



SCPR'S Annual Bulletin

for Consumer Price Index and Inflation in Syria 2023

“A crumbling economy”



Issue 2

Preface

The bulletin provides an independent assessment of consumer prices and inflation rates in all Syrian regions based on a monthly survey of consumer prices carried out by the Syrian Center for Policy Research (SCPR) since October 2020. The SCPR had developed a methodology for building a price index based on components of the consumer basket, weighting, and market selection (See [SCPR's Consumer Price Index in Syria](#)).

This bulletin presents the findings of the monthly consumer price survey and the changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for 2023 (with 2021 as the base year) broken down by region and the major consumption groups. Based on the CPI changes, the bulletin provides an estimate of the cost of living and poverty lines at the local level in all Syrian regions.

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SCPR would like to thank the field researchers for the great effort in conducting the monthly prices and wages survey throughout the year 2023. Their observations and quick responses played an important role in completing this work.



Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|-------|-----------------------------------|
| AA | Autonomous Administration |
| CPI | Consumer Price Index |
| GoS | Government of Syria |
| kg | kilogram |
| km | kilometer |
| kWh | kilowatt-hours |
| M-o-M | Month on month |
| SCPR | Syrian Center for Policy Research |
| SIG | Syrian Interim Government |
| SSG | Syrian Salvation Government |
| SYP | Syrian Pound |
| TL | Turkish Lira |
| USD | United States Dollar |
| Y-o-Y | Year on year |

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Introduction

Despite a significant decline in military operations, since 2020, Syria has witnessed a sharp economic deterioration, a rise in unemployment rates, a decline in the levels of public services, a rise in the cost of living and prices, and a worsening of the levels of poverty, deprivation, and food insecurity. This deterioration and its repercussions took root as the controlling powers continued to consolidate the components of conflict economies and divert material and human resources to the benefit of the conflict elite through monopoly, appropriation, corruption, smuggling, drug trade, looting, unjust exploitation of natural resources, and others. This is being done in light of the political and economic fragmentation of the country between four areas of influence of local military and political forces with direct support from external forces. The role of the military and security forces prevails in the existing regimes, the spread of tyranny, the failure to achieve the basic functions of public institutions, including security, protection, and the provision of public services, and the spread of looting and waste in the absence of accountability.

Economically, Syria's GDP deteriorated significantly during 2023, reaching 527 SYP billion (at constant 2000 prices), equivalent to only 38 per cent of the 2010 GDP. The value of the total cumulative losses amounted to USD 864 billion, of which USD 724 billion were losses. In the GDP and USD 72 billion in losses in the capital stock,¹ the February 2023 earthquake added total losses worth USD 5.85 billion, mostly distributed in the governorates of Idleb and Aleppo. The economic losses of the earthquake are equivalent to about 33 per cent of the GDP for the year 2023.²

The economic deterioration was reflected in the continued high unemployment rates, which reached 52 per cent in 2023, hindered the participation of half of the individuals capable of working in economic activity, with the absence of decent work conditions in light of the scarcity of opportunities and the urgent need for work. Child labour has spread in an unstable and unsafe environment.

The trade deficit reached about 70 per cent of GDP in 2023, in light of continued reliance on imports, which amounted to more than 6 times exports. The state's general budget

¹ Syrian Center for Policy Research. (2024). [Alternative Development Forum 2](#).

² Syrian Center for Policy Research. (2023). [The Impact of the Earthquake in Syria](#).

deficit exceeded 50 per cent of GDP. This deficit has accumulated the economy's dependence on external forces so that the debt exceeds 250 per cent of the gross domestic product in 2023.³

The accumulated and continuing state budget deficits, which are covered by internal loans from the Central Bank of Syria, accelerated the deterioration of the value of the local currency, thus, the average exchange rate of the Syrian pound declined against the US dollar to record SYP 1935 per USD in 2020, and SYP 3393 per USD in 2021, SYP 4392 per USD in 2022, and SYP 10565 per USD in 2023.

The economy has become largely dependent on foreign aid. Official aid provided to Syria within the framework of the United Nations Response Plan alone amounted to approximately USD 21.6 billion during the period (2012-2023), that is, an average of USD 1.8 billion per year.⁴

Structural imbalances during the conflict contributed to the surge of price inflation, which reflects the depth of the economic deterioration, so the annual inflation rate reached 110 per cent in 2021, 85 per cent in 2022, and 116 per cent in 2023.⁵ Note that the annual inflation rate in the Arab countries reached 3.1 per cent, 5.1 per cent, and 12.5 per cent during the years 2021, 2022, and 2023, and the global inflation rate reached 3.5 per cent, 8.5 per cent, and 6.8 per cent during the same period.⁶

The continued rise in prices at these unprecedented levels was accompanied by a deterioration in GDP, aggregate demand, and employment, and contributed to undermining the state of economic and human development. According to the Socio-economic assessment survey conducted by SCPR, the Human Development Index declined again in 2023, as the ability of families to spend on income deteriorated. Health, education, food, and meeting their essential needs.⁷

The conflict has led to the systematic destruction of the social determinants of public health and the fragmentation of the health system. Individuals face many obstacles to

³ Calculations of the Syrian Center for Policy Research based on data from the Central Bureau of Statistics and the general state budget in Syria for the year 2023.

⁴ OCHA. [Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan \(SHARP\)](#)

⁵ SCPR. (2022). [The Syrian Center for Policy Research's guide to consumer prices in Syria for the period \(October 2020 - June 2022\)](#), and SCPR. (2023). [SCPR'S Annual Bulletin for Consumer Price Index and Inflation in Syria 2022](#).

⁶ The World Bank. (2022). [Databank](#), and IMF. (2023). [Inflation rate, average consumer prices](#).

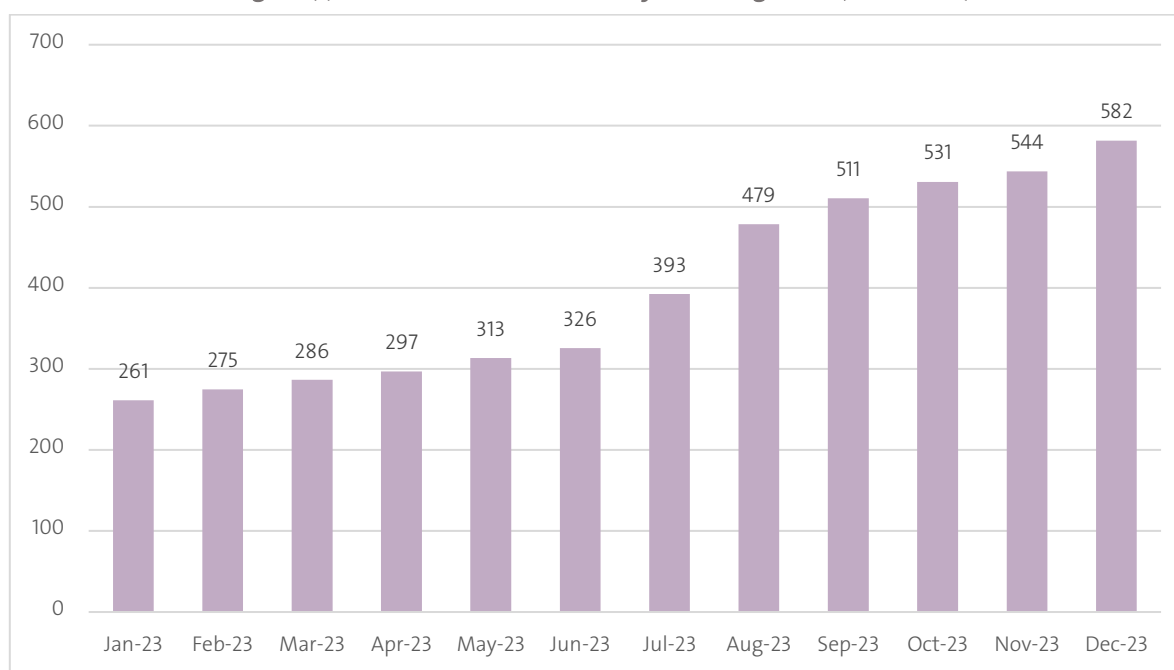
⁷ SCPR. (2022). [Socio-economic assessment surveys in Syria from 2020 to 2022](#). (in Arabic)

obtaining health services due to the lack of specialized services, the shortage of medicines, and the destruction of infrastructure and equipment.⁸ The educational system was also fragmented, with a significant shortage of qualified teachers, and a declining quality of education. The dropout rate from basic education reached 33 per cent in 2023 across Syria, exceeding 43 per cent in the SIG and SSG areas and 49 per cent in the AA areas.⁹

1. Consumer Price Index Guide in Syria for the year 2023

Syria witnessed hyperinflation in prices during the year 2023, as the CPI doubled compared to 2022 to reach 400 (The base year 2021) compared to 185 in 2022. This dangerous indicator that indicates the acceleration of the economic collapse accompanied by an increasing state of instability and uncertainty. The purchasing power of money deteriorated, and this inflation resulted in a significant increase in poverty lines (abject, lower, and upper) across Syria.

