



Monthly Bulletin for Consumer Price Index and Inflation in Syria

Issue (2) – February 2024



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 **February 2024** (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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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AA	Autonomous Administration
CPI	Consumer Price Index
GoS	Government of the Syria regime
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, February 2024

In February 2024, the general CPI achieved an annual inflation (Y-o-Y) of 128.6 per cent and monthly inflation (M-o-M) of 2.7 per cent. The Transportation group recorded the highest monthly inflation rate in February 2024 at 8.1 per cent, with gasoline prices rising in the GoS areas, as the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection raised the official price of a liter of subsidized gasoline to SYP 11000 instead of SYP 10000 in the previous month.¹ The gasoline prices rose on the black market to reach SYP 17000 per liter in light of the shortage of subsidized gasoline and the increase in demand for gasoline from the black market.

Table (1): Monthly consumer price inflation in Syria for February 2024 by consumption group (base year 2021 =100) and (inflation in percentages)

#	Group	CPI in January 2024	CPI in February 2024	Monthly Inflation (M-o-M)
	All commodities	603.8	620.5	2.7%
1	Food and non-alcoholic beverages	607.8	619.3	1.8%
2	Tobacco	454.6	459.6	1.1%
3	Clothes and shoes	695.5	711.8	2.3%
4	Housing, water, electricity, and other fuel oils	658.2	681.5	3.5%
5	Household equipment, supplies, and maintenance	615.6	635.2	3.2%
6	Health	667.9	691.5	3.5%
7	Transportation	675.9	730.8	8.1%
8	Communications	243.6	231.9	-4.8%
9	Entertainment and culture	603.4	611.6	1.4%
10	Education	521.0	530.1	1.8%
11+12	Various commodities and services	576.4	593.8	3.0%

Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2024.

The Health group recorded a monthly inflation of 3.5 per cent during February 2024, with the increase in the medical services prices. The average fee for a general practitioner's examination rose to SYP 35000 within Syria, the fee for a specialist doctor's examination (cardiology) rose to SYP 55000, and the fee for a dentist's examination (nerve extraction without crowning) rose to SYP 315000.

The Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels group recorded monthly inflation of 3.5 per cent with the rise in the prices of drinking water distributed via tankers resulting from the rising in fuel prices and transportation costs, with the average price of a cubic meter of water (5 barrels) reaching SYP 37500, the price of unsubsidized diesel rose to SYP 12000, and the prices of a cylinder of local gas rose on the black market to SYP 263000 within Syria.

