 2022)



Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

2.

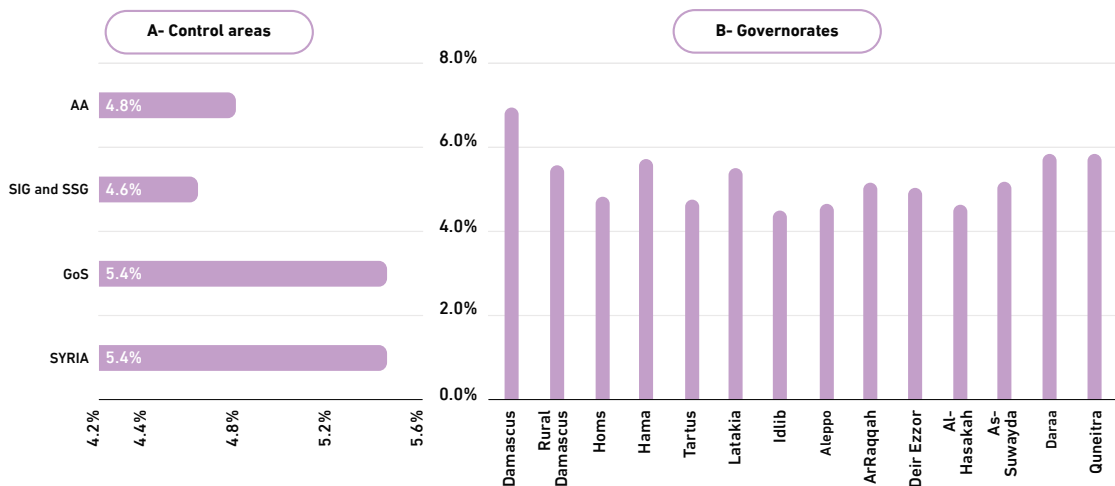
Analyzing inflation in Syria by major consumption groups during the survey period

During the survey period, the Syria-wide average monthly inflation rate of the overall consumer price index reached 5.4 per cent. The GoS-controlled areas experienced the

highest inflation rate at 5.4 per cent, followed by AA areas at 4.8 per cent, and finally SIG and SSG areas at 4.6 per cent.

Figure 10

Comparison of Syria's average monthly general inflation rate (November 2020 - June 2022)



Source: SCPR 2022 and the Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

Four major groups exceeded the average monthly general inflation rate of 5.4 per cent during the reporting period (November 2020 to June 2022); the housing, water, electricity and gas group was first at 6.4 per cent, followed by household furnishings, equipment and maintenance at 5.9 per cent, then transportation at 5.7 per cent, and finally food and non-alcoholic beverages

at 5.5 per cent. Alcoholic beverages and tobacco saw the lowest average monthly inflation rate at 3 per cent. Furthermore, inflation rates differed by groups across the areas of control as follows:

- **GoS areas:** The housing, water, electricity and gas group ranked first for inflation, followed by household

equipment and ordinary maintenance works, food and non-alcoholic beverages and clothing and footwear.

- **SIG and SSG areas:** Transportation came first for inflation, followed by communications, various goods and services, and finally both entertainment and culture and household equipment.

- **AA areas:** The clothing and footwear group ranked first in terms of inflation, followed by education, household equipment and food and non-alcoholic beverages.

Table 3

Distribution of average monthly consumer price inflation rate in Syria (November 2020 - June 2022) by Main groups of consumption and areas of control, (in percentage)

| | Group | GoS areas | SIG and SSG areas | AA areas | Syria |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|------------|
| | All goods | 5.4 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 5.4 |
| 1 | Food and non-alcoholic beverages | 5.8 | 4.6 | 5.2 | 5.5 |
| 2 | Alcoholic beverages and tobacco | 2.7 | 4.0 | 4.1 | 3.0 |
| 3 | Clothing and Footwear | 5.6 | 5.0 | 5.6 | 5.3 |
| 4 | Housing, water, electricity and gas | 6.4 | 4.5 | 5.1 | 6.4 |
| 5 | Household equipment and maintenance | 5.8 | 5.5 | 5.2 | 5.9 |
| 6 | Health | 5.4 | 3.6 | 4.5 | 5.0 |
| 7 | Transportation | 5.6 | 6.8 | 4.7 | 5.7 |
| 8 | Communication | 3.8 | 6.0 | 4.0 | 4.5 |
| 9 | Entertainment and culture | 4.2 | 5.6 | 5.0 | 4.4 |
| 10 | Education | 4.3 | 4.5 | 5.2 | 4.4 |
| 12+11 | Various goods and services | 5.3 | 5.9 | 3.9 | 5.1 |

Source: SCPR 2022 and the Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

Below is an analysis of the average monthly inflation rate in Syria by major groups of consumption:

2.

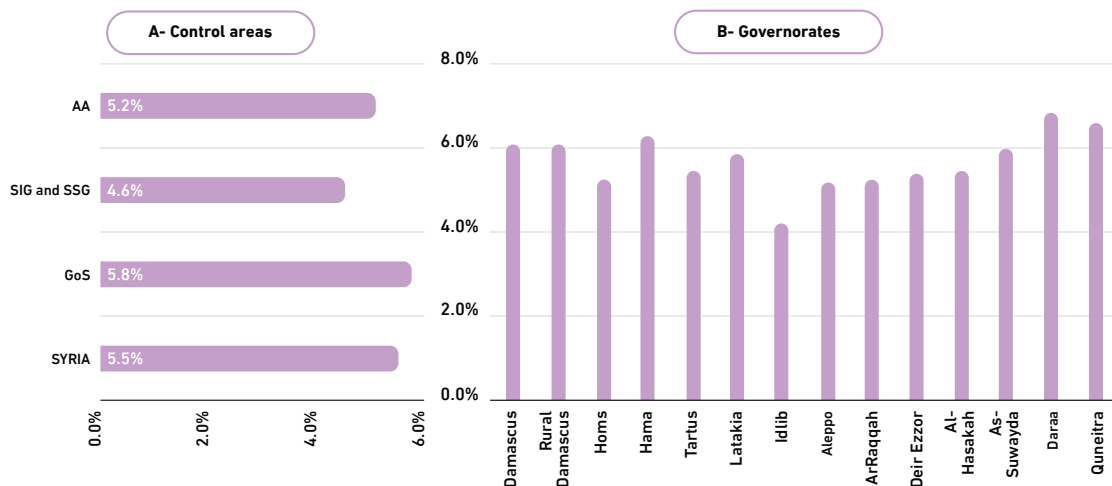
Food and non-alcoholic beverages

The results showed that the food and non-alcoholic beverages group made the largest contribution to the general inflation rate in Syria during the survey period and had a relatively greater significance in the AA areas, as compared with GoS areas and SIG and SSG areas. The average monthly inflation rate of the food and non-alcoholic beverages group on the country level was 5.5 per cent

during the survey period, with the GoS areas recording the highest average monthly inflation rate at 5.8 per cent, followed by AA areas at 5.2 per cent, and finally SIG and SSG areas at 4.6 per cent.

Figure 11

Comparison of Syria's general average monthly inflation rate of the food and non-alcoholic beverages group (November 2020 - June 2022)



Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

As for the food subgroups, the oils and fats subgroup ranked first for inflation in Syria with a monthly inflation rate of 7.6 per cent, followed by the Dry legume and vegetables

subgroup at 6.3 per cent and the sugar and sweet subgroup at 5.9 per cent. The percentages varied depending on the area of control, as shown in the table below:

Table 4

Distribution of average monthly inflation rate of food and non-alcoholic items in Syria (November 2020 - June 2022) by areas of control, (in percentage)

| Group | GoS areas | SIG and SSG areas | AA areas | Syria |
|---|------------|-------------------|------------|------------|
| 1 Food and non-alcoholic beverages | 5.8 | 4.6 | 5.2 | 5.5 |
| 11 Food | 5.9 | 4.6 | 5.3 | 5.6 |
| 111 Bread and cereals | 6.6 | 5.1 | 4.9 | 5.6 |
| 112 Meat | 4.5 | 3.4 | 2.9 | 3.9 |
| 113 Fish and seafood | 6.1 | 5.3 | 3.6 | 5.8 |
| 114 Yoghurt, cheese and eggs | 5.0 | 4.8 | 4.7 | 4.9 |
| 115 Oils and fats | 7.5 | 8.5 | 8.3 | 7.6 |
| 116 Fruits | 6.3 | 4.1 | 6.0 | 5.9 |
| 117 Dry legumes and vegetables | 6.7 | 4.8 | 6.9 | 6.3 |
| 118 Sugar, jam, honey, chocolate and sweet | 6.1 | 5.7 | 5.2 | 5.9 |
| 119 Food products N.E.C | 5.1 | 4.5 | 6.6 | 4.7 |
| 12 Non-alcoholic Beverages | 5.3 | 5.2 | 4.5 | 5.2 |

Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

These prices varied from one area of control to another. When comparing the unweighted prices among the three areas of control, it turns out that the GoS areas were the highest in prices across most food goods (except for subsidized food goods such as bread), followed by the AA areas, and finally the SIG and SSG areas.

