



Monthly Bulletin for Consumer Price Index and Inflation in Syria

Issue (4) – April 2023



Preface

The bulletin provides an independent assessment of consumer prices and the rate of inflation 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 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 **April 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 local level in all Syrian regions.

Contents

Preface	1
Contents	2
List of Tables	3
Table of Figures	3
Acronyms and Abbreviations	4
1. Inflation in Syria, April 2023	5
2. Inflation by Governorate	6
3. Contributors to Inflation.....	8
4. Wages in Syria, April 2023	10
Appendix	13

List of Tables

Table (1): Monthly consumer price inflation in Syria for April 2023 by consumption group (base year 2021 =100).....	5
Table (2): Average monthly wages in Syria during April 2023.....	10
Table (3): Monthly wage gap from poverty lines in Syria during April 2023	12

Table of Figures

Figure (1): Monthly inflation (M-o-M) of consumer prices in Syria during April 2023.....	6
Figure (2): Change in the exchange rate of the SYP and the TL against the USD during April 2023.....	7
Figure (3): Contribution of major consumption groups to the monthly inflation rate (M-o-M) for April 2023	8
Figure (4): Contribution of major consumption groups to the monthly inflation rate (M-o-M) for April 2023 by areas of control	9
Figure (5): Monthly poverty lines in Syria during April 2023	11

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AA	Autonomous Administration
CPI	Consumer Price Index
GoS	Government of Syria
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

1. Inflation in Syria, April 2023

In April 2023, the general price index exhibited an annual inflation (Y-o-Y) of 76.7 per cent and a monthly inflation (M-o-M) of 3.6 per cent.

The Entertainment & Culture group marked the highest monthly inflation rate at 7.4 per cent in April 2023. Notably, the price of a Smart TV (32-inch screen) rose to SYP 1.3 million, and a laptop tailored for an engineering student reached approximately SYP 6 million. The Clothes & Shoes group also experienced significant monthly inflation, recording a rate of 7.1 per cent in April 2023, and with the advent of the Eid al-Fitr holiday. Prices surged, with a locally-made pair of jeans averaging SYP 80 thousand, and imported ones costing around SYP 127 thousand. Cotton scarves were priced at about SYP 20 thousand, and children's clothes reached up to SYP 50 thousand. Sneakers were priced at SYP 190 thousand. Additionally, the Household Equipment & Supplies, and Ordinary Maintenance Works group saw a considerable monthly inflation of 6.8 per cent in April 2023. For instance, the average price of a gas stove 4 burner increased to SYP 1.64 million, and an automatic washing machine (7 kg and 1200 rpm) rose to SYP 4.1 million.

Table (1): Monthly consumer price inflation in Syria for April 2023 by consumption group (base year 2021 =100) and (inflation in percentages)

#	Group	March 2023 index	April 2023 index	Monthly Inflation (M-o-M)
	All commodities	286.4	296.7	3.6%
1	Food & non-alcoholic beverages	288.6	299.4	3.7%
2	Tobacco	243.9	253.6	4.0%
3	Clothes & shoes	278.5	298.3	7.1%
4	Housing, water, electricity, and gas	313.5	321.7	2.6%
5	Household equipment, supplies & maintenance	288.8	308.4	6.8%
6	Health	278.6	288.1	3.4%
7	Transportation	288.4	294.6	2.2%
8	Communications	194.3	198.3	5.0%
9	Entertainment & culture	274.2	294.5	7.4%
10	Education	250.0	261.1	4.5%
11+12	Various commodities & services	276.5	292.9	5.9%