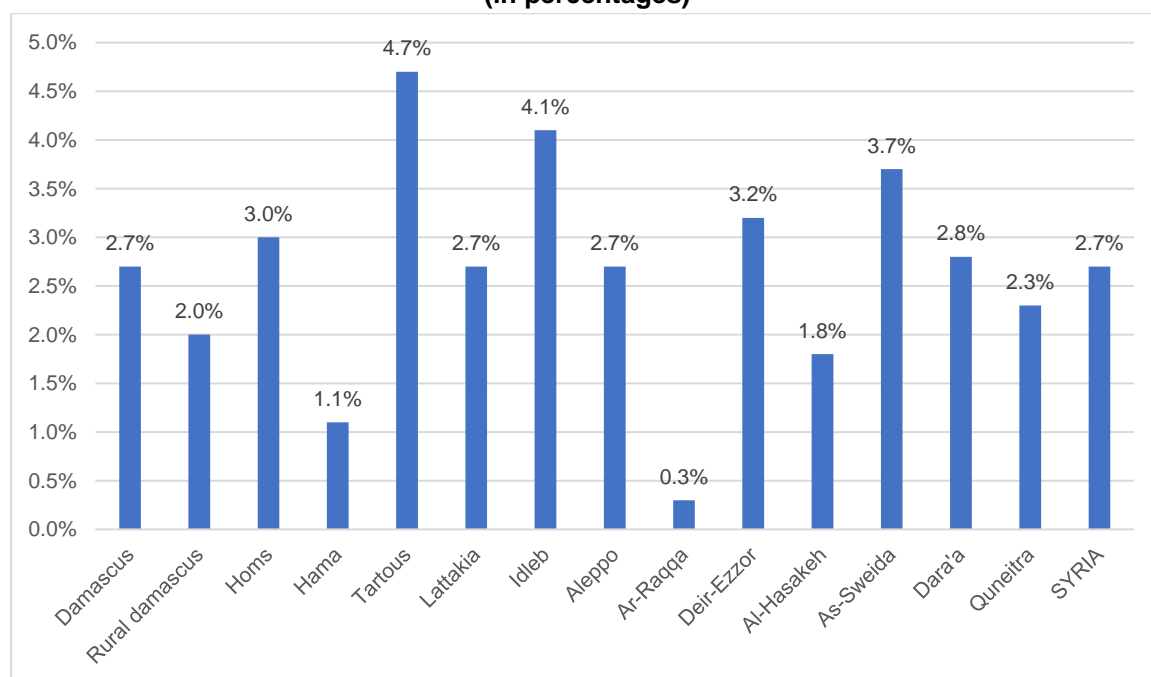
¹ North Press. (2024, 19 February). [The government has raised the prices of gasoline and diesel for the third time since the beginning of the year.](#) (in Arabic)

2. Inflation by Governorate

Tartous Governorate recorded the highest monthly inflation rate (M-o-M) in February 2024 at 4.7 per cent, followed by Idleb at 4.1 per cent, while Ar-Raqqa recorded the lowest monthly inflation rate at 0.3 per cent, as most goods and services maintained stable prices, except for the Food and non-alcoholic beverages group, whose prices decreased during February 2024, and the Transportation group, whose prices increased compared to January 2024.

The GoS areas recorded the highest monthly inflation rate (M-o-M) for all goods and services during February 2024 at 3.3 per cent, followed by the SIG & SSG areas at 2.8 per cent, then the AA areas at 1.4 per cent.

Figure (1): Monthly inflation (M-o-M) of consumer prices in Syria during February 2024 (in percentages)



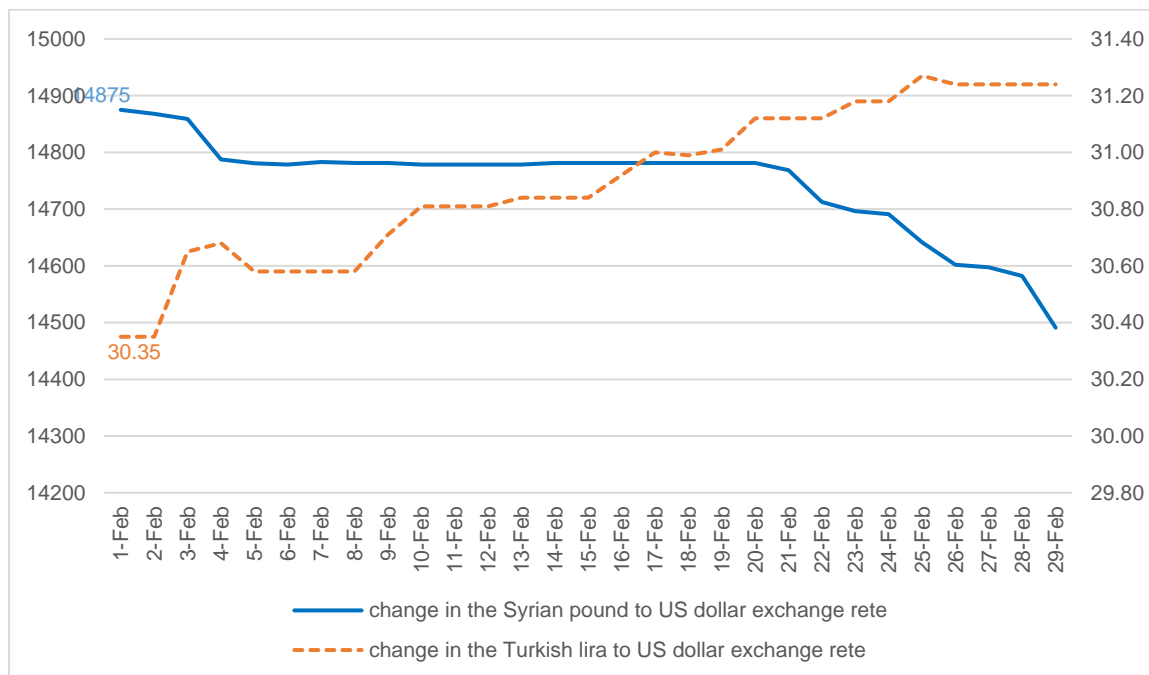
Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2024.