Figure (1): Consumer Price Index in Syria during 2023, (2021 = 100)



Source: SCPR 2023, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

The rise in the CPI in Syria during the last four years has been linked to a decline in economic activity, disruption of the production process, and confusion in the public policies implemented. The indices for the housing, water, electricity, and gas group, the

⁸ SCPR. (2023). [Devastation of the right to health during the conflict in Syria](#).

⁹ The Syrian Center for Policy Research.

transportation group, the clothing and footwear group, and the food and non-alcoholic beverages group recorded a significant increase. The CPI for the housing, water, electricity, and gas group reached 433 in 2023 (2021 = 100), the transportation group 430, the clothing and shoes group 415, and the food and non-alcoholic beverages group 404.

Table (1): CPI in Syria during the year 2023 compared to the year 2022 by consumption groups, (the base year 2021 = 100), inflation in percentages

| # | Consumption group | CPI 2022 | CPI 2023 | (M-o-M) INF |
|-------|---|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| | All commodities | 184.9 | 399.7 | 116.2% |
| 1 | Food and Beverages | 181 | 404.2 | 123.3% |
| 2 | Tobacco | 140.8 | 336.7 | 139.1% |
| 3 | Clothes and Shoes | 169.1 | 414.9 | 145.4% |
| 4 | Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and other fuel | 209.5 | 433.4 | 106.9% |
| 5 | Household equipment and maintenance | 168.8 | 414.1 | 145.3% |
| 6 | Health | 189.1 | 387.2 | 104.8% |
| 7 | Transportation | 185.5 | 430.0 | 131.9% |
| 8 | Communications | 166.3 | 221.1 | 33.0% |
| 9 | Entertainment and Culture | 166.3 | 398.5 | 139.6% |
| 10 | Education | 184.3 | 337.1 | 82.9% |
| 11+12 | Various goods and services | 170 | 388.4 | 128.5% |

Source: SCPR, a monthly survey of consumer prices in Syria during the years 2022 and 2023. For details, see Appendix (1)

The deterioration of the exchange rate of the Syrian pound against the US dollar during the year 2023 was reflected in the prices of imported goods, as the Household equipment and maintenance group recorded annual inflation of 145 per cent, the tobacco, entertainment and culture groups recorded annual inflation of 139 per cent for each during the year 2023., as the government decisions in raising the prices of subsidized goods played a role in the increase in the prices of the transportation, food, and non-alcoholic beverages groups by between 123 per cent and 132 per cent.

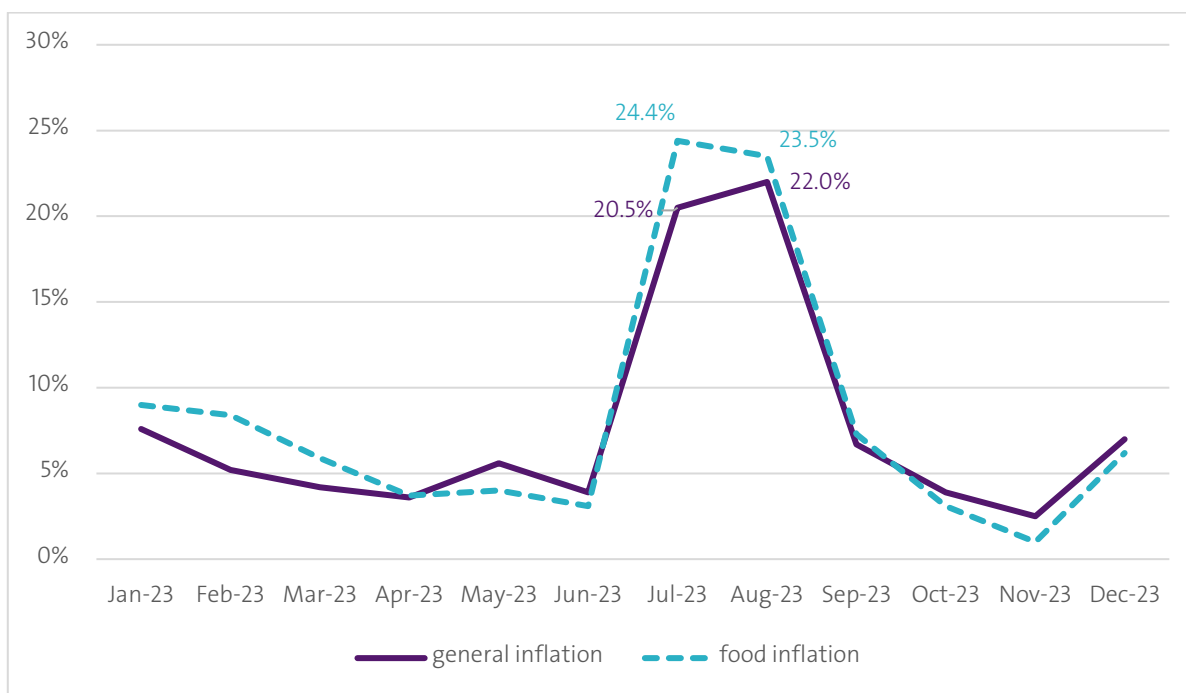
2. Inflation for the year 2023

2.1. Inflation rates

Consumer goods and services prices have risen sharply in the last four years. According to the SCPR’s guide to consumer prices in Syria, the annual inflation rate (Y-o-Y) for prices reached 113 per cent in 2020, 110 per cent in 2021, 85 per cent in 2022, and 116 per cent. In 2023, the inflation rate reached more than 1700 per cent compared to 2019.

The SCPR’s index for consumer prices in Syria rose from 261 in January 2023 to 582 in December 2023. The average monthly inflation (M-o-M) for prices reached 7.73 per cent in 2023, knowing that it was around 5.6 per cent in 2022.

In July and August 2023, the general price index recorded two significant price jumps. The total monthly inflation (M-o-M) for them exceeded 42.5 per cent, which constitutes a turning point in the rise in prices and indicates an acceleration in inflation rates compared to the previous months that witnessed high inflation during the period (2020 – 2022).Figure (2): Monthly inflation (M-o-M) in Syria during 2023 (in percentages)



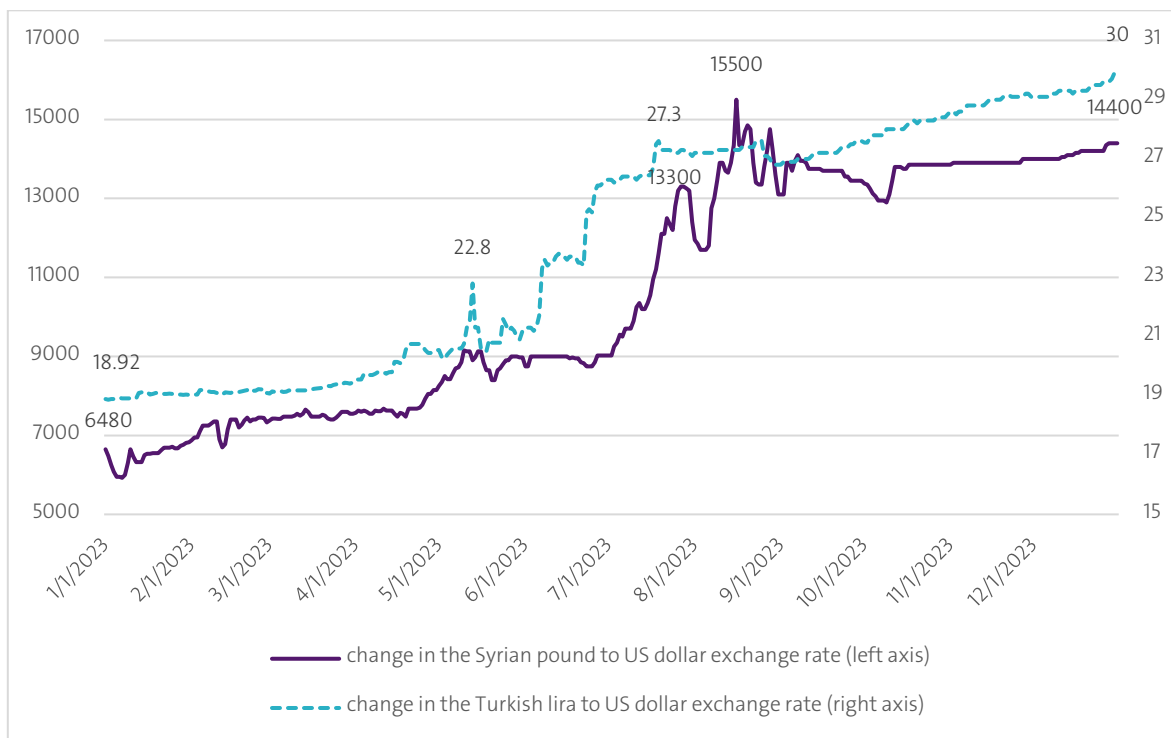
Source: SCPR 2023, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