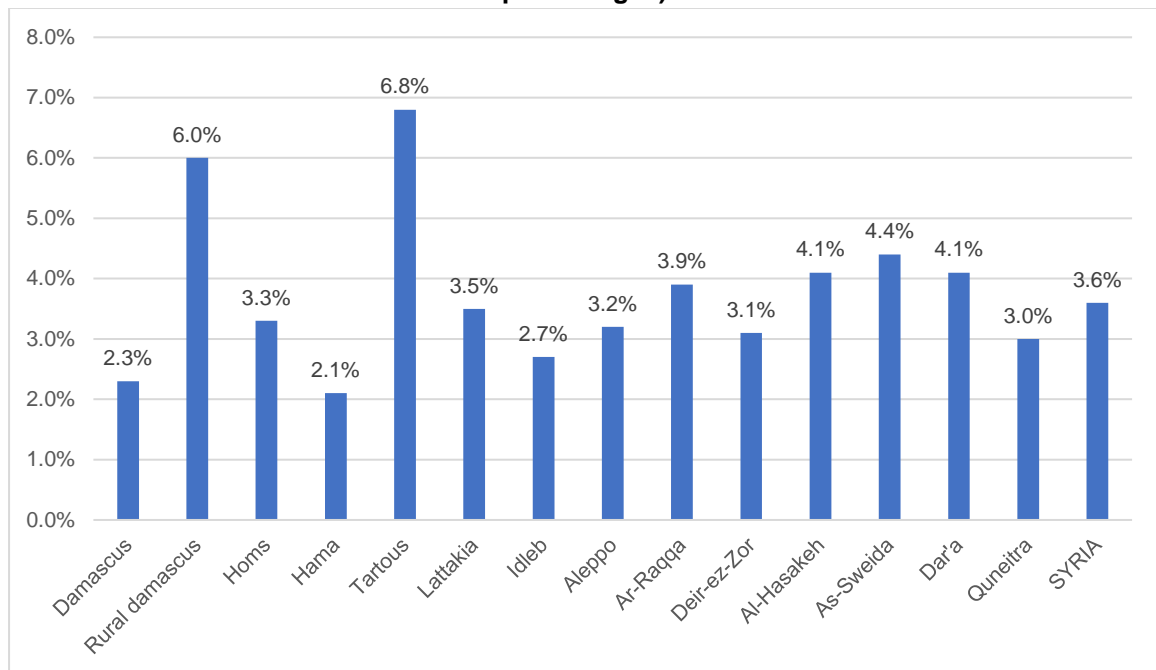
Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2023.

2. Inflation by Governorate

In April 2023, the governorates of Tartous and Rural Damascus marked the highest monthly inflation rates, standing at 6.8 per cent and 6 per cent, respectively. While, the governorates of Hama, Damascus, Idleb, Quneitra, Deir-ez-Zor, and Aleppo recorded the lowest inflation rates ranging between 2.1 and 3.2 per cent.

Autonomous Administration (AA) areas led in monthly inflation (M-o-M) across all commodities and services in April, recording a rate of 4 per cent. Following closely, the Syrian Interim Government (SIG) and the Syrian Salvation Government (SSG) areas registered a 3.8 per cent inflation, while the Government of Syria (GoS) areas experienced a 3.5 per cent increase.

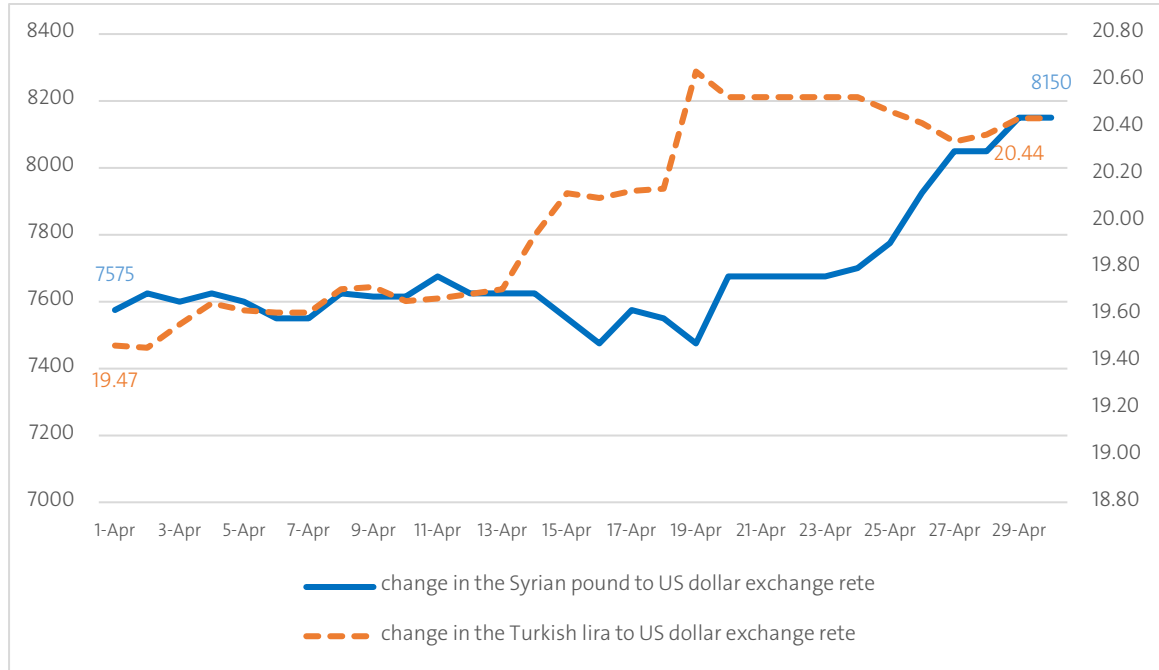
Figure (1): Monthly inflation (M-o-M) of consumer prices in Syria during April 2023 (in percentages)