3. Exchange rate

There was an improvement in the value of the Syrian pound against the US dollar by 0.4 per cent on February 2024 compared to the previous month, as the monthly average exchange rate of the Syrian pound against the US dollar reached SYP 14747 in February 2024 compared to SYP 14806 in January 2024. The exchange rate of Syrian pound closed at SYP 14491 per USD at the end of February 2024.

On the other hand, the Turkish lira witnessed a decline in its value in the Northwestern regions of Syria by 2.5 per cent during February 2024 compared to the previous month, as the average exchange rate of the Turkish lira against the US dollar reached TL 30.89 per USD in February 2024 after it was around TL 30.15 in January 2024. The exchange reate of Turkish lira closed at TL 31.24 per USD at the end of February 2024.

Figure (2): Changes in the exchange rate of the SYP in the unofficial market and the exchange rate of the TL against the USD during February 2024



Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2024.

The Central Bank of Syria (CBS) fixed the Money transfers and cash foreign exchange bulletin rate throughout the days of February 2024 at SYP 13200 per USD, the CBS raised the rate to SYP 13500 on the last day of the month (February 29), while the Official market foreign exchange bulletin remained fixed at SYP 12562 per USD throughout the days of the month.²

There is a noticeable discrepancy in the exchange rate of the Syrian pound against the US dollar in the black market between the control areas in Syria, as the value of the Syrian pound against the USD decreases in the AA areas and the SIG & SSG areas compared to the GoS areas. This is due to government pressure on dealing with USD in the black market, tightening sanctions, and restricting imports in the GoS areas. The average exchange rate of the Syrian pound against the US dollar reached SYP 14631 per USD in the GOS areas during February 2024, while it reached SYP 15048 and SYP 15018 per USD in the AA areas and the SIG & SSG areas.

² The Central Bank of Syria. [Exchange rate bulletin](#).

Figure (3): Comparison of changes in the exchange rate of the SYP against the USD in the black market between control areas during February 2024