Among the most prominent factors influencing inflationary pressures in Syria during the year 2023 are the continuing state of conflict, the encroachment of authoritarian powers, the distortion of governance structures, political and economic fragmentation, the dominance of external powers, and the accompanying economic effects such as monopoly, plunder, robbery, royalties, smuggling, and trafficking, the continued economic deterioration, and the decline in industrial and service production, as well as, the absence of investment and job opportunities, the high state budget deficit, the trade balance deficit, external debt, and the decline in the exchange rate of the Syrian pound and the Turkish lira, in addition to the repercussions of the February 2023 earthquake, which greatly affected the stock of physical capital and the gross domestic product.

2.2. Exchange rate

The Syrian pound against the US dollar witnessed a significant decline in 2023 compared to 2022 by more than 140 per cent, as the annual average exchange rate of the Syrian pound reached SYP 10565 per USD in 2023 after it was about SYP 4402 per USD in 2022. The value of the Turkish lira -the trading currency in the areas of the SIG and the SSG areas- decreased against the US dollar by 28.6 per cent in 2023 compared to 2022, as the annual average exchange rate of the Turkish lira reached TL 24.2 per USD in 2023 compared to TL 18.8 per USD in 2022.

Figure (3): The exchange rate of the Syrian pound and the Turkish lira against the US dollar during 2023



Source: SCPR 2023, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

The trend of the exchange rate of both the Syrian pound and the Turkish lira against the US dollar was upward during the year 2023,¹⁰ so the exchange rate of the Syrian pound rose from SYP 6480 per USD at the beginning of 2023 to SYP 11400 per USD at its end. The exchange rate of the Turkish lira rose from TL 18.9 per USD to TL 30 in the same period. The trend of the CPI in all control areas was also upward during 2023.

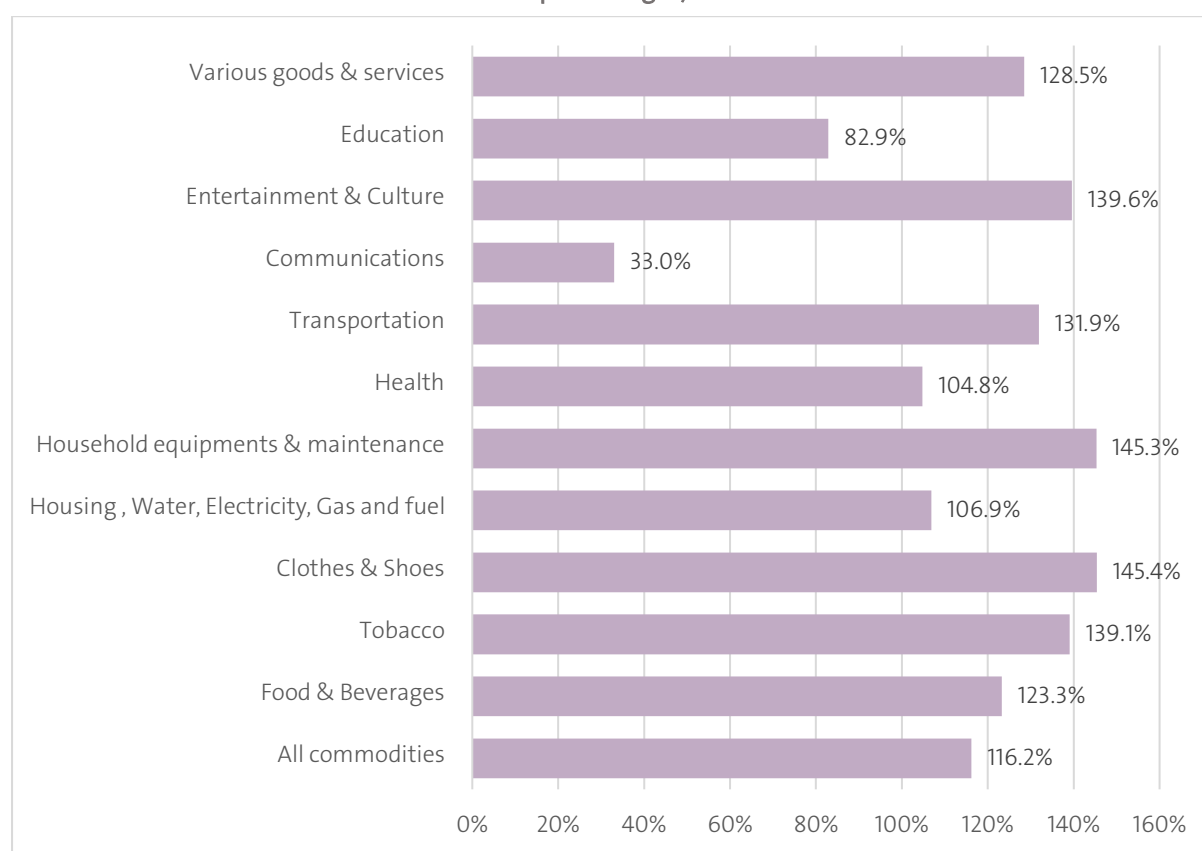
¹⁰ The exchange rate of the Syrian pound against the US dollar stabilized at around SYP 14000 per USD from September to December 2023.

2.3. Inflation by consumption groups and governorates

2.3.1. Inflation by consumption groups

The annual inflation rate in nine major groups out of eleven exceeded 100 per cent during the year 2023, which indicates a doubling of the general price levels of most goods and services in Syria during 2023. The clothes and shoes group and the household equipment and maintenance group topped the rankings in terms of the annual inflation level in 2023, by 145 per cent each, then the entertainment and culture group and the tobacco group by 139 per cent each, followed by the transportation group with a rate of 131 per cent, the various goods and services group with a rate of 129 per cent, and the food and non-alcoholic beverages group with a rate of 123 per cent. On the other hand, the education group achieved an annual inflation of 83 per cent, and the communications group 33 per cent.

Figure (4): The average of annual inflation (Y-o-Y) in Syria by consumption groups during 2023 (in percentages)



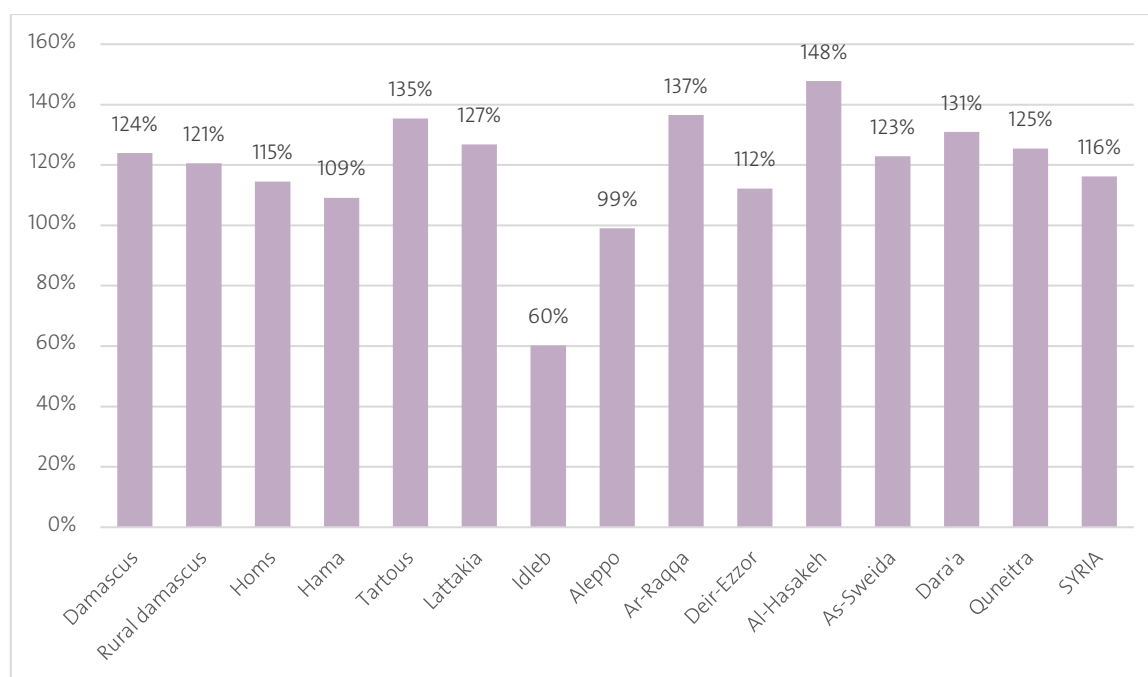
Source: SCPR 2023, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria.