The AA areas had the lowest prices for meat and dairy and their derivatives, while the SIG and SSG areas had the lowest prices for fruits, dry legumes and vegetables. For example, in June 2022, the price of 1 kilogram of subsidized bread was SYP 270 in GoS areas and about SYP 300 in AA areas, while it amounted to SYP 1600 in SIG and

SSG areas.⁶ The price of olive oil was SYP 18 thousand per kg in the GoS areas, about SYP 11 thousand per kg in the SIG and SSG areas and about SYP 15 thousand per kg in the AA areas. Mutton's price amounted to SYP 32 thousand per kg in GoS areas, compared to SYP 25 thousand per kg in the SIG and SSG areas and only SYP 18 thousand per kg in the AA areas. The price of unsubsidized (imported) sugar was about the same in both SIG and SSG areas and AA areas, ranging from SYP 3320 to SYP 3420 per kg, while it amounted to SYP 4180 per kg in the GoS areas. A kilogram of tea was about SYP 34 thousand in GoS areas, SYP 28 thousand in the SIG and SSG areas and SYP 33 thousand in the AA areas.

⁶ Note: The price of a kilogram of subsidized bread was about 3.6 Turkish liras in the SIG's areas, while it amounted to about 10 Turkish liras in the SSG's areas.

Table 5 Average prices of some foodstuffs in June 2022 (in Syrian pounds)

| | Item | Unit | GoS areas | SIG and SSG areas | AA areas |
|---|---------------------------------|---------|-----------|-------------------|----------|
| 1 | Subsidized bread | 1 kg | 271 | 1,595 | 297 |
| 2 | Mutton | 1 kg | 32,421 | 24,440 | 18,128 |
| 3 | Unsubsidized rice | 1 kg | 4,113 | 3,149 | 4,460 |
| 4 | Crushed lentils | 1 kg | 6,643 | 2,961 | 5,217 |
| 5 | Eggs | 2 kg | 12,112 | 10,998 | 9,533 |
| 6 | Olive oil | 1 kg | 17,841 | 10,810 | 15,089 |
| 7 | Unsubsidized sugar | 1 kg | 4,182 | 3,419 | 3,318 |
| 8 | Black tea | 1 kg | 34,259 | 27,613 | 32,878 |
| 9 | Diesel at an unsubsidized price | 1 litre | 5,353 | 3,093 | 1,126 |

Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

2.

Alcoholic beverages and tobacco

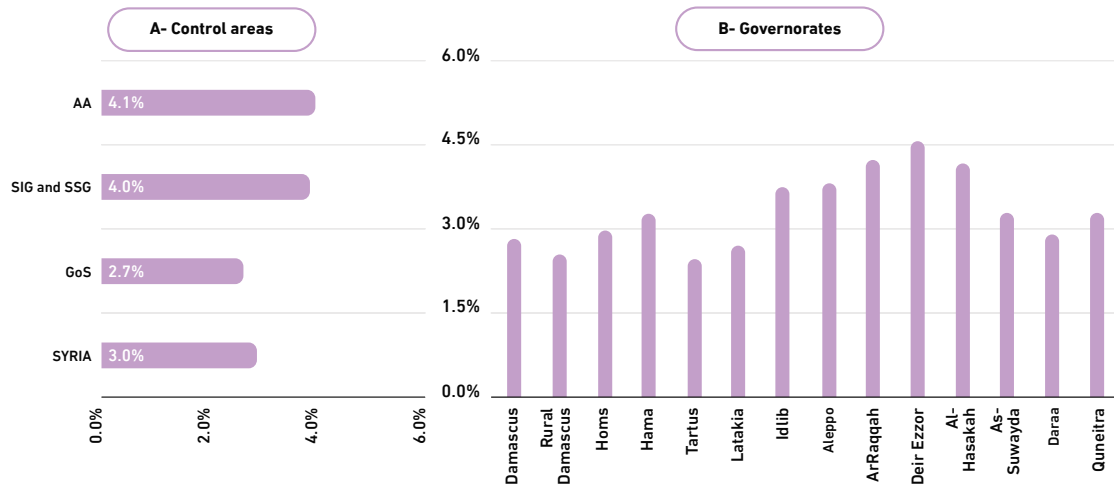
During the survey period, the average monthly inflation rate of alcoholic beverages and tobacco was 3 per cent on the country level,⁷ with AA areas recording the highest inflation rate at 4.1 per cent, followed by SIG and SSG areas at 4 per cent, and finally the GoS areas at 2.7 per cent. Price comparison across the areas of control shows that prices of locally manufactured cigarettes are

different from those of imported ones. For example, the prices of locally manufactured cigarettes are lower than imported ones in the GoS areas, but they are higher in the SIG and SSG areas and AA areas due to the high cost of transporting goods produced in the GoS areas to the said areas.

⁷ Note: Alcoholic beverages were not included in the survey; cigarettes and tobacco products were used to represent this group.

Figure 12

Comparison of the average monthly inflation rate of alcoholic beverages and tobacco group (November 2020 - June 2022)



Source: SCPRI 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

3.

Clothing and Footwear

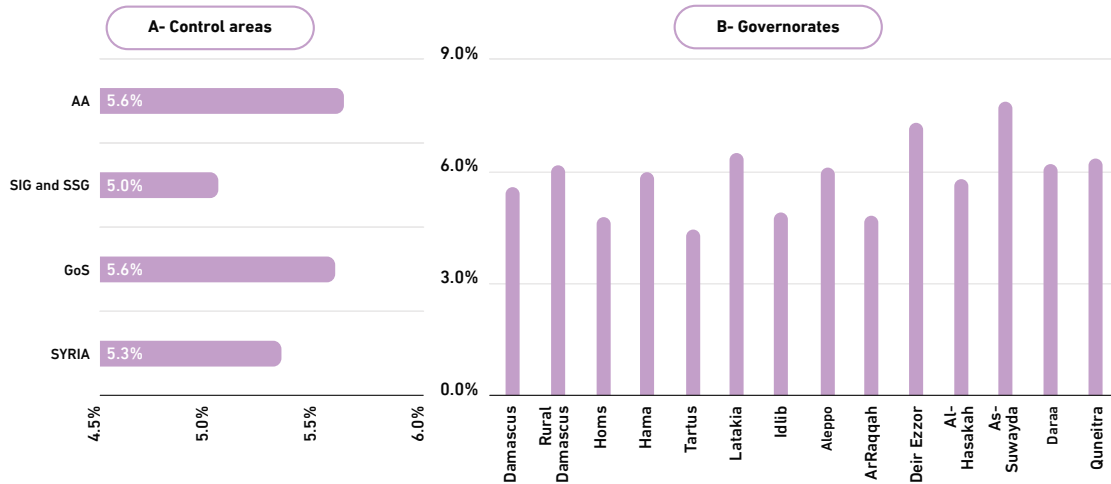
During the survey period, the average monthly inflation rate of clothing and footwear prices was 5.3 per cent on the country level, with AA areas seeing the highest inflation rate at 5.64 per cent, followed by GoS areas at 5.58 per cent, and finally the SIG and SSG areas at 5.0 per cent.

Price comparison across the areas of control shows that clothing and footwear prices vary from one area to another and that GoS areas had the highest prices of clothing and

footwear, followed by the SIG and SSG areas and finally the AA areas. In June 2022, for example, an imported pair of jeans was SYP 73 thousand in GoS areas, about SYP 45 thousand in the SIG and SSG areas, and SYP 36 thousand in AA areas.

Figure 13

Comparison of the average monthly inflation rate of the clothing and footwear group (November 2020 - June 2022)



Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

4.

Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuel oils

This group includes four sub-groups: 1) Imputed + Actual housing rentals, 2) Works for maintenance and repair of dwelling, 3) Water supplying and various services related to dwelling, 4) electricity, gas and other fuel oils. During the survey period, this group makes the second-largest contribution (after the food and non-alcoholic beverages group) to the general inflation rate in Syria.

