



Monthly Bulletin for Consumer Price Index and Inflation in Syria

Issue (5) – May 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 **May 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.

Contents

Preface	1
List of Tables	3
Table of Figures	3
Acronyms and Abbreviations	4
1. Inflation in Syria, May 2024	5
2. Inflation by Governorate	7
3. Exchange rate	7
4. Contributors to Inflation.....	9
5. Wages in Syria, May 2024	11
6. Poverty Lines in Syria, May 2024.....	12
Appendix	14

List of Tables

Table (1): Monthly consumer price inflation in Syria for May 2024 by consumption group (base year 2021 =100) and (inflation in percentages)	5
Table (2): Average monthly wages in Syria during May 2024.....	11
Table (3): Monthly wage gap from poverty lines in Syria during May 2024	13

Table of Figures

Figure (1): Average prices of private lessons for secondary school students in Syria during May 2024	6
Figure (2): Monthly inflation (M-o-M) of consumer prices in Syria during May 2024.....	7
Figure (3): Changes in the exchange rate of the SYP in the unofficial market and the exchange rate of the LT against the USD during May 2024	8
Figure (4): Comparison of changes in the exchange rate of the SYP against the USD in the black market between control areas during May 2024.....	8
Figure (5): Contribution of major consumption groups to the monthly inflation rate (M-o-M) for May 2024	9
Figure (6): Contribution of major consumption groups to the monthly inflation rate (M-o-M) for May 2024 control areas	10
Figure (7): Monthly poverty lines in Syria during May 2024	12

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AA	Autonomous Administration
CPI	Consumer Price Index
GoS	Government of the Syrian 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, May 2024

In May 2024, the general CPI achieved annual inflation (Y-o-Y) of 113.2 per cent and monthly inflation (M-o-M) of 2.4 per cent.

The Various commodities and services group recorded the highest monthly inflation rate in May 2024 at 5.8 per cent, Due to the high prices of personal care services, where men's haircuts cost SYP 24000, women's haircuts cost SYP 35000, and the price of a toothbrush reached SYP 13000.

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

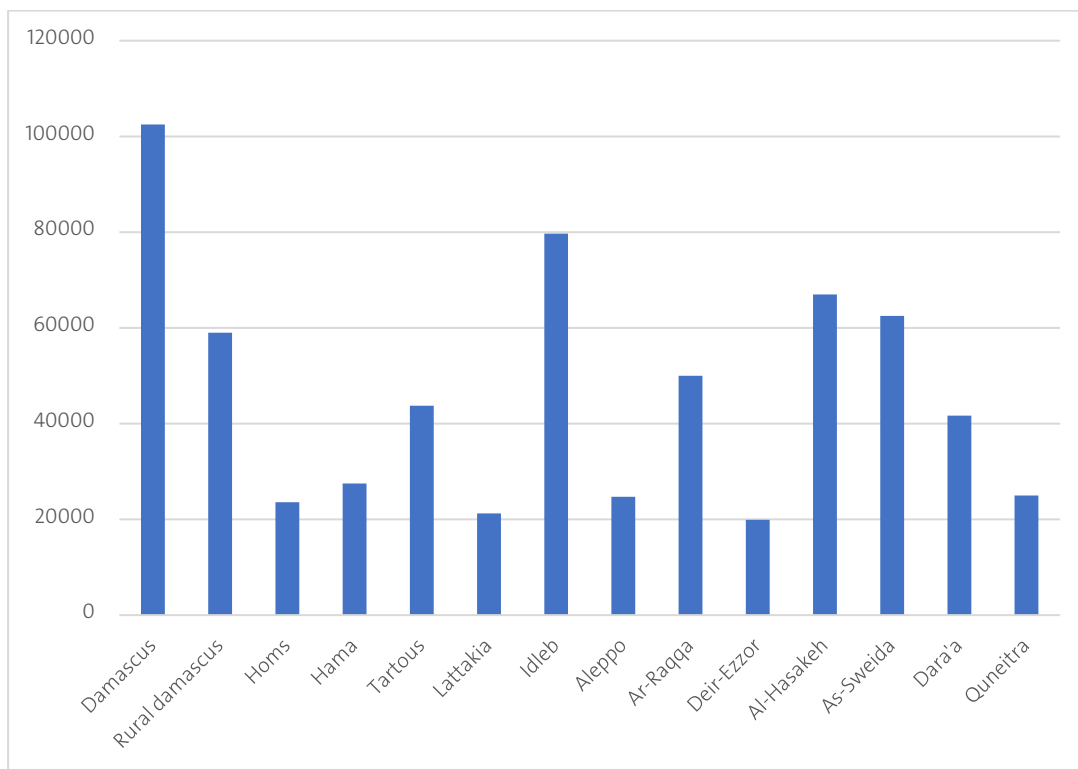
#	Group	CPI in April 2024	CPI in May 2024	Monthly Inflation (M-o-M)
	All commodities	644.6	660.1	2.4%
1	Food and non-alcoholic beverages	628.5	635.0	1.0%
2	Tobacco	472.3	484.9	2.7%
3	Clothes and shoes	764.3	786.3	2.9%
4	Housing, water, electricity, and other fuel oils	734.9	762.9	3.8%
5	Household equipment, supplies, and maintenance	639.2	649.3	1.6%
6	Health	713.0	738.9	3.6%
7	Transportation	775.9	797.1	2.7%
8	Communications	221.2	220.9	-0.1%
9	Entertainment and culture	625.8	654.6	4.6%
10	Education	548.3	563.9	2.8%
11+12	Various commodities and services	621.5	657.8	5.8%