2.3.2. Inflation by governorates

Twelve out of fourteen governorates recorded annual inflation (Y-o-Y) that exceeded 100 per cent during 2023, led by Al-Hasakeh at 148 per cent, then Ar-Raqqa at 137 per cent, then Tartous at 135 per cent, then Dara'a at 131 per cent, while Idleb recorded the lowest annual inflation rate of 60 per cent.

In terms of food inflation, Al-Hasakeh recorded the highest food inflation rate in 2023 at 163 per cent, followed by Lattakia at 139 per cent, Homs at 137 per cent, and Damascus at 134 per cent, while Idleb recorded the lowest food inflation rate in 2023 at 55 per cent. It is the only governorate in which the inflation rate in food prices was below the 100 per cent level in 2023.

Figure (5): The average annual inflation (Y-o-Y) for prices in Syria by governorate during 2023, (in percentages)



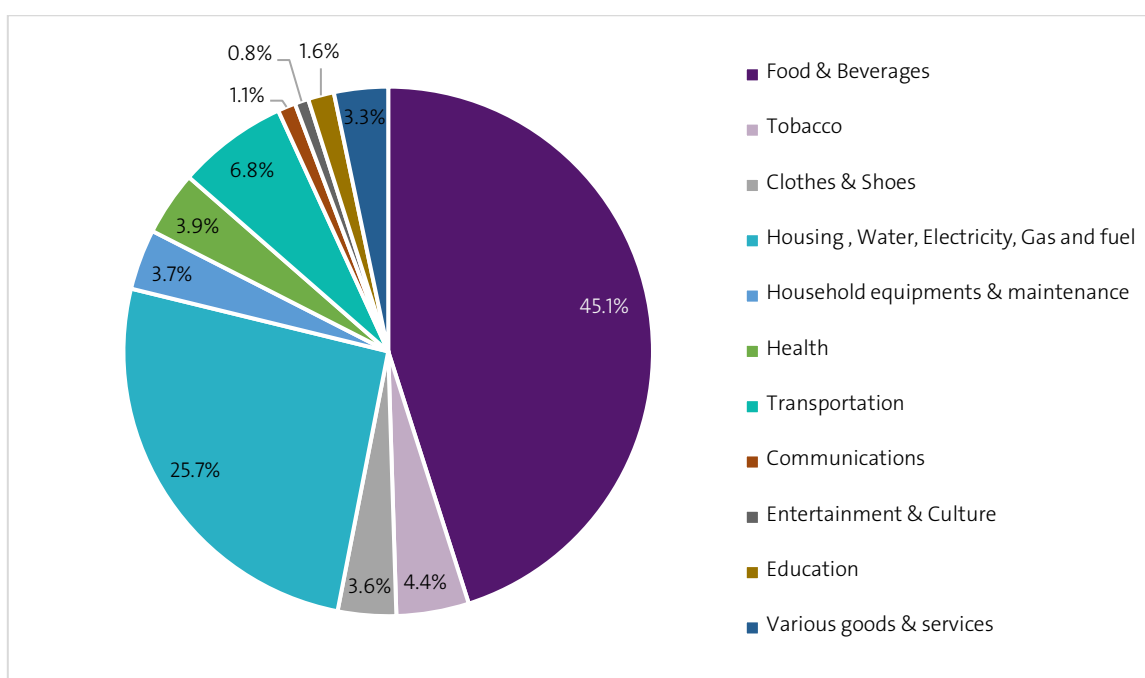
Source: SCPR 2023, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria. For details, see Appendix (2).

At the level of control areas, the AA areas achieved the highest general and food inflation rates during the year 2023 at 136 per cent and 141 per cent for each, respectively, followed by the GoS areas with a rate of 122 per cent and 129 per cent and finally the SIG and SSG areas with a rate of 63 per cent and 53 per cent.

2.4. Contribution to Inflation

The food and non-alcoholic beverages group achieved the most considerable contribution to the annual inflation¹¹ in Syria for the year 2023 (amounting to 116 per cent), with a contribution rate of 45 per cent, followed by the housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuel oils group which recorded a rate of 25.7 per cent. The transportation group contributed 6.8 per cent of the annual inflation in 2023, while all others contributed 22.5 per cent.

Figure (6): Contribution of major consumption groups to the monthly inflation rate (M-o-M) for 2023 (in percentages)



Source: SCPR 2023, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

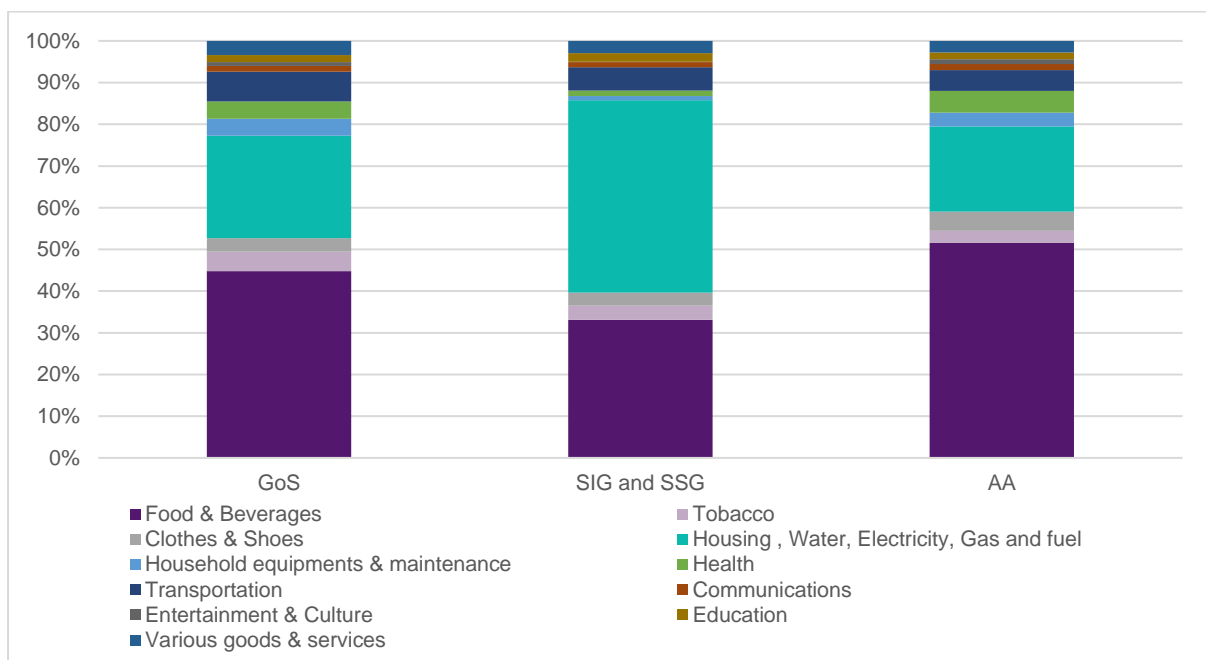
In 2023, the food and non-alcoholic beverages group contributed the largest to the annual inflation of the AA areas and the GoS areas, at 51.5 per cent and 50 per cent for each, respectively, then the housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuel oils group with a contribution of 25 per cent for the GoS areas and 20.5 per cent for the AA areas. The

¹¹ The contribution rate to inflation means the percentage of the contribution of each consumption group to annual inflation out of 100%.

transportation group contributed 7 per cent of the annual inflation in GoS areas and 5 per cent in AA areas.

The group of housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuel oils contributed 46 per cent of the annual inflation in SIG and SSG areas, attributed to the impact of the February 2023 earthquake that hit those areas severely, the increased demand for housing in light of the shortage of supply, and the increased demand for building materials there, while the food and non-alcoholic beverages group contributed 33 per cent of the annual inflation in the SIG and SSG areas, and the transportation group only contributed 5.6 per cent there.

Figure (7): Contribution of major consumption groups to the monthly inflation rate (M-o-M) for 2023 by areas of control (in percentages)



Source: SCPR 2023, Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria

The following is a presentation of the most important changes at the level of the groups that contribute most to inflation in Syria during the year 2023.