The results indicate that the average monthly inflation of the housing group in Syria was 6.4 per cent during the survey period, with the GoS areas having the highest inflation rate at 6.4 per cent, followed by the AA areas at 5.1 per cent, and finally the SIG and SSG

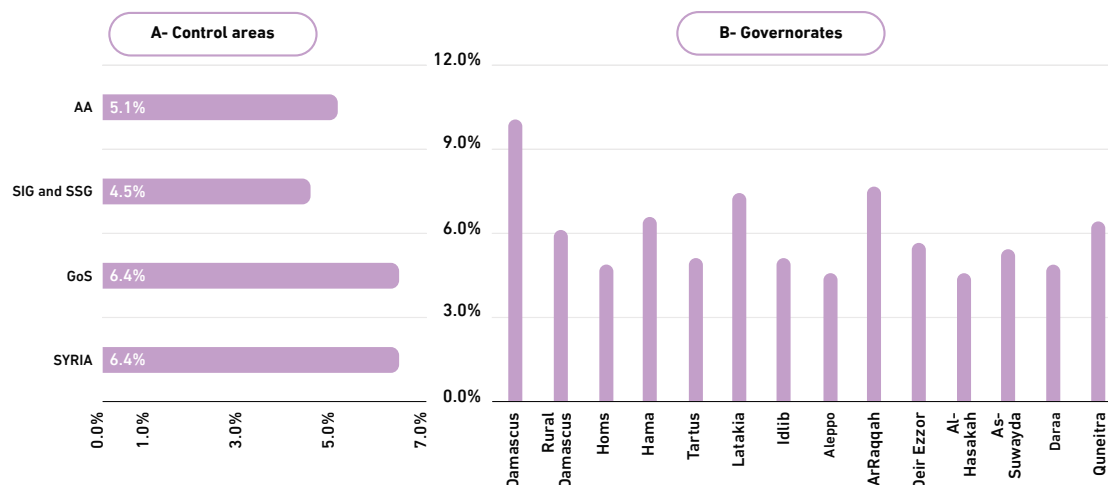
areas at 4.5 per cent.

At the level of sub-groups, electricity and gas came first at a Syria-wide average monthly inflation rate of 8.3 per cent, followed by the dwelling-related supply of water and miscellaneous services at 6.6 per cent, and the two groups of actual and imputed rents and dwelling maintenance and repairs at 6.1 per cent each. The percentages varied from one area of control to another, as follows:

- GoS areas: The electricity, gas and other fuel oils group ranked first for average monthly inflation, followed by dwelling maintenance and repairs, actual and

Figure 14

Comparison of the average monthly inflation rate of alcoholic beverages and tobacco group (November 2020 - June 2022)



Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

imputed rents and dwelling-related supply of water and various services.

- SIG and SSG areas:** The highest average monthly inflation rate in these areas was in the electricity, gas and other fuel oils group, followed by the dwelling-related supply of water and various services, dwelling maintenance and repairs and housing actual and imputed rents.
- AA areas:** The group of housing actual and imputed rents saw the highest average monthly inflation rate, followed by dwelling maintenance and repairs, electricity, gas and other fuel oils and dwelling-related supply of water and various services.

Table 6

Distribution of the average monthly inflation rate of the housing, water, electricity and fuel group items in Syria (November 2020 - June 2022), (in percentages)

| Group | GoS areas | SIG and SSG areas | AA areas |
|---|------------|-------------------|------------|
| 4 Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuel oils | 6.4 | 4.5 | 5.1 |
| 42+41 Imputed + Actual housing rentals | 6.3 | 4.2 | 6.9 |
| 43 Works for maintenance and reparation of dwelling | 7.1 | 4.2 | 4.1 |
| 44 Water supply and various services related to dwelling | 2.0 | 5.5 | 3.2 |
| 45 Electricity, gas and other fuel oils | 8.5 | 6.0 | 3.4 |

Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

Monthly rents varied among areas and governorates, recording an average of SYP 240 thousand in the GoS areas, over SYP 290 thousand in the AA areas, and approximately SYP 210 thousand in the SIG and SSG areas.

Household gas and diesel (mazout) are subsidized in both the GoS and AA areas, noting that their prices in the AA areas are lower than in the GoS areas. Notably, the unsubsidized price for these two commodities was very high in the GoS areas; the unsubsidized price of a gas cylinder (10

kg) in June 2022 was about SYP 92 thousand and a litre of unsubsidized diesel stood at SYP 5350. In the SIG and SSG areas, a gas cylinder was sold at SYP 53 thousand, and a litre of unsubsidized diesel at SYP 3100. By contrast, such prices in the AA areas were the lowest, where a gas cylinder was priced at SYP 38 thousand and a litre of diesel at SYP 1100.

Table 7
Average prices of some housing-related commodities in June 2022 (in Syrian pounds)

| Commodity/Service | Unit | GoS areas | SIG and SSG areas | AA areas |
|---|------------------|-----------|-------------------|----------|
| 1 Monthly housing rents | monthly | 239,394 | 208,186 | 288,833 |
| 2 Public-supply water | 1 m ³ | 15 | 674 | 44 |
| 3 Drinking water sold in bottles or containers | 1 m ³ | 13,662 | 7,168 | 7,800 |
| 4 Public-supply electricity | 1 kWh | 54 | 721 | 34 |
| 5 Electricity from other sources | 1 kWh | 1,832 | 1,580 | 170 |
| 6 Gas cylinder refilling at a subsidized price | 10 kg | 11,346 | N/A | 3,444 |
| 7 Gas cylinder refilling at an unsubsidized price | 10 kg | 92,115 | 52,943 | 37,722 |
| 8 Diesel at a subsidized price | 1 litre | 526 | N/A | 133 |
| 9 Diesel at an unsubsidized price | 1 litre | 5,353 | 3,093 | 1,126 |

Source: SCPR 2022 and the Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

5.

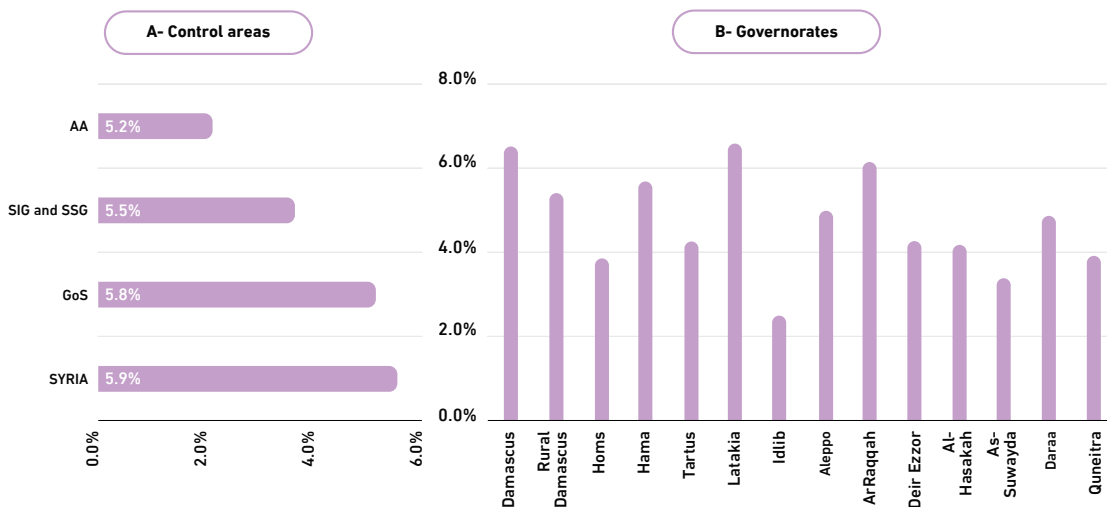
Household equipment and ordinary maintenance works

During the survey period, the average monthly price inflation rate of furnishings, household equipment, and ordinary maintenance works was 5.9 per cent on the country level, with GoS areas experiencing the highest inflation rate at 5.8 per cent, followed by SIG and SSG areas at 5.5 per cent, and finally the AA areas at 5.2 per cent.

Price comparison across the areas of control shows that the highest prices of household

equipment and maintenance were recorded in the GoS areas, followed by the AA areas and finally the SIG and SSG areas. For example, in June 2022, a locally made typical 19-CF refrigerator was sold for SYP 2.1 million in the GoS areas, and an imported refrigerator with the same specifications was sold for SYP 1.1 million in the AA areas, and for SYP 996 thousand in the SIG and SSG areas.