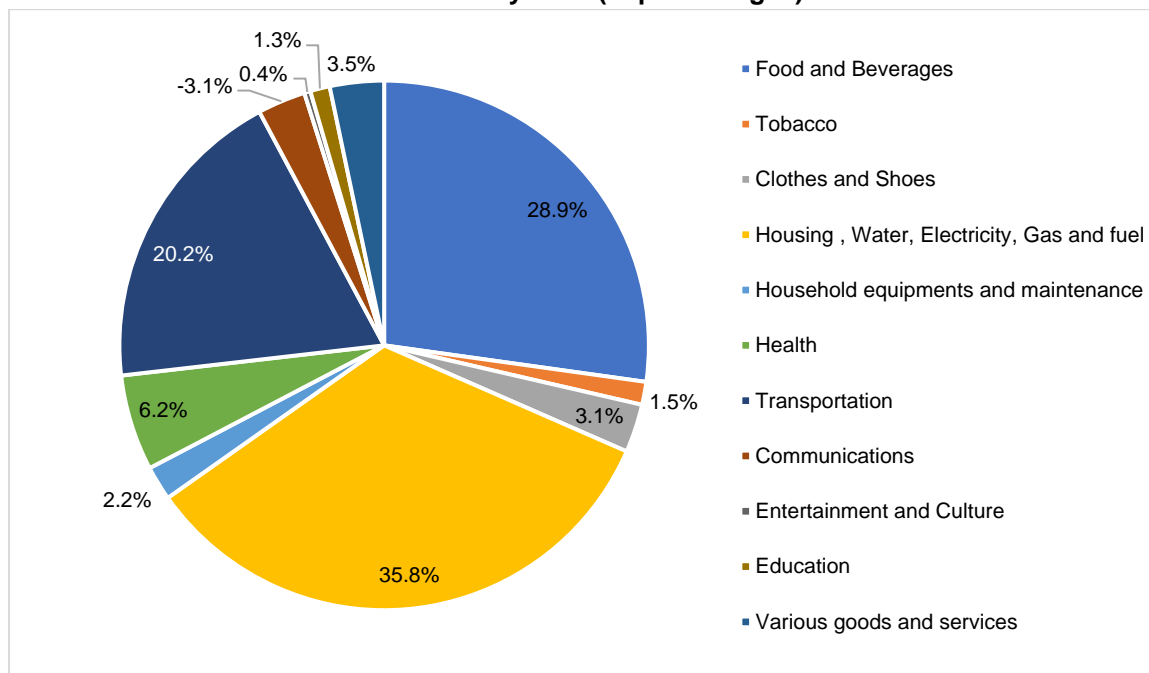


Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2024.

4. Contributors to Inflation

In February 2024, the Housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuel oils group³ contributed significantly to the monthly inflation (M-o-M) with 2.7 per cent, making up 35.8 per cent of the total, followed by the group of Food and non-alcoholic beverages with a contribution of 28.9 per cent, trailed by the Transportation group at 20.2 per cent.

Figure (4): Contribution of major consumption groups to the monthly inflation rate (M-o-M) for February 2024 (in percentages)



Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2024.

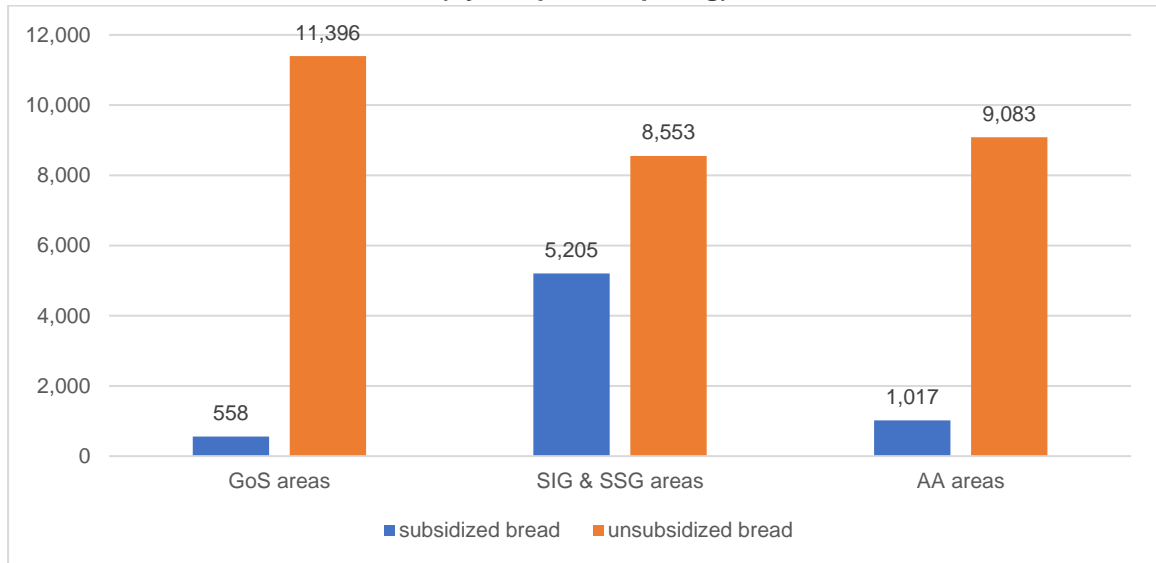
The Food and non-alcoholic Beverages group made the largest contribution to the monthly inflation in the SIG & SSG areas and the AA areas during February 2024, at 60 per cent and 40 per cent for each, respectively, and contributed by 32 per cent to monthly inflation in the GoS areas. The rise in the prices of a group of food commodities played a role in increasing the group's contribution to the monthly inflation. This group includes garlic, onions, eggplant, cucumbers, red and white meat, citrus fruits, and bread.