2.4.1. Food and Non-alcoholic Beverages Group

The food and non-alcoholic beverages group achieved an excessive annual inflation rate of 123 per cent in 2023. At the level of its subgroups, the meat group achieved the highest annual inflation rate during the year 2023 at 177 per cent, followed by the sugar, jam, honey, chocolate, and sweet group at 151 per cent, then the yoghurt, cheese, and eggs group by 127 per cent.

Comparing the prices between the three control areas, it becomes clear that the GoS areas had the highest prices for most food commodities, followed by the AA and SSG, and finally the SIG areas. In December 2023, a kilogram price of veal reached thousand 131 SYP in the GoS areas, thousand 106 SYP in the SIG and SSG areas, and thousand 96 SYP in the AA areas.

Table (2): Average prices of some food commodities in December 2023 compared to December 2022, (in Syrian pounds)

| # | Commodity | Unit | GoS areas | | SIG and SSG areas | | AA areas | |
|----|---------------------------|-------|-----------|----------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| | | | Dec 2022 | Dec 2023 | Dec 2022 | Dec 2023 | Dec 2022 | Dec 2023 |
| 1 | White bread | 1 kg | 4,760 | 11,400 | 3,900 | 7,640 | 3,135 | 7,370 |
| 2 | Veal | 1 kg | 36,000 | 131,625 | 32,300 | 105,980 | 26,270 | 94,890 |
| 3 | Chicken | 1 kg | 16,660 | 47,270 | 10,675 | 27,200 | 11,370 | 31,380 |
| 4 | Bulgur | 1 kg | 6,915 | 13,520 | 5,020 | 9,540 | 5,500 | 13,880 |
| 5 | Chickpeas | 1 kg | 6,760 | 22,200 | 6,980 | 14,650 | 7,350 | 17,780 |
| 6 | Egg | 2 kg | 18,840 | 62,530 | 13,120 | 43,295 | 14,370 | 49,900 |
| 7 | Olive oil | 1 kg | 22,690 | 86,745 | 19,060 | 81,000 | 20,325 | 80,650 |
| 8 | Tuna | 160 g | 6,820 | 18,400 | 6,330 | 14,800 | 5,500 | 14,400 |
| 9 | Apple | 1 kg | 3,420 | 11,560 | 3,550 | 9,430 | 4,420 | 12,160 |
| 10 | Potatoes | 1 kg | 2,525 | 6,060 | 2,260 | 5,180 | 3,000 | 7,040 |
| 11 | Tomatoes | 1 kg | 2,415 | 6,700 | 4,000 | 8,500 | 3,360 | 9,050 |
| 12 | Garlic | 1 kg | 5,475 | 46,435 | 5,940 | 19,870 | 6,960 | 33,615 |
| 13 | Unsubsidized rice | 1 kg | 7,000 | 20,600 | 5,340 | 12,255 | 6,250 | 15,825 |
| 14 | Unsubsidized sugar | 1 kg | 6,485 | 15,330 | 5,515 | 12,720 | 5,715 | 16,400 |
| 15 | Coffee (without cardamom) | 1 kg | 51,800 | 135,350 | 44,500 | 87,315 | 57,950 | 132,750 |
| 16 | Black tea | 1 kg | 55,250 | 165,700 | 46,070 | 109,775 | 46,650 | 145,925 |

Source: SCPR. Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria 2022 and 2023.

The price per kilogram of unsubsidized sugar was SYP 15300 in GoS areas, SYP 16400 in AA areas, and SYP 12700 in SIG and SSG areas. The eggs and olive oil prices increased significantly in 2023, with egg plat prices (2 kg) reaching SYP 62 thousand in GoS areas, SYP 50 thousand in AA areas, and SYP 43 thousand in SIG and SSG areas. The one-

kilogram price of olive oil was SYP 87 thousand in the GoS areas, SYP 81 thousand in the AA areas, and the SIG and SSG areas. The year 2023 saw a significant increase in vegetable prices. The price of one kilogram of garlic was 46 SYP thousand in the GoS areas, SYP 34 thousand in the AA areas, and SYP 20 thousand in the SIG and SSG areas. The price per kilogram of potatoes was approximately SYP 6000 in GoS areas, SYP 5200 in SIG and SSG areas, and SYP 7000 in AA areas.

There was a significant increase in bread prices in all control areas in 2023. In the GoS areas, the Syrian Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection raised the price of a bundle of bread for the people segment excluded from support from SYP 1250 to SYP 3000 (by 140 per cent) in November 2023,¹² contributed to a significant increase in the price of bread, and the Economic Authority in North and East Syria raised the price of a bundle of bread in the AA areas to SYP 1000 in March 2023.¹³ As for the SSG areas, similar to last year, the weight of the bread bundle has been reduced while maintaining its price. In November 2023, the weight of a bundle of bread was reduced from 420 grams to 390 grams while keeping its price at TL 5. Thus, the price of a kilogram of bread became TL 12.8 instead of TL 11.9 (an increase of 7.5 per cent).¹⁴



¹² Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection. [Resolution No. 3633 dated November 6, 2023](#).

¹³ The joint presidency of the Economic Authority for North and East Syria. [Circular No. 8 dated September 7, 2023](#).

¹⁴ Decision of the General Directorate of Grains and Bakeries in the SSG areas. On November 21, 2023.

2.4.2. Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and other Fuel oils Group

The housing, water, gas, electricity, and other fuel oils group achieved the second largest contribution to the general inflation rate in Syria during the year 2023, and its contribution rate was very high in the SIG and SSG areas (46 per cent), then the GoS areas (25 per cent), then the AA areas (20.6 per cent).

Monthly rent allowances varied between regions and governorates, reaching an average of SYP 840 thousand in the GoS areas during December 2023, reaching SYP 1.26 million in the SIG and SSG areas, and exceeding SYP 868 thousand in the AA areas.

Table (3): Average prices of some goods and services related to housing in December 2023 compared to December 2022 (in Syrian pounds)

| # | Good / service | Unit | GoS areas | | SIG and SSG areas | | AA areas | |
|---|--|---------------|-----------|----------|-------------------|-----------|----------|----------|
| | | | Dec 2022 | Dec 2023 | Dec 2022 | Dec 2023 | Dec 2022 | Dec 2023 |
| 1 | Monthly rent for housing | Monthly | 314,275 | 839,750 | 357,090 | 1,258,780 | 455,560 | 868,560 |
| 2 | Water from the public network | 1 cubic meter | 18 | 39 | 1,899 | 4,785 | 33 | 78 |
| 3 | Purchased water for drinking | 1 cubic meter | 19,240 | 35,475 | 12,295 | 27,460 | 8,135 | 20,500 |
| 4 | Electricity from the public network | 1 kWh | 54 | 154 | 1,141 | 1,800 | 18 | 63 |
| 5 | Electricity from other sources | 1 kWh | 2,855 | 7,470 | 1,995 | 3,295 | 255 | 645 |
| 6 | Gas cylinder at the subsidized price | 10 kg | 11,535 | 20,275 | - | - | 7,835 | 11,370 |
| 7 | The gas cylinder at the unsubsidized price | 10 kg | 150,065 | 212,780 | 80,860 | 185,870 | 66,220 | 154,900 |
| 8 | Diesel at the subsidized price | 1 litre | 700 | 2,250 | - | - | 133 | 418 |
| 9 | Diesel at the unsubsidized price | 1 litre | 9,775 | 13,180 | 3,875 | 9,125 | 1,725 | 5,700 |

Source: SCPR. Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria 2022 and 2023.

Comparing the prices of services related to housing and living conditions between the three control areas, it becomes clear that the SIG and SSG areas are the highest in price due to the liberalization of energy prices there, followed by the GoS areas, then the AA areas. In 2023, fuel and electricity prices in GoS areas frequently rose through several governmental decisions. In August 2023, fuel prices were raised for the people segments deserving of support and those excluded from it, as follows:

- To increase the price of a subsidized gas cylinder (10 kg) for families From SYP 15000 to SYP 18500 (23 per cent), and families excluded from a subsidy from SYP 51 thousand to SYP 53 thousand (3.9 per cent).
- To increase the price of the subsidized diesel for heating from SYP 700 per litre to SYP 2000 (186 per cent) and families excluded from a subsidy from SYP 5600 to SYP 11550 (106 per cent).
- To raise the price of industrial diesel provided to agriculture outside of subsidized allocations, agricultural industries, private hospitals, and pharmaceutical factories to SYP 8000 per litre.
- to raise the price of free diesel for the industrial sector and other sectors to SYP 11550 per litre.¹⁵

On September 27, 2023, the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection also raised the price of unsubsidized gas cylinders (10 kgs) to SYP 75 thousand and the industrial gas price (16 kgs) to SYP 150 thousand instead of SYP 75 thousand.¹⁶

At the end of October 2023, the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection set the price of free diesel allocated to the industrial sector at SYP 12430, raised the fuel oil price to SYP 7.9 million per ton, and the liquid gas to SYP 10.68 million per ton.¹⁷

In September 2023, the Ministry of Water Resources raised the tariff for drinking water for the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth segments while keeping the prices of the segments with low consumption the same, bringing a cubic meter price of water through the public network for the consumption category (36-50) cubic meters per cycle (two months) to SYP 150 instead of SYP 30 in the previous cycle.¹⁸ The AA also raised the value of the monthly subscription for drinking water to SYP 5000 instead of SYP 1000.