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

The Education group recorded a monthly inflation of 2.8 per cent with the arrival of the preparatory and secondary school exams season and the rise in the prices of private lessons, which most students have come to rely on in light of the deteriorating educational situation in public schools and the high cost of education in private schools,¹ as the average price of an hour of private lessons within Syria reached SYP 46000 during May 2024. It is noted that there is a large disparity in the prices of private lessons between the governorates, as in Damascus Governorate the price reached a little more than SYP 100 thousand per hour, while it did not reach SYP 20000 in Deir Ezzor Governorate, and reached about SYP 80000 in Idleb.

¹ Students in northeastern Syria take exams in schools affiliated with the Syrian government in order to obtain a recognized certificate. The Syrian curriculum is only taught in limited areas such as the security square area in Hasakah. Due to the difficulty of reaching these schools due to high transportation costs and security risks, students there rely on private lessons throughout the school year.

Figure (1): Average prices of private lessons for secondary school students in Syria during May 2024 (Syrian pounds per hour)



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

The Health group witnessed monthly inflation of 3.6 per cent during May 2024, as the fees for a specialist doctor’s examination (cardiology with echo) rose to SYP 60 thousand within Syria, the fees for a dentist’s examination (nerve extraction without crowns) to SYP 340 thousand, and the expenses of staying in a private hospital (without medication) to SYP 430 thousand, noting that the expenses of staying in the intensive care unit exceed SYP 1.5 million per night due to the high prices of medications and oxygen.

The prices of the Tobacco group increased by 2.7 per cent, with the average price of national Cigarettes reaching SYP 7500 and foreign Cigarettes reaching SYP 11500 within Syria. It is worth noting that in late January 2024, the Syrian government raised the purchase prices of the tobacco crop for the 2023-2024 season by about double compared to the previous season.² Also, on 5 May 2024, a legislative decree was issued allowing the private sector to invest in the tobacco industry and purchase it for the purpose of manufacturing and marketing it locally.³

² Presidency of the Council of Ministers. (2024, 24 January). [Determining the prices of purchasing tobacco from farmers.](#)