Figure 15 Comparison of the average monthly inflation rate of the household equipment and maintenance group in Syria (November 2020 - June 2022)



Source: SCPR 2022 and the Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

6. Health

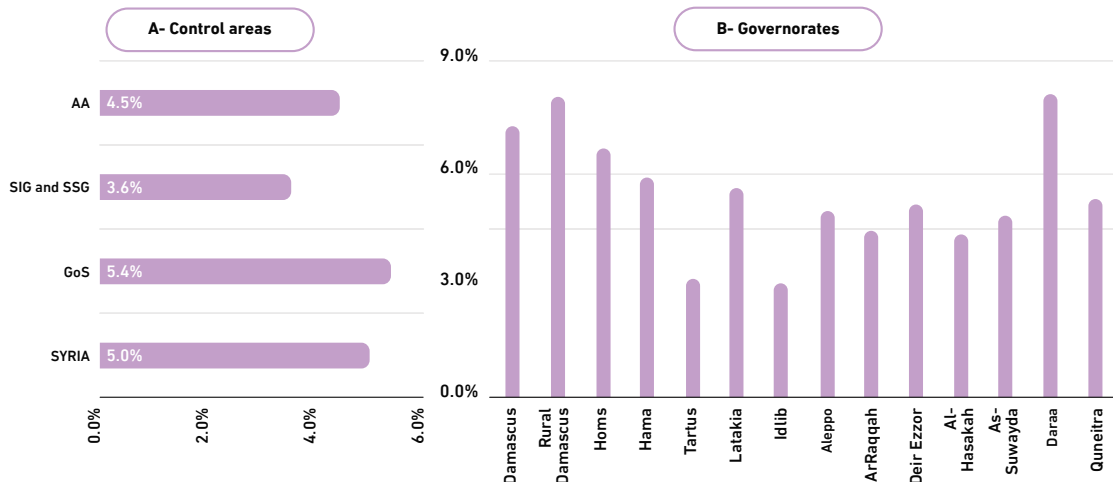
The average monthly inflation of the health group in all of Syria was 5 per cent during the survey period. The highest inflation rate was 5.4 per cent in the GoS areas, followed by the AA areas at 4.5 per cent and the SIG and SSG areas at 3.6 per cent.

The findings show that the prices of health-related goods and services vary by control area, with the GoS areas having the highest prices, followed by the SIG and SSG areas, and finally the AA areas. For example, a physician's examination fees amounted to

SYP 16 thousand in the GoS areas, SYP 11 thousand in the SIG and SSG areas, and SYP 10 thousand in the AA areas.

Figure 16

Comparison of the average monthly inflation rate of the health group in Syria (November 2020 - June 2022)



Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

7.

Transportation

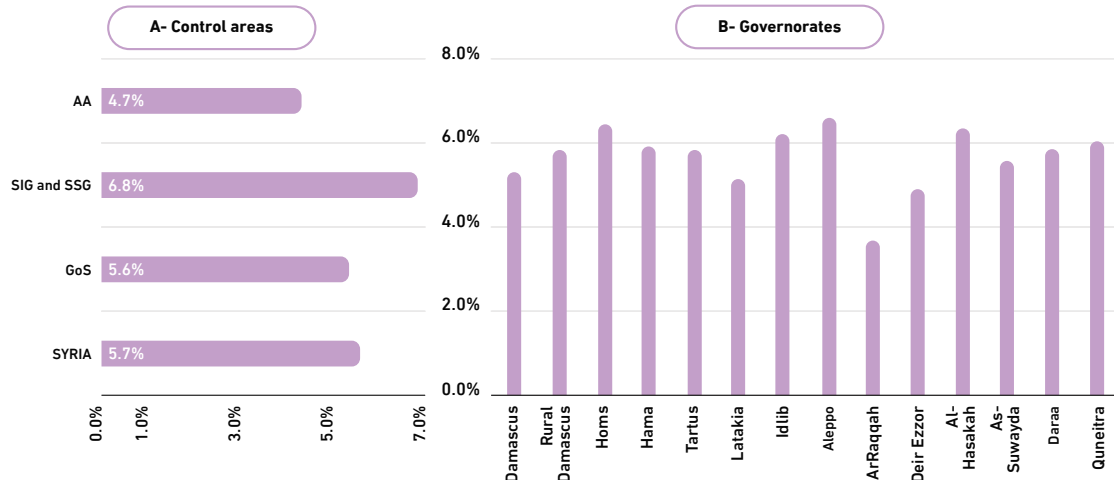
For the transportation group, the average monthly inflation in all of Syria was 5.7 per cent during the survey period. The SIG and SSG areas experienced the highest inflation rate at 6.8 per cent, followed by the GoS areas at 5.6 per cent and the AA areas at 4.7 per cent.

The prices of transport vehicles were the lowest in the SIG and SSG areas, while the prices of transport services were significantly higher in these areas as compared to both GoS and AA areas. For instance, in **June 2022**, intra-city public transportation fares reached SYP 270 in the GoS areas and SYP

350 in the AA areas. In contrast, such fares were as high as SYP 1080 in the SIG and SSG areas, noting that the tariff is administratively determined in the three areas.⁸ Gasoline is sold at subsidized prices in both GoS and AA areas, but prices in the AA areas were lower than those of the GoS areas. While a litre of subsidized gasoline was sold for SYP 525 in the AA areas, it exceeded SYP 1100 per litre in the GoS areas in June 2022. Unsubsidized gasoline was sold at SYP 2300 per litre in the AA areas, SYP 5700 per litre in the SIG and SSG areas, and over SYP 6600 per litre in the GoS areas.

Figure 17

Comparison of the average monthly inflation rate of the transportation group in Syria (November 2020 - June 2022)



Source: SCPRI 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

⁸ Note: Although fuels are not subsidized in the SIG and SSG areas, mass transportation fares are subsidized because the mass transport is a public service.

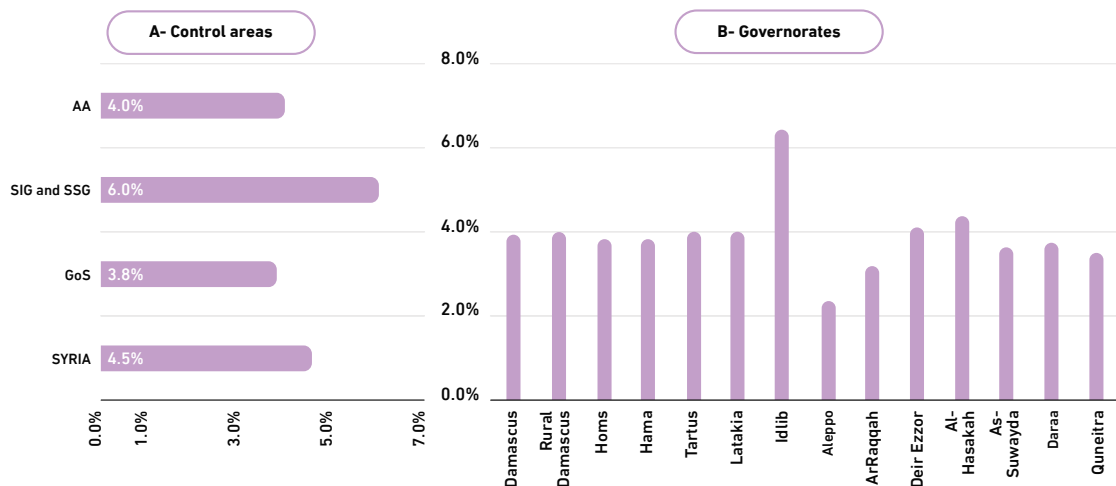
8. Communication

During the survey period, the average monthly inflation of the communications group averaged 4.5 per cent on the country level, with the SIG and SSG areas coming first in terms of average monthly inflation at 6 per cent, followed by the AA areas at 4 per cent, and the GoS areas at 3.8 per cent.

The prices of communications goods and services varied greatly from one area of control to another. For example, in both GoS and AA areas, where the same mobile

network is used, the rate per minute (for prepaid SIM card mobile-to-mobile calls) was SYP 27 in June 2022, whereas it was around SYP 240 in the SIG and SSG areas.⁹

Figure 18 Comparison of the average monthly inflation rate of the communications group in Syria (November 2020 - June 2022)



Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

⁹ The Turkish telecommunications network is used in the SIG areas, where the rate per minute (for mobile-data package calls) is approximately 0.08 Turkish lira. The SSG areas use an international communication network and has a relatively high per-minute rate, approximately USD 0.16, so people there rely more on the Internet-based communication applications than on cellular communications.

9.