It is worth noting that the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection raised the prices of subsidized bread by 100 per cent during February 2024, bringing the price of the kilogram to SYP 400 instead of SYP 200 in previous months.⁴ The bread agent's wages (which reaches SYP 350 in some governorates) are added to the price of bread in the GoS areas. The prices of subsidized bread in the GoS areas are lower than in the rest of the control areas, as they average around SYP 558 (including the agent's wages), while they reach SYP 1017 in the AA areas, and more than SYP 5200 in the SIG & SSG areas. On the contrary, the prices of white bread (unsubsidized) are higher in GoS areas compared to other areas.

³ The contribution rate to inflation means the percentage of the contribution of each consumption group to annual inflation out of 100%.

⁴ SANA. (2024, 5 February). Internal trade: [400 liras is the selling price of a 1100-gram of bread](#). (in Arabic)

Figure (5): The price of subsidized and unsubsidized bread by control areas (Syrian pounds per kg)

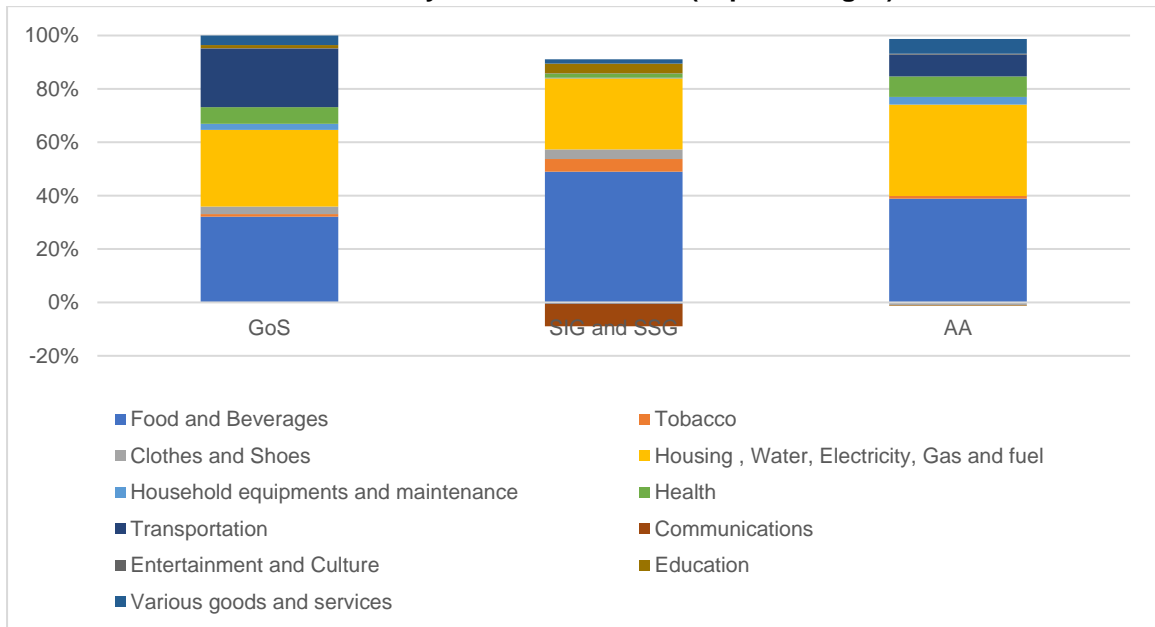


Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2024.

The housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels group contributed by 35 per cent of monthly inflation for the AA areas, and by 32 per cent of monthly inflation for the SIG & SSG, and 29 per cent of monthly inflation for the GoS areas.

The Transportation group contributed by 22 per cent of the monthly inflation in the GoS areas, with the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection raising the price of a liter of subsidized gasoline from SYP 10000 to SYP 11000 in February 2024.⁵

Figure (6): Contribution of major consumption groups to the monthly inflation rate (M-o-M) for February 2024 control areas (in percentages)



**Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2024.

⁵ North Press. (2024, 19 February). [The government has raised gasoline and diesel prices for the third time since the beginning of the year.](#) (in Arabic)

5. Wages in Syria, February 2024

In February 2024, the wages at current prices increased slightly within Syria. The average monthly salary stood at approximately SYP 589 thousand for a university-educated employee newly appointed in the public sector. The wages in the private sector reached around SYP 877 thousand, while counted in the civil sector at SYP 2.4 million.

Upon comparing wage levels between control areas in Syria, it is evident that wages in both the public and private sectors in the SIG & SSG areas are the highest, followed by wages in AA areas. And lastly comes the wages in GoS areas. Furthermore, the wages of the public and private sectors were lower than in the civil sector, as wages in the private and public sectors were approximately 36 and 24 per cent in the civil one within Syria.⁶

Table (2): Average monthly wages in Syria during February 2024 (SYP)

	GoS areas	SIG & SSG areas	AA areas	Whole of Syria
A- Public sector workers				
Staff wages (professor)	726696	7143313	3090000	1870685
Staff wages (university-educated)	207667	2109358	1060000	588956
Staff wages (4th band)	190692	1305170	1040000	474447
B- Private sector workers				
Company director salary	2226515	5193383	2775000	2717242
Shop worker salary	723387	1746845	951431	877160
C- Civil sector workers				
Staff wages (university-educated)	1365996	6506208	4317882	2430840

Note: Employees' wages in the SSG areas are denominated in USD dollars or their equivalent in Turkish lira, and those in the SIG areas are paid in Turkish lira. The wage values in this table have been converted to the Syrian pound for comparison with other areas.

Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2024.

The inflation that occurred in February 2024 led to a decrease in the real wages⁷ of workers in the public sector in the GoS areas by 3.2 per cent compared to January 2024. Inflation also led to a decrease in the real wages of employees in the institutions of self-administration by 1.4 per cent, and in the SIG & SSG areas by 0.7 per cent.