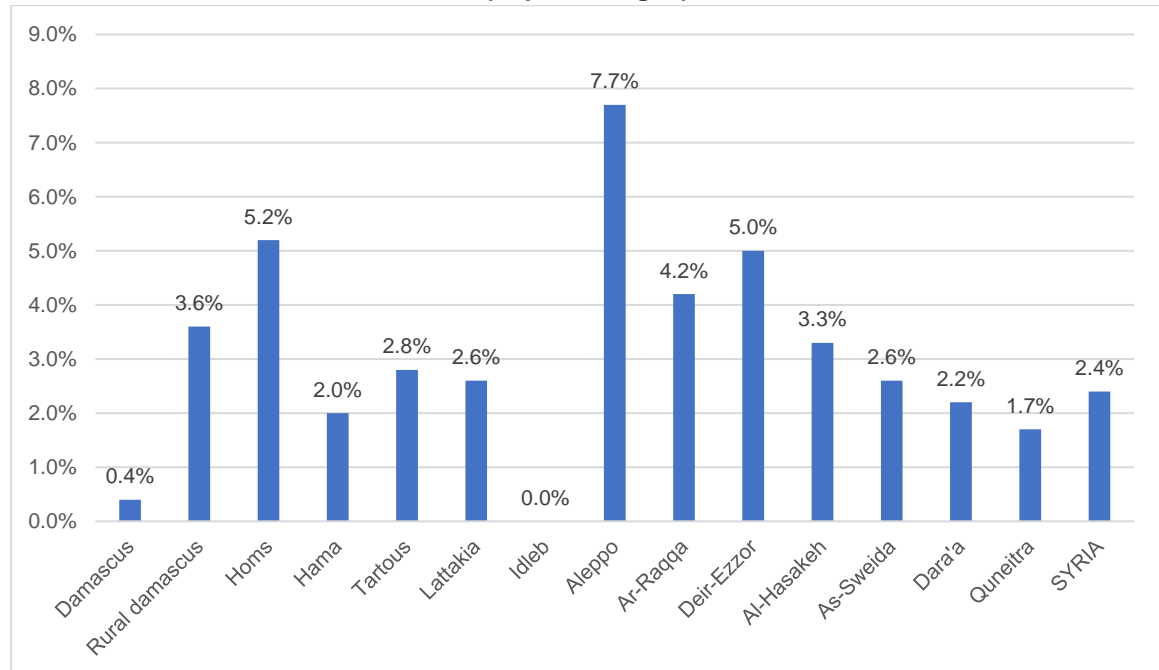
³ Syrian Investment Authority. (2024, May 05). [Legislative Decree No. 16 of 2024.](#)

2. Inflation by Governorate

In May 2024, Aleppo Governorate recorded the highest monthly inflation rate (M-o-M) at 7.7 per cent, followed by Homs Governorate at 5.2 per cent, while Idleb Governorate maintained the prices of most goods and services during May 2024.

The AA areas recorded the highest monthly inflation rate (M-o-M) for all goods and services during May 2024 at 4.1 per cent, followed by the GoS areas at 3.1 per cent, then the SIG & SSG areas at 0.5 per cent.

Figure (2): Monthly inflation (M-o-M) of consumer prices in Syria during May 2024 (in percentages)