The Ministry of Electricity raised electricity prices for the consumption exceeding category 1500 kWh to SYP 200 instead of SYP 90 and for the category exceeding 2500 kWh to SYP 450 instead of SYP 150. It also sets the kWh price for prime subscribers in the

¹⁵ Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection. [Resolutions No. 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606 and 2607 dated August 15, 2023.](#)

¹⁶ Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection. Resolution No. 3109 dated September 21, 2023.

¹⁷ Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection. [Resolution No. 3532 dated October 30, 2023.](#)

¹⁸ The decision raised the consumption cost for the quantity exceeding 50 cubic meters to SYP 400, the quantity exceeding 80 cubic meters to SYP 1500, and the quantity exceeding 120 cubic meters to SYP 3000. Knowing that the bracket system will be cancelled starting from the sixth bracket, meaning that the consumer pays SYP 400 for every cubic meter he consumes, regardless of the brackets, if his consumption is more than 50 cubic meters and less than 80 cubic meters during one cycle (two months). For details, enter the [link](#).

public and private sectors who are exempt from rationing, wholly or partially, for home consumption purposes as SYP 800.¹⁹ the kWh price of electricity for industrial uses also reached SYP 220 (since September 2023) instead of SYP 100. It reached SYP 600 for industrialists, who are exempt, wholly or partially, from legalization.

The Turkish electricity company “Ak Energy” changed electricity prices in the northern and eastern Aleppo countryside, under the control of the SIG, several times in 2023. In March 2023, it raised the kWh price of household electricity from TL 3.85 to TL 4.45 and commercial from TL 4.45 to TL 5.25.²⁰ In April 2023, it decreased the home subscription to TL 3.2 and the commercial subscription to TL 4.45.²¹ In August 2023, it raised the price for home consumption to TL 4.75 and commercial consumption to TL 5.75.²² In September 2023, the company decreased the price of electricity by a rate ranging between 38 per cent and 41 per cent so that the kWh price for a home became TL 2.94 and a commercial price of TL 3.37 after protests from residents over the rise in electricity prices.²³

As for the private electricity company supplying Idleb Governorate, “Green Energy”, set the price of a household kWh in US dollars at USD 0.16 in August, after it was USD 0.18 in the previous period,²⁴ and added cleaning fees to the electricity meter for the benefit of the private “E-clean” company at USD 0.65 per month.²⁵

2.4.3. Transportation Group

The transportation group recorded the third largest contributor to the general inflation rate in Syria during the year 2023, and its contribution was significantly enormous in the GoS areas (by 7.1 per cent), followed by the SIG and SSG areas (by 5.6 per cent), then the AA areas (by 4.9 per cent).

The comparison between the control areas shows a significant increase in the transportation services price in the SIG and SSG areas compared to the GoS and AA areas. For example, the fare for mass transportation (microbus) within cities in GoS areas

¹⁹ SANA. (2023, September). [The Ministry of Electricity adjusts tariff prices for consumption above 1500 kWh.](#)

²⁰ Syria TV. (06 March 2023). [The electricity company in northern Syria responds to the Azaz Local Council](#)

²¹ The New Arab. (April 11, 2023). [Northern Syria Electricity Company reduces prices.](#)

²² Baladi. (August 19, 2023). [The North Aleppo Electricity Company explains the reason for raising the price of electricity.](#)

²³ Sham Network. (September 23, 2023). [After angry protests, electricity prices in northern Syria were reduced by 30 percent.](#)

²⁴ Sham Network. (01 November 2023). [Electricity companies adjust current prices in northern Syria.](#)

²⁵ Sham Network. (02 August 2023). [In "dollars".. Obliging Idleb residents to pay the "cleaning" tax while charging "electricity".](#)

reached SYP 1200 in December 2023, while it reached SYP 1650 in the AA areas, and in contrast, reached about SYP 5400 in the SIG and SSG areas. Gasoline is sold at subsidized prices in the GoS and the AA areas. The subsidized gasoline price in the AA areas reached SYP 1800 per litre at the end of 2023, while it exceeded SYP 8900 in the GoS areas. The price of a litre of non-subsidized gasoline reached SYP 9000 in the AA areas, SYP 15000 in the GoS areas, and exceeded SYP 18000 in the SIG and SSG areas.

Table (4): Average prices of some goods and services related to transportation in December 2023 compared to December 2022 (in Syrian pounds)

| # | Good / service | Unit | GoS areas | | SIG and SSG areas | | AA areas | |
|---|--|---------|-----------|----------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| | | | Dec 2022 | Dec 2023 | Dec 2022 | Dec 2022 | Dec 2023 | Dec 2022 |
| 1 | Gasoline for private cars (subsidized) | 1 litre | 3,036 | 8,924 | - | - | 1,200 | 1,817 |
| 2 | Gasoline for private cars (free) | 1 litre | 14,003 | 15,002 | 8,006 | 18,077 | 3,583 | 9,110 |
| 3 | Bus or service fare within the city | 1 round | 504 | 1,192 | 1,650 | 5,359 | 944 | 1,656 |
| 4 | Taxi fare within the city is 3 km | 3 km | 10,366 | 18,149 | 8,258 | 28,904 | 3,750 | 9,622 |
| 5 | Intercity bus fare | 1 km | 48 | 116 | 376 | 860 | 69 | 145 |

Source: SCPR. Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria 2022 and 2023.

During 2023, the increasing prices of transportation services are attributed to several issued decisions in all areas of control in Syria. In mid-July 2023, the AA raised the prices of fuels by rates between 36 per cent and 88 per cent, bringing the price of refined gasoline (first type) to SYP 1700, after it was about SYP 1250. The subsidized diesel used in transportation rose to SYP 525 after it was about SYP 425, and the free diesel to SYP 1700 after it was SYP 1200 in September 2023.²⁶ The AA raised the price of diesel used for tourist vehicles (except for internal and external transportation and pulleys). The price of diesel used in industry and in civil and military institutions increased from SYP 525 per litre to SYP 2050 (by 290 per cent), and the litre of unsubsidized diesel fuel price increased from SYP 1700 to SYP 4100 (by 141 per cent).²⁷ In response, protests took place in Qamishli, Al-Hasakeh, and Ain Al-Arab, demanding a reversal of this latest increase because it caused a rise in bread, transportation, and food supply prices.²⁸

²⁶ Syria TV. (July 16, 2023). [New pricing.. "Self-Administration" stops supplying fuel stations](#)

²⁷ North Press. (September 19, 2023). [On what did the Autonomous Administration base its decision to raise fuel prices?](#)

²⁸ Syria TV. (September 18, 2023). [After raising diesel prices, protests against the Autonomous Administration](#) and Asharq Al-Awsat newspaper. (September 17, 2023). [After the Autonomous Administration raised the prices of diesel... popular protests in the countryside of the Syrian city of Al-Hasakeh.](#)

Transport prices rose in an unprecedented manner in GoS areas during August 2023, and the rise is due to several factors, the most important of which are:

- An issued decision to raise the price of a litre of subsidized premium gasoline (90 octanes), distributed via the electronic card, from SYP 3000 to SYP 8000 (by 167 per cent) for vehicles that deserve support²⁹ and from SYP 4600 for vehicles excluded from support to SYP 8000 (by 76 per cent), and to raise the premium gasoline price (octane 95) to SYP 13500 per litre.³⁰
- A decision was issued to double the fare for large tourist class buses (Pullmans). Thus, the fare per km became SYP 90 instead of SYP 45.³¹ These decisions led to a transportation crisis in all regions of GoS areas and an unprecedented price increase.

In the SIG and SSG areas, fuel prices remained liberalized and priced in US dollars or its equivalent in Turkish lira, as the imported European gasoline price stabilized at around USD 1279, and the European diesel price intended for cars was USD 1078 throughout the year 2023.