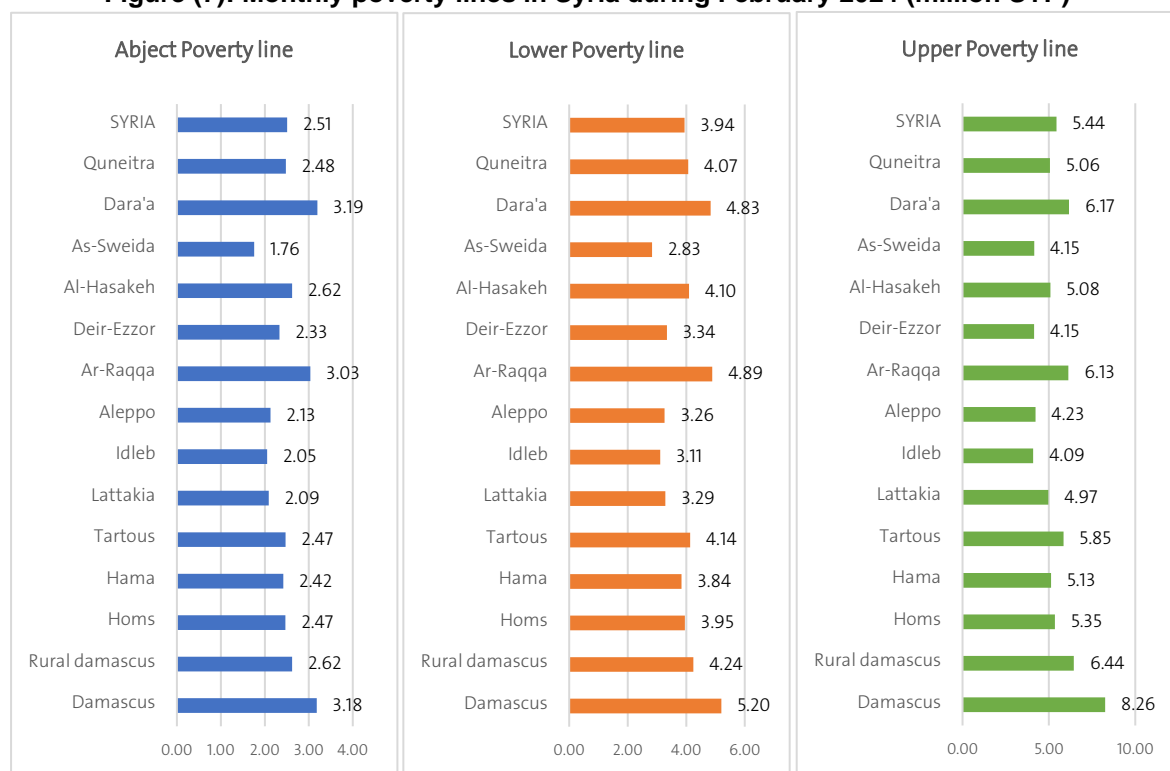
⁶ Although the wages of civil sector workers in the GoS areas are relatively high compared to public and private sector wages, they are low compared to the rest. It equates to 32 per cent of the civil sector worker wage in the AA areas and 21 per cent in the SSG and SIG areas in February 2024.

⁷ 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.

6. Poverty Lines in Syria, February 2024

In February 2024, the abject poverty line for families,⁸ serving as an indicator of food insecurity, rose to SYP 2.51 million per month, marking an increase of SYP 59 thousand from January 2024. The lower poverty line increased by SYP 134 thousand from the previous month to reach 3.93 million, while the upper poverty line saw an SYP 128 thousand increase, reaching 5.44 million. The highest values for poverty lines were recorded in the governorates of Damascus, Dara'a, and Ar-Raqqa, while As-Sweida, Idleb, Deir-Ezzor and Aleppo recorded the lowest poverty lines in February 2024.

Figure (7): Monthly poverty lines in Syria during February 2024 (million SYP)



Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2024.

Comparing control areas shows that AA areas ranked the highest in abject and lower poverty lines in February 2024, where the abject poverty line reached SYP 2.68 million and the lower poverty line SYP 4.11 million. Following were the GoS areas with an abject poverty line of SYP 2.49 million and a lower poverty line exceeding SYP 3.93 million per month. Lastly, the SIG & SSG areas had an abject poverty line of SYP 1.8 million and a lower poverty line above SYP 2.8 million. The GoS is ranked the highest level of the monthly upper poverty line during February 2024, reaching SYP 5.4 million, followed by the AA areas with an amount of SYP 5.12 million, and finally, the SIG & SSG areas with an amount of SYP 3.65 million.

⁸ The poverty lines (abject, lower and upper) were calculated by measuring the impact of inflation on the 2009 poverty lines.