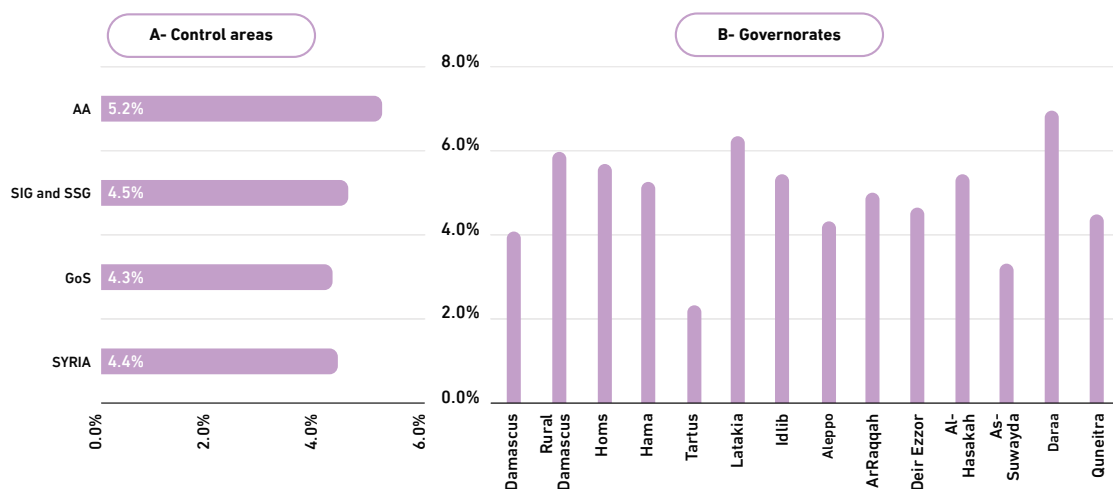
Education

During the survey period, the average monthly inflation rate for the education group in Syria was 4.4 per cent. The highest inflation rate was 5.2 per cent in the AA areas, followed by the SIG and SSG areas at 4.5 per cent, and the GoS areas at 4.3 per cent.

Tuition fees for education services varied across areas of control. The annual tuition fee for “non-applied” colleges in public universities in the GoS areas amounted to about SYP 5000 in June 2022, while it

reached SYP 500 thousand in the SIG and SSG areas.

Figure 19 Comparison of the average monthly inflation rate of the transportation group in Syria (November 2020 - June 2022)



Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

10.

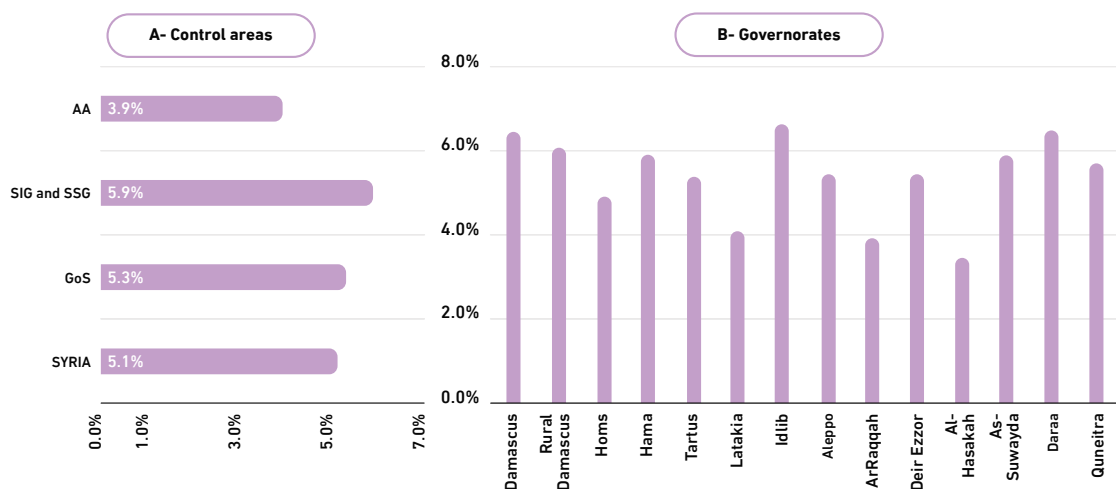
Various goods and services

This group includes personal care and other non-classified services such as lawyer services and other necessary social services. During the survey period, the average monthly inflation of this group in Syria was 5.1 per cent. The SIG and SSG areas experienced the highest average monthly inflation rate at 5.9 per cent, followed by the GoS areas at 5.3 per cent, and the AA areas at 3.9 per cent.

personal care goods and services were similar in the GoS areas and the SIG and SSG areas and lower in the AA areas. For instance, in June 2022, women's hairdressing costs amounted to about SYP 8000 in the GoS areas and the SIG and SSG areas, compared to SYP 5500 in the AA areas.

The survey results show that prices for

Figure 20 Comparison of the average monthly inflation rate of the Various goods and services in Syria (November 2020 - June 2022)



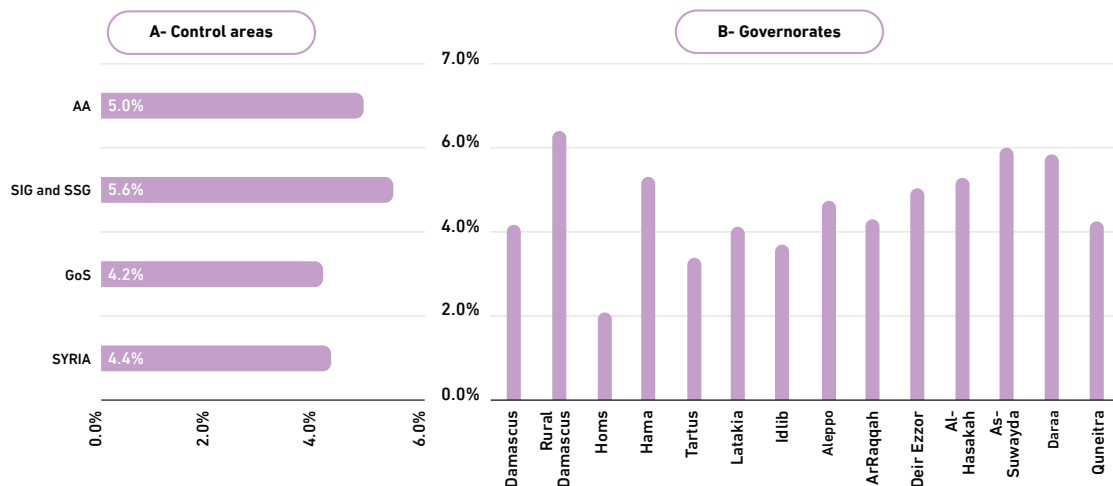
Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

11.

Entertainment and culture

The entertainment and culture group contributes the least to Syria’s inflation rate. During the survey period, the average monthly inflation for this group was 4.4 per cent on the country level, with the SIG and SSG areas experiencing the highest average monthly inflation rate of 5.6 per cent, followed by the AA areas at 5 per cent and the GoS areas at 4.2 per cent.

Figure 21 Comparison of the average monthly inflation rate of the Entertainment and culture group in Syria (November 2020 - June 2022)



Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

**Section III:
The National
Poverty Lines
and Wages
in Syria**

I: Measuring the national poverty lines in Syria

Throughout the conflict period, Syria has seen accelerating inflation rates. Long-term price time series analysis (Laspeyres 2009) confirmed that prices had increased 76 times by the first half of 2022 compared to 2009. These inflation rates resulted in an increase in poverty lines at the same rate. The poverty lines for 2021 and the first half of 2022 have been created by measuring the impact of inflation of these years on the 2009 poverty lines.

Further analysis of prices throughout the conflict period shows that food prices increased about 91 times by the first half of 2022 compared to 2009, while the general index rose about 76 times – a

difference of 15 times (noting that the difference between food inflation and general inflation increased from 11 times in 2021 to 17.4 times in the first half of 2022). This indicates that the greatest impact of the repercussions of the deteriorating Syrian economy is felt primarily in the accelerating collapse of food security and the change in the poverty structure in Syria, with Syrians sliding from being poor within the upper-bound¹⁰ or lower-bound¹¹ poverty lines to being poor below the extreme poverty line¹². As prices continue to rise at the same rate, more poor people will move to the bottom of extreme poverty, and critical patterns of extreme poverty, such as hunger, will emerge.