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

During this period, there was a concurrent decrease in the exchange rates of the SYP and the Turkish Lira (TL) against the USD, each experiencing a 3 per cent and 4 per cent decline, respectively. By end of April 2023, the TL was quoted at 20.44, in contrast to 19.47 in the beginning of the month. Simultaneously, the SYP's value against the USD increased from 7575 to 8150 during the same period.

Figure (2): Change in the exchange rate of the SYP and the TL against the USD during April 2023

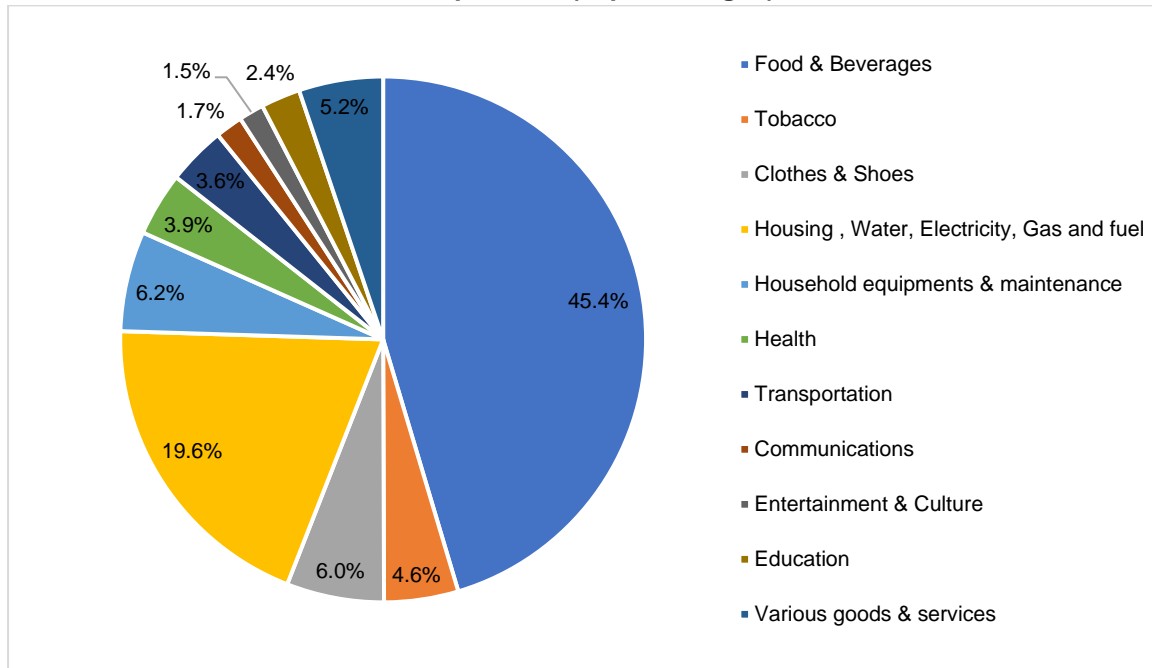


Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2023.

3. Contributors to Inflation

April 2023 saw the Food & non-Alcoholic Beverages group taking the lead¹ in contributing to the monthly inflation (M-o-M) with 3.6 per cent, making up 45.4 per cent of the total. Subsequently, Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas, and other fuel oils followed with a contribution of 19.6 per cent, trailed by the Household Equipment & Supplies, and Ordinary Maintenance Works group at 6.2 per cent, and the Clothes & Shoes group at 6 per cent.