A comparison between wages in current prices and monthly poverty lines reveals that the wage gap⁹ the abject poverty line within Syria level in February 2024 reached about 76.5 per cent for a university-educated employee in the public sector, 65 per cent for a private sector worker, and 3 per cent for a civil sector worker. Notably, wages of civil sector workers in the SIG & SSG areas, and the AA areas surpassed the abject poverty line by 255 per cent and 61 per cent, respectively. Wages in the civil sector in the GoS areas were 45 per cent lower than the abject poverty line, highlighting the disparity between regions and the relatively high wages of this sector compared to others in the SIG & SSG areas, and AA areas.

Table (3): Monthly wage gap from poverty lines in Syria during February 2024 (in percentages)

	GoS areas	SIG & SSG areas	AA areas	Whole of Syria
A- Wage gap from the abject poverty line				
University-educated employees in the public sector	-91.7%	15.1%	-60.5%	-76.5%
Private sector worker	-70.9%	-4.7%	-64.5%	-65.0%
Civil sector worker	-45.1%	255.1%	61.0%	-3.0%
B- Wage gap from the lower poverty line				
University-educated employees in the public sector	-94.7%	-24.4%	-74.2%	-85.1%
Private sector worker	-81.6%	-37.4%	-76.9%	-77.8%
Civil sector worker	-65.3%	133.1%	5.0%	-38.4%
C- Wage gap from the upper poverty line				
University-educated employees in the public sector	-96.2%	-42.2%	-79.3%	-89.2%
Private sector worker	-91.57%	-82.70%	-87.16%	-81.49%
Civil sector worker	-74.9%	78.4%	-15.7%	-55.3%

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

Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2024.

The gap between the wages of public sector employees and the upper poverty line reached 96.2 per cent in the GoS areas, 79.3 per cent in the AA areas, and 42.2 per cent in the SIG & SSG areas. This means that the wages of government employee in all control areas in Syria are unable to cover the basic requirements for a decent life. The employee in the GoS areas is considered the most suffering because his monthly wage barely covers 3.8 per cent of the family's basic needs, while the monthly wage in the AA areas covers about 20.7 per cent of basic needs, and the monthly wage in the SIG & SSG areas covers about 57.8 per cent of basic needs. These percentages express the severity of the misery that Syrians suffer from in light of rampant inflation and the deterioration of the purchasing power of their wages.

⁹ 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.

Appendix

Appendix (1): Consumer Price Index in Syria by Major Consumption Groups in February 2024, (2021 = 100)

	Damascus	Rural Damascus	Homs	Hama	Tartous	Lattakia	Idleb	Aleppo	Ar- Raqqa	Deir- Ezzor	Al- Hasakeh	As- Sweida	Dara'a	Quneitra	SYRIA
All commodities	778	636	627	616	713	622	418	585	677	553	775	647	667	674	620
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	651	654	664	646	665	656	420	591	589	608	701	643	652	657	619
Tobacco	478	475	460	481	505	481	313	378	374	491	490	494	501	491	460
Clothing and footwear	613	759	585	698	997	987	448	595	871	538	1,070	931	626	599	712
Housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels	1,021	661	599	567	836	558	505	642	995	439	1,046	668	719	755	682
Household equipment and maintenance	863	673	727	755	699	664	286	455	584	569	879	626	791	838	627
Health	693	758	727	652	756	741	409	608	962	604	733	649	895	639	692
Transportation	904	695	721	731	750	757	478	607	584	632	643	830	782	951	731
Communications	324	324	324	321	324	324	115	358	330	325	336	318	320	313	232
Culture and entertainment	530	713	616	582	831	579	327	593	847	508	871	538	706	493	612
Education	560	447	541	467	694	404	606	442	676	465	707	494	567	482	530
Various goods and services	490	627	643	648	751	615	380	576	643	523	520	680	595	625	594

Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2024.



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