Table 8
The national monthly poverty lines in Syria in 2021 and the first half of 2022, (in Syrian pounds)

| | GoS areas | | SIG and SSG areas | | AA areas | | Syria | |
|---|-----------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|----------|------------------|---------|------------------|
| | 2021 | The half of 2022 | 2021 | The half of 2022 | 2021 | The half of 2022 | 2021 | The half of 2022 |
| A- The national poverty line per person | | | | | | | | |
| The extreme poverty line | 74,024 | 113,917 | 78,651 | 133,244 | 63,667 | 94,050 | 74,157 | 115,318 |
| The lower poverty line | 118,150 | 181,822 | 116,261 | 196,959 | 96,676 | 142,812 | 116,651 | 181,399 |
| The upper poverty line | 165,839 | 255,211 | 147,737 | 250,283 | 119,124 | 175,973 | 161,024 | 250,402 |
| B- The national poverty line per household | | | | | | | | |
| The extreme poverty line | 399,496 | 614,791 | 486,876 | 824,823 | 434,580 | 641,970 | 415,005 | 645,357 |
| The lower poverty line | 637,633 | 981,263 | 719,692 | 1,219,239 | 659,895 | 974,810 | 652,816 | 1,015,165 |
| The upper poverty line | 895,001 | 1,377,331 | 914,539 | 1,549,333 | 813,124 | 1,201,164 | 901,143 | 1,401,328 |

Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

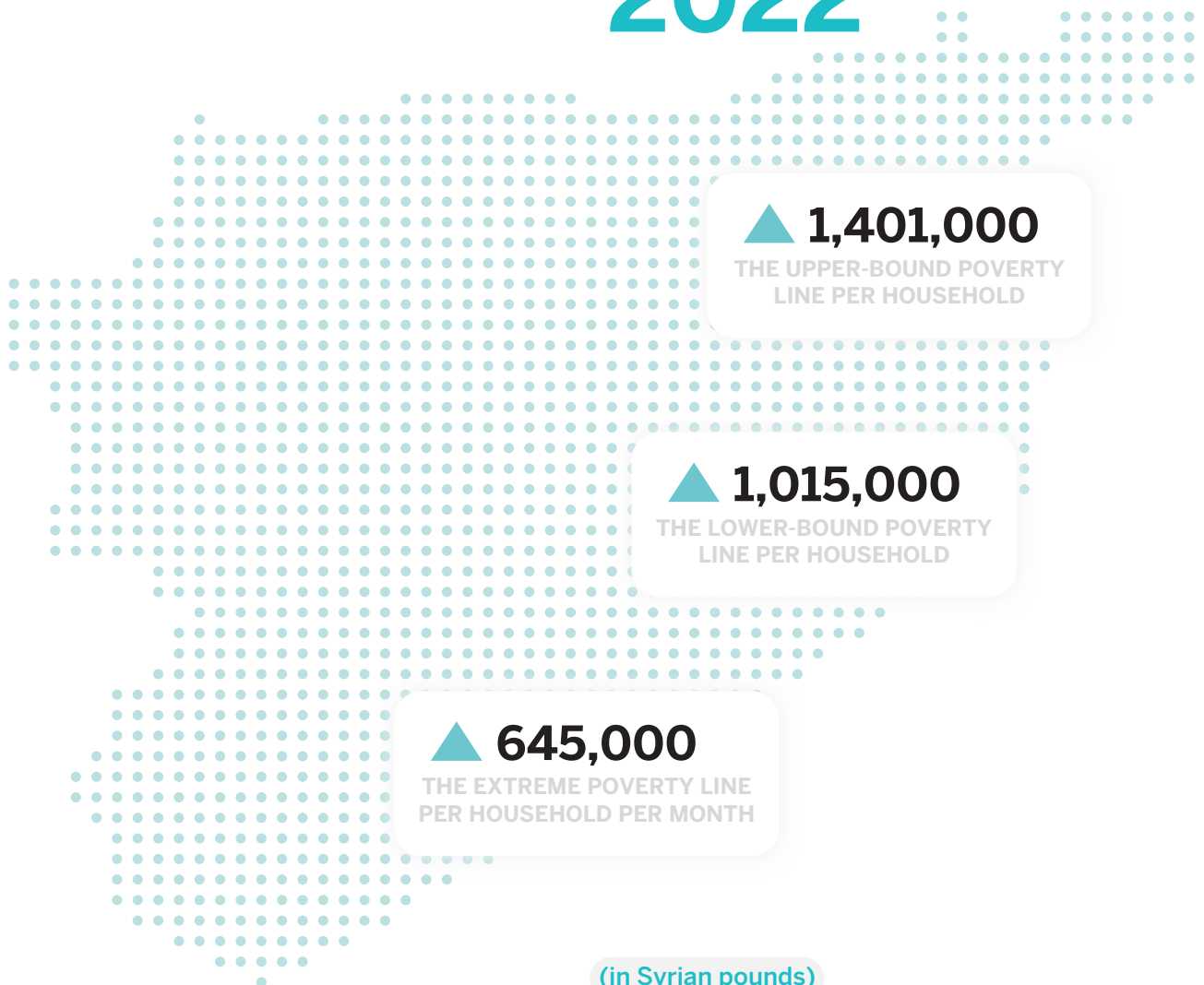
¹⁰ This refers to the overall poverty rate.

¹¹ This refers to a severe level of poverty indicating inability to meet basic survival needs

¹² This refers to the extreme level of poverty indicating deprivation of food.

Calculating national poverty lines in Syria shows that the extreme poverty line rose to SYP 115 thousand per person and SYP 645 thousand per household in the first half of 2022, the lower poverty line increased to SYP 181 thousand per person and SYP 1.02 million per household, and the upper poverty line increased to SYP 250 thousand per person and SYP 1.4 million per household during the same period.

In the first half of 2022



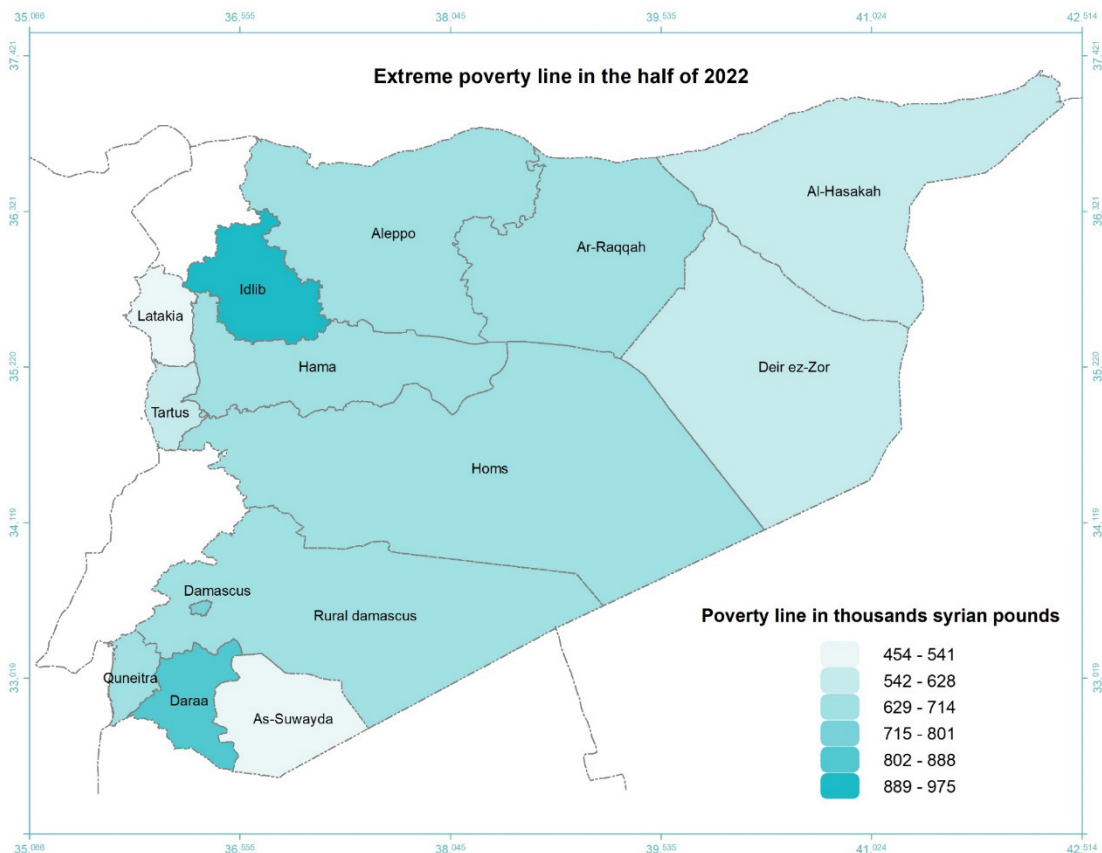
The following is a summary of the national poverty lines across the areas of control:

1. Extreme poverty line per household

By the first half of 2022, the extreme poverty line per household in Syria had amounted to SYP 645 thousand per month. The SIG and SSG areas had the highest value of this line at SYP 826 thousand, followed by the AA areas at SYP 642 thousand, and finally the

GoS areas at around SYP 615 thousand. The extreme poverty line had its highest value in Idlib, followed by Daraa, then Damascus, while As-Suwayda had its lowest value for the extreme poverty line followed by Latakia and Tartus.