Figure (3): Contribution of major consumption groups to the monthly inflation rate (M-o-M) for April 2023 (in percentages)



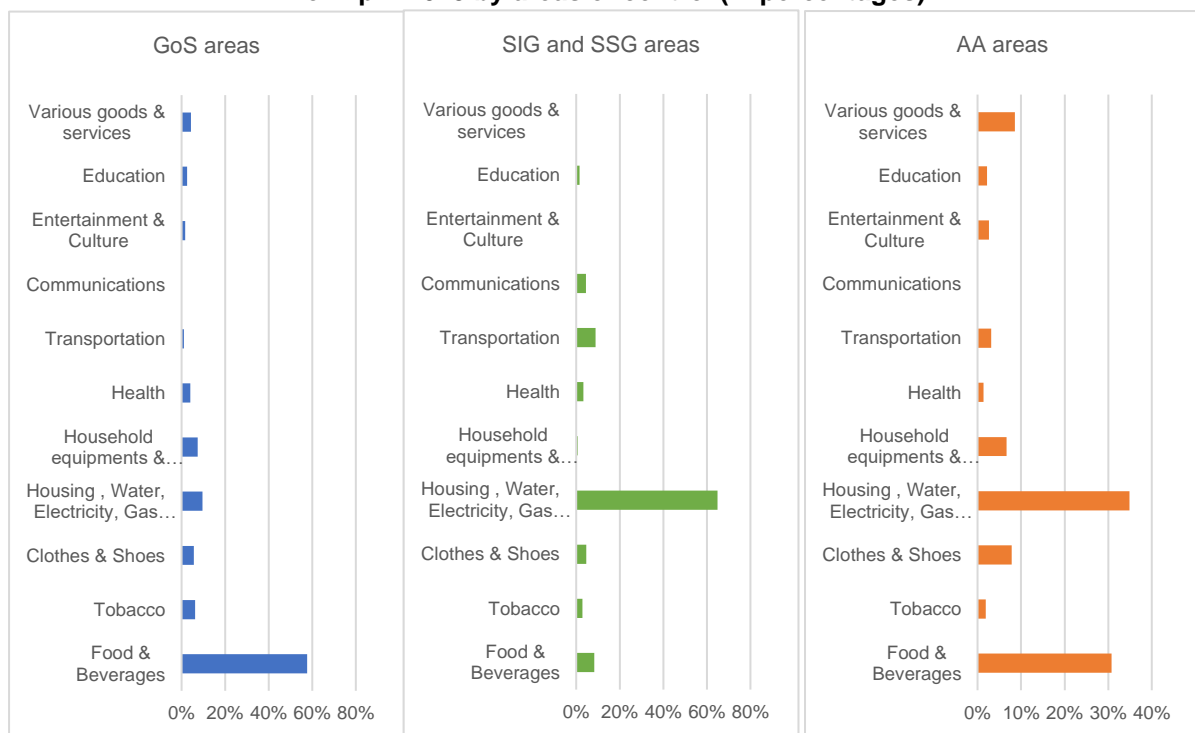
Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2023.

¹ The contribution rate to inflation means the percentage of the contribution of each consumption group to annual inflation, out of 100%.

The Food & non-Alcoholic Beverages Group played a major role in driving the monthly inflation of the GoS areas in April 2023, contributing a substantial 57.6 per cent. It also had a significant impact on the monthly inflation of AA areas, contributing 30.7 per cent, and on the SIG and the SSG areas, contributing 8.3 per cent.

The Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas, and other fuel oils group played a dominant role in driving the monthly inflation of the SIG and the SSG areas in April 2023, contributing a significant 65 per cent. This was attributed to the sustained surge in housing demand and the rising costs of building materials, two months after the earthquake that struck areas of northern Syria in February 2023. The group also contributed 35 per cent to the monthly inflation of AA areas, while its impact was relatively weaker in the GoS areas, where its contribution reached 9.6 per cent.

Figure (4): Contribution of major consumption groups to the monthly inflation rate (M-o-M) for April 2023 by areas of control (in percentages)



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

4. Wages in Syria, April 2023

In April 2023, the average monthly wage in Syria stood at approximately SYP 277 thousand for a university-educated employee in the public sector, at the start of their appointment. For a worker in the private sector, the average wage reached around SYP 386 thousand, while a worker in the civil society sector received an average monthly wage of SYP 1.2 million.