²⁹ After this increase, the price of a litre was raised twice until the end of 2023, the first on December 10, 2023, to become SYP 8500, and the second on December 25, to become SYP 9000, by the decisions of the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection No. 4086 and 4229 issued in the month of December. 2023.

³⁰ Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection. Resolution No. 2604 of August 15, 2023.

³¹ Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection. [Resolution No. 14283/10/3 dated August 8, 2023.](#)

3. Wages in Syria for the year 2023

In 2023, The average monthly salary stood at approximately SYP 370 thousand for a university-educated employee in the public sector at the start of their appointment. The wages in the private sector reached around SYP 524 thousand, while counted in the civil sector at SYP 1.5 million.

Upon comparing wage levels between areas of control in Syria, it is evident that wages in the SIG and the SSG areas are the highest, followed by wages in AA, and lastly, the wages in the GoS areas.³²

Table (5): Average monthly wages in Syria according to the control areas during the year 2023 (SYP)

| | GoS areas | | SIG and SSG areas | | AA areas | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|---------|-------------------|---------|----------|---------|
| | 2022 | 2023 | 2022 | 2022 | 2023 | 2023 |
| A- Public sector workers | | | | | | |
| Staff wages (professor) | 224232 | 391720 | 1738623 | 4717722 | 1037500 | 2122917 |
| Staff wages (university-educated) | 103838 | 138448 | 416547 | 1195528 | 295000 | 727500 |
| Staff wages (4th band) | 95346 | 127128 | 282921 | 841341 | 295000 | 713889 |
| B- Private sector workers | | | | | | |
| Company director salary | 633386 | 1190529 | 1682125 | 3489451 | 972222 | 1319000 |
| Shop worker salary | 215317 | 400177 | 543551 | 1196781 | 218333 | 566613 |
| Day workers' wages (per day) | 15774 | 27534 | 16964 | 36221 | 8931 | 22894 |
| C- Civil sector workers | | | | | | |
| Staff wages (university-educated) | 433348 | 775703 | 1738623 | 4169297 | 1042306 | 2872641 |

Source: SCPR. Monthly Survey of Consumer Prices in Syria 2022 and 2023.

The real wages³³ continued to decline in 2023 as inflation levels rose, completely unable to meet the minimum living requirements. Comparing wages in 2023 with wages in 2022 shows a decrease in the purchasing power of wages in the private sector by 17 per cent, in the public sector by 15 per cent, and in the civil sector by 13 per cent.

To keep pace with the continuing price increase, on August 16, 2023, the Syrian government issued two decrees requiring a 100 per cent increase in the lump sum wages for civilian and military workers and retirees, and the increase applied to wages for September.³⁴ The university employee's salary in government departments (the year the appointment began) rose to SYP 207667, and the monthly salary of an employee -who

³² Although the wages of civil sector workers in the GoS areas are relatively high compared to public and private sector wages, they are low compared to the rest. It equates to 25 per cent of the civil sector worker wage in the AA areas and 18 per cent in the SSG and SIG areas in the year 2023.

³³ Real wages were calculated by dividing nominal wages by the CPI index. For details, see ILO. (2010). [Global Wage Report 2010-2011: Wage Policies in Times of Crisis.](#)

³⁴ [Legislative Decree No. 11 of 2023 and Legislative Decree No. 12 of 2023.](#)

holds a basic education certificate (fourth category) rose to SYP 190692. The monthly salary of a university professor also increased from SYP 112116 to SYP 242232. The university professor received a full-time allowance of 100 per cent of the lump-sum salary before the decree. However, on August 24, 2023, a decree was issued raising the full-time allowance to 200 per cent of the lump-sum salary.³⁵ Hence, the University professor's salary reached SYP 726696 in September 2023 instead of SYP 224232 in the previous month (an increase of 224 per cent).

The AA also raised the worker's wages in its institutions twice during 2023. On March 28, 2023, the "Finance Commission" in the AA ratified an increase in the workers' wages in affiliated institutions by 100 per cent (applied in March), so the minimum wage became SYP 520 thousand rather than SYP 320.³⁶ At the end of August 2023, the Executive Council and the Financial Authority of the AA issued a circular requiring that workers' wages in the AA increase by 100 per cent (valid on August 2023 wages).³⁷

The SSG raised the salaries of workers in its departments by 25 per cent at the end of January 2023 and increased working days by adopting one day off per week, which is Friday. As for the SIG, it did not take any measures related to improving the situation of salaries and wages in its regions despite the decline in purchasing power.

Although there was an increase in wages in the GoS areas, the AA areas, and the SSG areas, the purchasing power of wages for employees in the public sector in the GoS areas decreased in 2023 by 30 per cent and in the AA areas by 7 per cent, which indicates that the increases Wages did not keep pace with the rise in prices during the year. The purchasing power of wages for public sector workers in the SIG and SSG areas increased by 1 per cent during 2023 due to its connection to the US dollar and the Turkish lira.

³⁵ [Legislative Decree No. 20 of 2023](#).

³⁶ Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria Executive Council / Finance Authority, Circular No. 83 dated 3/28/2023. Noting that this decision was applied to the wages of March 2023.

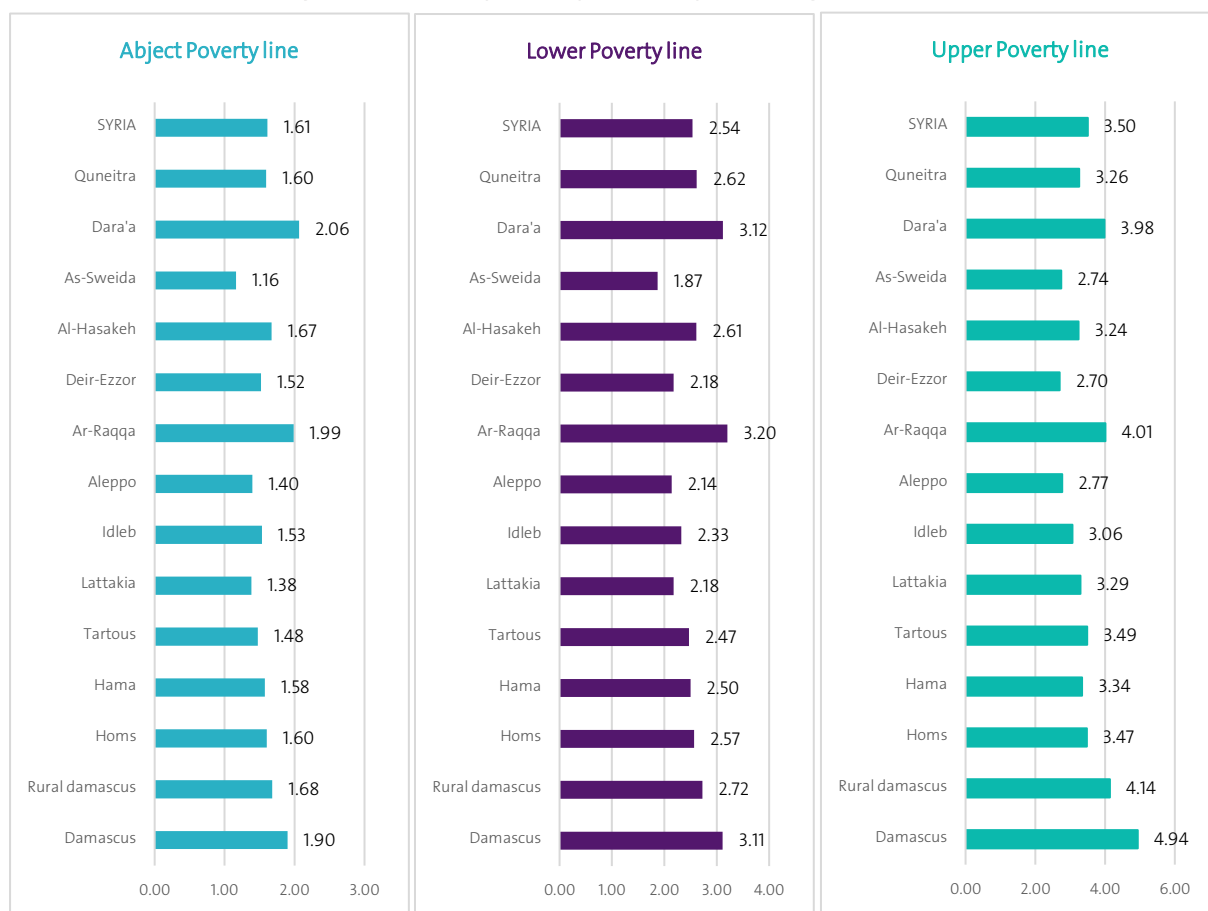
³⁷ The Autonomous Administration issued [Circular No. 27 dated 8/27/2023](#) amending the scale of salaries and wages in the AA areas by raising them by 100 percent, with implementation effective in the current month of August.