Map 1 Syria's monthly extreme poverty line in the first half of 2022 (in thousands Syrian pounds)



Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria; and the Central Bureau of Statistics 2009

2.

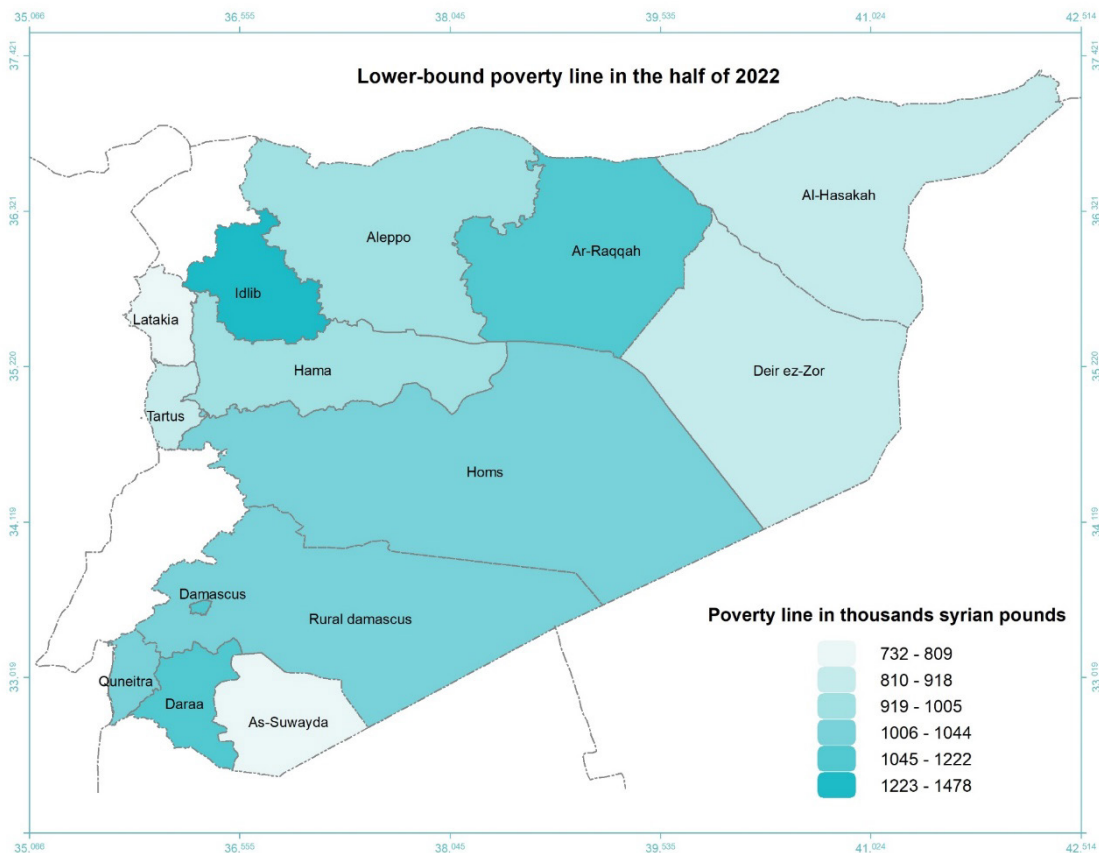
The lower-bound poverty line per household

By the first half of 2022, the lower-bound poverty line per household in Syria had approached SYP 1 million per month. The highest value was recorded in the SIG and SSG areas, which amounted to SYP 1.2 million, followed by the GoS areas at

approximately SYP 981 thousand, and the AA at SYP 975 thousand. The lower-bound poverty line had its highest value in Idlib, followed by Daraa, Damascus, and Ar-Raqqah, As-Suwayda, the lowest poverty line followed by Latakia, and Deir ez-Zor.

Map 2

Syria's monthly lower-bound poverty line in the first half of 2022 (in thousands Syrian pounds)



Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria; the Central Bureau of Statistics 2009, Survey of Household Income and Expenditure

3.

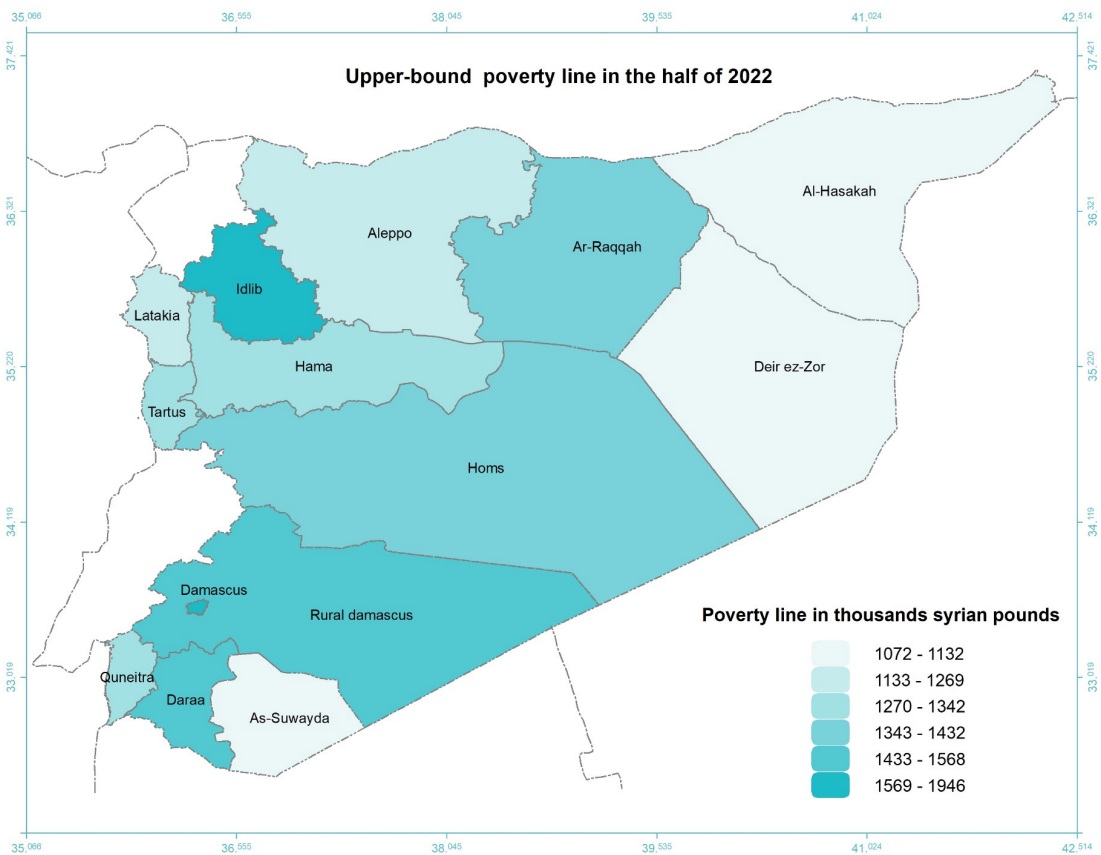
The upper-bound poverty line per household

The upper-bound poverty line per household in Syria was approximately SYP 1.4 million per month by the first half of 2022.

The SIG and SSG areas had the highest value at SYP 1.55 million, followed by the GoS areas at SYP 1.38 million and the AA at

SYP 1.2 million. Idlib has the highest value for the upper-bound poverty line, followed by Damascus, then rural Damascus, and Daraa, while As-Suwayda has the lowest value for the higher poverty line followed by Deir ez-Zor, then AL-Hasakah.

Map 3 Syria's monthly upper-bound poverty line in the first half of 2022 (in thousands Syrian pounds)



Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria; the Central Bureau of Statistics 2009, Survey of Household Income and Expenditure.

II: The wage gap and inequality in Syria

1.

The wage gap in Syria

Wages have failed to catch up with the national poverty lines, and the gap has widened significantly in 2021 and the first half of 2022 as conflict economies remain dominant. The sharp wage disparity has deepened across Syria and within the areas of control and employment sectors (public, private and civil), reflecting a state of fragmentation, inequality and injustice among and within the areas of control.

During the first half of 2022, the average monthly wage in Syria for a university graduate (entry-level) employee was about SYP 159 thousand in the public sector, about SYP 228 thousand in the private sector, and about SYP 614 thousand in the civil sector. Pay comparisons across the areas of control in Syria show that the SIG and SSG areas had the highest wages in both the public and private sectors, followed by the AA areas, and finally the GoS areas.