When examining wage levels across areas of control in Syria, it's evident that the wages in both the public and private sectors are highest in the SIG and the SSG areas, followed by wages in AA areas, and finally, wages in the GoS areas. Furthermore, workers in the civil society sector enjoy significantly higher wages in all regions compared to their counterparts in the public and private sectors. Civil society sector wages are approximately three times higher than private sector wages and four times higher than public sector wages on a national level in Syria.²

Table (2): Average monthly wages in Syria during April 2023 (SYP)

	GoS areas	SIG and SSG areas	AA areas	Whole of Syria
A- Public sector workers				
Staff wages (professor)	224,232	3,573,561	1,545,000	836,187
Staff wages (university educated)	103,838	945,681	530,000	277,409
Staff wages (4th band)	95,346	673,507	520,000	236,664
B- Private sector workers				
Company director salary	983,950	2,593,247	1,016,667	1,169,983
Shop worker salary	324,221	926,419	280,000	386,001
C- Civil society workers				
Staff wages (university educated)	672,944	3,090,648	2,148,556	1,196,120

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

Monthly inflation had a significant impact in April 2023, leading to a decline in the real wages of public sector workers³ across Syria by 2.7 per cent compared to March 2023. The purchasing power of public sector workers saw a decrease of 3.4 per cent in the GoS areas, 2.3 per cent in the SIG and the SSG areas, and 3.8 per cent in AA areas. Conversely, the purchasing power of workers in the private sector and the civil society sector increased at the national level by 0.7 per cent and 5.8 per cent, respectively. However, day laborers experienced a 1.5 per cent decrease in their purchasing power during April 2023 compared to March 2023.

During April 2023, the purchasing power of wages for workers in the public sector, private sector, and civil society sector decreased by 30.4 per cent, 27.4 per cent, and 17.7 per cent, respectively, in comparison to the purchasing power observed in 2021. This ongoing decline in wages underscores the decline in living standards, as citizens find themselves able to afford fewer commodities with their April 2023 wages than they could with their 2021 wages.

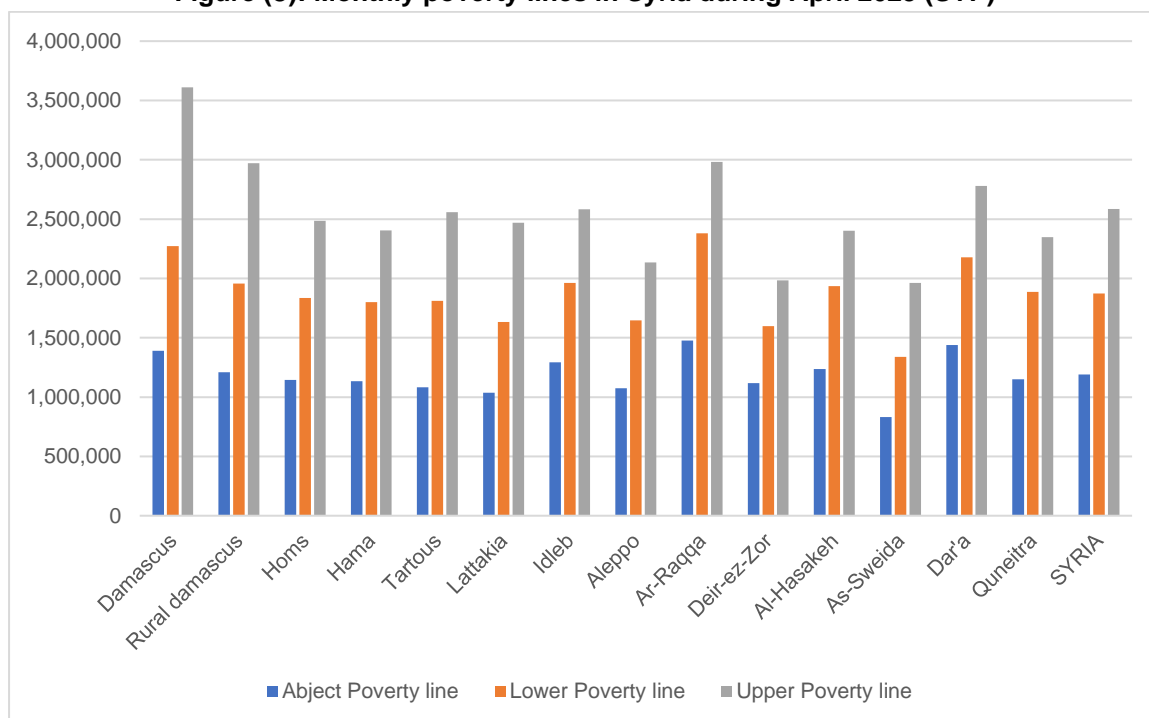
² There is a considerable gap in civil society sector wages among control areas, with civil society workers in the SIG and the SSG areas earning roughly 1.4 times more than those in AA areas, and 4.6 times more than their counterparts in the GoS areas.