4. Poverty lines in Syria for the year 2023

Estimates of the SCPR indicate that the overall poverty rate will exceed 90 per cent in 2023. The average upper poverty line for a family will reach SYP 3.5 million per month during 2023, compared to SYP 1.6 million in 2022 and SYP 870 thousand in 2021. The governorates of Ar-Raqqa, Deir-Ezzor, Idleb, and Aleppo recorded the highest overall poverty rates. These governorates were suffering from widespread poverty before the conflict and became an arena of fighting and destruction during the conflict.

The SCPR estimates also indicate that more than 80 per cent of the population in Syria lives below the lower poverty line, meaning that 80 per cent of the population is unable to meet basic needs (food, education, and health). Ar-Raqqa, Deir-Ezzor, Idleb, Hama, and Homs governorates recorded the highest rates of extreme poverty. The estimated value of the lower poverty line for a family was SYP 2.54 million per month, compared to SYP 1.16 million in 2022 and SYP 630 thousand in 2021.

Figure (8): Monthly poverty lines in Syria during 2023 (SYP)



Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2023.

The abject poverty rate exceeded 50 per cent in 2023, meaning that half of Syria's population is unable to secure basic food needs, knowing that in 2010, the percentage of the population below the abject poverty line was only 1 per cent. The rate of extreme poverty raises fears of widespread malnutrition, as increases in food prices in different regions have limited access to sufficient food to meet the minimum internationally recommended calories. Deir-Ezzor, Idleb, Hama, and Homs governorates recorded the highest rates of abject poverty. The estimated value of the abject poverty line per family was SYP 1.61 million per month in 2023, compared to SYP 736 thousand in 2022 and SYP 400 thousand in 2021.

By comparing wages with monthly poverty lines, it becomes clear that the wage gap³⁸ above the abject poverty line in Syria during 2023 will reach about 77 per cent for a university employee in the public sector, 68 per cent for a worker in the private, and 6 per cent for an employee in the civil, knowing that The wages of civil sector workers in the SIG and SSG areas and the AA areas were 205 and 65 per cent higher than the abject poverty line, while wages in the civil sector in GoS areas were 51 per cent lower than the abject poverty line.

Table (6): Monthly wage gap from poverty lines in Syria during December 2023 (in percentages)

| | GoS areas | SIG and SSG areas | AA areas | Syria |
|--|-----------|-------------------|----------|----------------|
| A- Wage gap from the abject poverty line | | | | |
| University-educated employees in the public sector | -91.2% | -12.5% | -58.1% | -77.1% |
| Private sector worker | -74.7% | -12.4% | -67.4% | -67.5% |
| Civil sector worker | -50.9% | +205.3% | +65.4% | -6.1% |
| B- Wage gap from the lower poverty line | | | | |
| University-educated employees in the public sector | -94.5% | -42.5% | -72.7% | -85.4% |
| Private sector worker | -84.0% | -42.5% | -78.7% | -79.4% |
| Civil sector worker | -69.0% | +100.4% | +7.9% | -40.3% |
| C- Wage gap from the upper poverty line | | | | |
| University-educated employees in the public sector | -96.0% | -56.0% | -78.1% | -89.4% |
| Private sector worker | -88.43% | -55.98% | -82.92% | -85.04% |
| Civil sector worker | -77.6% | +53.3% | -13.4% | -56.8% |

Note: Negative (-) indicates a gap and positive (+) indicates excess.

Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research 2023, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria.

³⁸ Equals the relative difference between the monthly wage and the poverty line. ILO. For details, see [International Labour Organization. \(2013\). Equal Pay – an introductory guide.](#) Geneva.

The wage gap above the upper poverty line reached 89 per cent for a university employee in the public sector, 85 per cent for a worker in the private sector, and 57 per cent for an employee in the civil sector. In the three cases, the wage gap was highest in the GoS areas, followed by the AA areas, then the SIG and SSG areas. The widening of the wage gap reflects great risks resulting from the poverty of a large segment of Syrians and their increasing level of deprivation as their wage level is far from the poverty line.



Appendix

Appendix (1): Consumer Price Index in Syria by Major Consumption Groups and Months in 2023, (2021 = 100)

| Group / Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | 2023 |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------|
| All commodities | 261 | 275 | 286 | 297 | 313 | 326 | 393 | 479 | 511 | 531 | 544 | 582 | 400 |
| Food and non-alcoholic beverages | 252 | 273 | 289 | 299 | 312 | 321 | 400 | 494 | 530 | 546 | 552 | 586 | 404 |
| Tobacco | 248 | 269 | 284 | 294 | 303 | 312 | 386 | 479 | 516 | 534 | 540 | 575 | 395 |
| Clothing and footwear | 239 | 249 | 261 | 269 | 279 | 286 | 354 | 431 | 457 | 453 | 452 | 460 | 349 |
| Housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels | 239 | 275 | 322 | 354 | 339 | 359 | 398 | 513 | 549 | 576 | 619 | 663 | 434 |
| Household equipment and maintenance | 246 | 265 | 283 | 292 | 306 | 323 | 369 | 451 | 470 | 492 | 516 | 529 | 379 |
| Health | 278 | 292 | 298 | 308 | 315 | 344 | 390 | 497 | 560 | 612 | 632 | 668 | 433 |
| Transportation | 231 | 238 | 245 | 252 | 266 | 271 | 377 | 473 | 494 | 484 | 505 | 527 | 363 |
| Communications | 227 | 245 | 256 | 275 | 305 | 321 | 419 | 509 | 530 | 533 | 498 | 515 | 386 |
| Culture and entertainment | 271 | 328 | 351 | 330 | 296 | 272 | 304 | 386 | 452 | 520 | 515 | 648 | 389 |
| Education | 275 | 286 | 296 | 312 | 359 | 365 | 488 | 590 | 632 | 636 | 650 | 659 | 462 |
| Various goods and services | 240 | 277 | 285 | 296 | 300 | 317 | 354 | 391 | 447 | 493 | 489 | 496 | 365 |

Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research 2023, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria.

Appendix (2): Consumer Price Index in Syria governorate in 2023, (2021 = 100)

| Governorate / Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | 2023 |
|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Damascus | 307 | 319 | 326 | 333 | 346 | 351 | 398 | 483 | 548 | 607 | 635 | 749 | 450 |
| Rural Damascus | 252 | 265 | 272 | 289 | 305 | 311 | 386 | 478 | 509 | 543 | 552 | 592 | 396 |
| Homs | 252 | 268 | 281 | 290 | 298 | 309 | 410 | 490 | 527 | 538 | 552 | 591 | 400 |
| Hama | 258 | 272 | 282 | 288 | 305 | 319 | 385 | 481 | 505 | 535 | 546 | 576 | 396 |
| Tartous | 245 | 261 | 279 | 297 | 317 | 335 | 415 | 523 | 561 | 576 | 604 | 643 | 421 |
| Lattakia | 262 | 281 | 299 | 309 | 328 | 335 | 389 | 486 | 530 | 554 | 559 | 588 | 410 |
| Idleb | 233 | 243 | 250 | 257 | 263 | 293 | 318 | 334 | 347 | 370 | 383 | 394 | 307 |
| Aleppo | 248 | 262 | 272 | 281 | 310 | 338 | 383 | 451 | 469 | 480 | 493 | 518 | 375 |
| Ar-Raqqa | 258 | 274 | 295 | 307 | 326 | 337 | 439 | 508 | 551 | 563 | 576 | 616 | 421 |
| Deir-Ezzor | 233 | 244 | 257 | 265 | 294 | 294 | 368 | 428 | 466 | 481 | 489 | 519 | 361 |
| Al-Hasakeh | 267 | 283 | 303 | 316 | 338 | 349 | 449 | 521 | 571 | 581 | 603 | 632 | 435 |
| As-Sweida | 255 | 267 | 274 | 286 | 307 | 317 | 382 | 502 | 540 | 559 | 566 | 582 | 403 |
| Dara'a | 265 | 274 | 284 | 296 | 323 | 331 | 404 | 520 | 572 | 592 | 610 | 646 | 426 |
| Quneitra | 265 | 275 | 283 | 292 | 306 | 323 | 374 | 493 | 550 | 560 | 573 | 614 | 409 |
| SYRIA | 261 | 275 | 286 | 297 | 313 | 326 | 393 | 479 | 511 | 531 | 544 | 582 | 400 |

Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research 2023, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria.

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