In the first half of 2022, the monthly wage for a university graduate (entry-level) employee in the **public sector** was about

SYP 104 thousand in the GoS areas, SYP 240 thousand in the AA areas and SYP 369 thousand in the SIG and SSG areas.¹³

In the **private sector**, the monthly wage for a shop assistant was about SYP 203 thousand in the GoS areas, SYP 200 thousand in the AA areas and SYP 499 thousand in the SIG and SSG areas.¹⁴

In the **civil sector**, the monthly wage for an employee was about SYP 346 thousand in the GoS areas, SYP 1.1 million in the AA areas and SYP 1.5 million in the SIG and SSG areas.¹⁵

¹³ Wages of public workers are determined in US dollars by SSG, in Turkish liras by SIG and in Syrian pounds by both GoS and AA.

¹⁴ Monthly pay of a university-graduate employee in the public sector in the first half of 2022 was about TRY 1,100 in the SIG areas, and USD 120 in the SSG areas.

¹⁵ Monthly pay of a worker in the private sector in the first half of 2022 ranged from TRY 1500 to TRY 1800 in the SIG areas, and amounted to USD 150 in the SSG areas.

Table 9

Average monthly wages in Syria by areas of control in 2021 and the first half of 2022 (in Syrian pounds)

| | GoS areas | | SIG and SSG areas | | AA areas | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|
| | 2021 | The half of 2022 | 2021 | The half of 2022 | 2021 | The half of 2022 |
| A - Public sector workers | | | | | | |
| Employee pay (university professor) | 138,947 | 224,232 | 1,333,401 | 1,524,453 | 400,000 | 400,000 |
| Employee pay (graduate) | 64,344 | 103,838 | 372,500 | 368,593 | 240,000 | 240,000 |
| Employee pay (4th grade) | 59,082 | 95,346 | 229,538 | 247,826 | 240,000 | 240,000 |
| B - Private sector workers | | | | | | |
| Company manager pay | 445,978 | 571,990 | 1,321,485 | 1,448,154 | 966,667 | 966,667 |
| Shop assistant pay | 149,016 | 202,843 | 369,974 | 499,161 | 183,333 | 200,000 |
| C - Civil sector workers | | | | | | |
| Employee pay (graduate) | 263,135 | 346,388 | 1,389,831 | 1,524,453 | 1,127,778 | 1,133,333 |
| Maintenance staff pay | 231,561 | 273,617 | 868,644 | 952,783 | 883,333 | 933,833 |

Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

Calculating the gap between wages and poverty lines clearly demonstrates the wage disparity.¹⁶ In the first half of 2022, most wages in Syria were below the three national (upper, lower and extreme) poverty lines for the most prevalent employment categories (public-sector employees with or without university degrees, private-sector staff employed as workmen or day labourers), except for civil sector wages that were above the extreme poverty line at the Syrian level, and above the

extreme and lower poverty lines at the SIG and SSG areas and AA areas.

On the country level, the gap between wages and the extreme poverty line was about 73 per cent for a university graduate employee in the public sector, 54 per cent for a worker in the private sector, and achieved an 11 per cent surplus for an employee in the civil sector. The gap between wages and the lower poverty line was about 83 per cent for a university-

¹⁶ It refers to the percentage difference between monthly wages and poverty lines.

graduate employee in the public sector, 71 per cent for a worker in the private sector, and 30 per cent for an employee in the civil sector. The gap between wages and the upper poverty line was very high, amounting to 87 per cent for a university-graduate employee in the public

sector, 79 per cent for a worker in the private sector, and 49 per cent for an employee in the civil sector. Across these three cases, the GoS areas had the highest wage gap, followed by the AA areas and finally the SIG and SSG areas.

Table 10

Syria-wide monthly gap between wages and national poverty lines in the first half of 2022, (in percentages)

| | GoS areas | SIG and SSG areas | AA areas | Syria-wide |
|---|-----------|-------------------|----------|------------|
| A - The gap between wages and the extreme poverty line | | | | |
| A graduated employee in the public sector | -83.1 | -55.3 | -62.6 | -72.5% |
| A worker in the private sector | -67.0 | -39.5 | -68.8 | -54.0% |
| An employee in the civil sector | -43.7 | +84.8 | +76.5 | +11.0% |
| B - The gap between wages and the lower poverty line | | | | |
| A graduated employee in the public sector | -89.4 | -69.8 | -75.4 | -82.5% |
| A worker in the private sector | -79.3 | -59.1 | -79.5 | -70.8% |
| An employee in the civil sector | -64.7 | +25.0 | +16.3 | -29.5% |
| C - The gap between wages and the upper poverty line | | | | |
| A graduated employee in the public sector | -92.5 | -76.2 | -80.0 | -87.3% |
| A Worker in the private sector | -85.3 | -67.8 | -83.3 | -78.8% |
| An employee in the civil sector | -74.9 | -1.6 | -5.6 | -48.9% |

Note: Negative reference refers to gap and positive reference to surplus

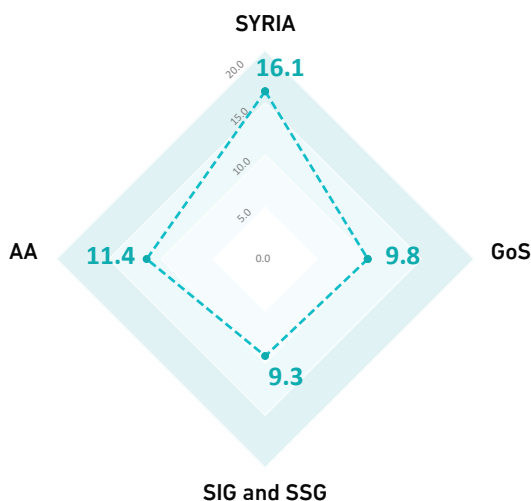
Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

2. The wage inequality in Syria

One of the most visible consequences of conflict economics was an increase in wage disparity/inequality.¹⁷ An examination of wage observations from 59 studied regions in the first half of 2022 reveals a 16-fold increase in wage disparity across the areas of control in Syria. Wage disparities for government employees in various areas of control are comparable to the 16-fold total disparity across Syria, with the highest seen in the SSG areas and the lowest in the GoS areas. This similarity in wage disparity at the national level and areas of control suggests that the conflict parties are one of the primary causes of wage inequality deepening.

The disparity analysis by area of control shows that the AA areas had the greatest disparity, with a rate of wage disparity in the governorates under their control of approximately 11.4 times, followed by the GoS areas at 9.8 times, and then the SIG and SSG areas at 9.3 times. Wage disparity comparison by employment sector shows that the public sector has the highest disparity rate at 16 times, followed by the private sector at 14 times, and the civil sector at 12 times.

Figure 22 Wage disparity by area of control in Syria in the first half of 2022



Source: SCPR 2022, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

¹⁷ Wage disparity is the ratio of the highest wage to the lowest wage. To measure the wage disparity, eight observations of workers' cases were monitored in 59 study areas: three employees in the public sector (a university prof, an employee with a university degree and an employee with a preparatory-education certificate) and three employees in the private sector (a factory manager, a shop assistant and a day laborer). and two staffs in the civil sector (office employee, maintenance technician). These wages represent some observations of popular wages in the study areas and are not generalized.

Conclusion

For more than two years, Syria's prices and cost of living have been steadily rising. In comparison to 2019, the annual consumer price inflation rate exceeded 600 per cent by the first half of 2022, and the food inflation rate exceeded 670 per cent during the same period. The GoS areas had the highest general and food inflation, followed by the AA areas and the SIG and SSG areas.

The high inflation rates identified by SCPR's Consumer Prices Index in Syria reflect the reality of conflict economies and the sharp deterioration in economic performance and living standards. The Index shows a significant increase in the national household (extreme, lower, and upper) poverty lines, deterioration of the real value of wages and a deepening of their disparity, and a widening gap between wages and poverty lines. Suffering affected all areas of control, albeit to varying degrees. The Index predicts the spread of a poverty pattern worse than extreme poverty if prices continue to rise at their current pace.

To sum up, the importance of SCPR's Consumer Price Index is that it provides regular tracking of prices in the various areas of control, which can be used as a foundation for developing interventions and programmes, thus enabling civil society and international organizations to develop their relevant policies. Based on SCPR's periodic field survey, the Index will be developed and issued on a monthly basis.

The current report serves as a foundation for future research and studies, notably including an examination of the determinants of inflation in Syria, determining the magnitude of the impact of the economies of violence and monopoly on the general level of prices, investigating food and non-food costs of living at the local level, analyzing disparity in income and expenditure across various areas in Syria, and identifying and measuring new patterns of poverty.

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