³ 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*.

5. Poverty Lines in Syria, April 2023

In April 2023, the abject poverty line for families,⁴ serving as an indicator of food insecurity, rose to SYP 1.19 million per month, marking an increase of SYP 41 thousand from March 2023. The lower poverty line increased by SYP 64 thousand from the previous month to reach 1.87 million, while the upper poverty line saw an SYP 88 thousand increase, reaching 2.59 million. The highest values for poverty lines were recorded in the governorates of Ar-Raqqa, Damascus, Dar'a, and Idleb, while As-Suwayda saw the lowest poverty lines in April 2023.

Figure (5): Monthly poverty lines in Syria during April 2023 (SYP)



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

When comparing control areas, AA areas ranked highest in poverty lines in April 2023, where the abject poverty line reached SYP 1.28 million, and the upper poverty line reached SYP 2.44 million. Following were the areas of the GoS, with an abject poverty line of SYP 1.15 million and an upper poverty line exceeding SYP 2.5 million per month. Lastly, the SIG and the SSG areas had an abject poverty line of SYP 1.15 million and an upper poverty line above SYP 2.28 million.

A comparison between nominal wages and monthly poverty lines revealed an increased wage gap⁵ from the abject poverty line at the Syria level in April 2023. It reached about 76.7 per cent for a university-educated employee in the public sector, 67.6 per cent for a private sector worker, and 0.5 per cent for a civil society sector worker. Notably, wages of civil society sector workers in the SIG and the SSG areas, along with AA areas, surpassed the abject poverty line by 170 per cent and 69 per cent, respectively, whereas wages in the civil society sector in the GoS areas were 41 per cent lower than the abject poverty line. The wage gap from the upper poverty line was 89 per cent for a university-educated

⁴ The poverty lines (abject, lower and upper) were calculated by measuring the impact of inflation on the 2009 poverty lines.

⁵ 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.

employee in the public sector, 55 per cent for a worker in the private sector, and 54 per cent for a worker in the civil society sector, highlighting the elevated poverty levels, especially among public sector workers.

Table (3): Monthly wage gap from poverty lines in Syria during April 2023 (in percentages)

	GoS areas	SIG and SSG areas	AA areas	Whole of Syria
A- Wage gap from the abject poverty line				
University-educated employee in the public sector	-91.0	-17.5	-58.5	-76.7
Private sector worker	-71.8	-19.2	-78.1	-67.6
Civil society worker	-41.4	+169.6	+68.5	+0.5
B- Wage gap from the lower poverty line				
University-educated employee in the public sector	-94.3	-45.9	-72.9	-85.2
Private sector worker	-82.1	-47.0	-85.7	-79.4
Civil society worker	-62.9	+77.0	+9.9	-36.1
C- Wage gap from the upper poverty line				
University-educated employee in the public sector	-95.9	-58.6	-78.2	-89.3
Private sector worker	-60.8	+13.6	-58.3	-54.8
Civil society worker	-73.2	+35.4	-11.8	-53.7

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

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

Appendix

Appendix (1): Consumer Price Index in Syria by Major consumption groups in April 2023, (2021 = 100)

	Damascus	Rural Damascus	Homs	Hama	Tartous	Lattakia	Idleb	Aleppo	Ar-Raqqa	Deir-ez-Zor	Al-Hasakeh	As-Sweida	Dar'a	Quneitra	SYRIA
All commodities	333	289	290	288	297	309	257	281	307	266	316	286	295	292	297
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	305	303	308	297	313	316	270	309	280	277	346	297	305	308	299
Tobacco	244	262	241	231	269	264	223	238	211	280	299	267	278	262	254
Clothing and footwear	271	279	272	313	353	354	296	304	454	310	308	362	240	239	298
Housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels	409	281	281	282	293	338	257	269	443	232	296	267	289	273	322
Household equipment and maintenance	373	320	329	347	343	339	207	239	298	295	436	290	342	297	308
Health	271	326	277	257	259	328	232	322	309	295	262	310	375	293	288
Transportation	308	289	327	338	262	297	288	299	229	263	377	296	275	293	295
Communications	180	182	180	179	182	182	226	205	190	184	192	174	176	173	198
Culture and entertainment	260	350	310	286	356	291	248	292	306	290	397	273	290	244	295
Education	273	245	254	202	306	252	245	266	357	211	258	267	250	213	261
Various goods and services	259	332	277	308	333	294	230	291	241	267	294	303	292	427	293

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



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