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

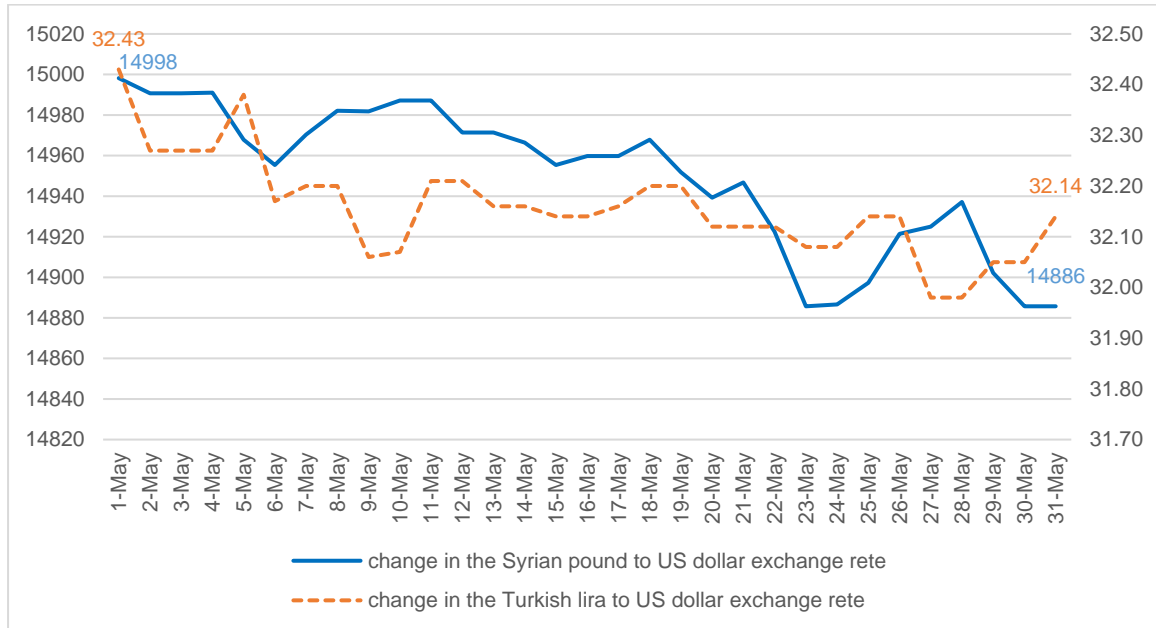
3. Exchange rate

There was a decline in the value of the Syrian pound against the US dollar by 2.7 per cent on May 2024 compared to the previous month, as the monthly average exchange rate of the Syrian pound against the US dollar reached SYP 14950 in May 2024 compared to SYP 14550 in April 2024. The exchange rate of Syrian pound closed at SYP 14886 per USD at the end of May 2024. On the other hand, the Turkish lira witnessed an improvement of its value in the Northwestern regions of Syria by 1 per cent during May 2024, as the average exchange rate of the Turkish lira against the US dollar reached LT 32.2 per USD in May 2024 after it was around LT 32.5 in April 2024. The exchange rate of the Turkish lira closed at a price of TL 32.14 per USD at the end of May 2024.

The Central Bank of Syria fixed the Money transfers and cash foreign exchange bulletin at SYP 13500 per USD and the Official market foreign exchange bulletin at SYP 12562 per USD throughout the month.⁴

⁴ The Central Bank of Syria. [Exchange rate bulletin](#).

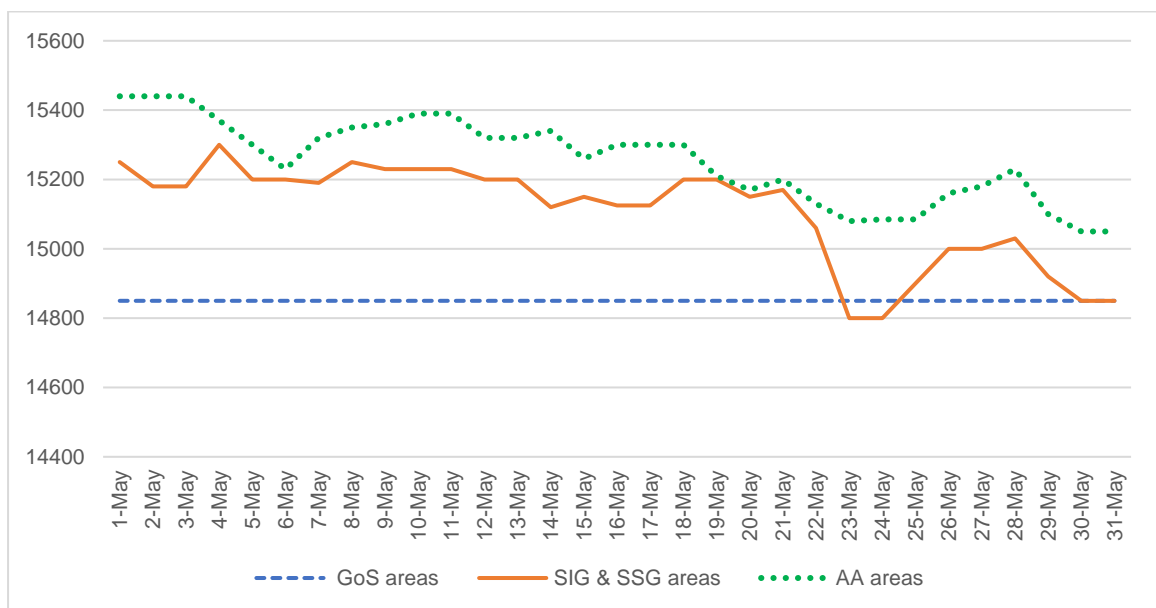
Figure (3): Changes in the exchange rate of the SYP in the unofficial market and the exchange rate of the LT against the USD during May 2024



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

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, 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 14850 per USD in the GOS areas during May 2024, while it reached SYP 15255 and SYP 15106 per USD in the AA areas and the SIG & SSG areas.

Figure (4): Comparison of changes in the exchange rate of the SYP against the USD in the black market between control areas during May 2024

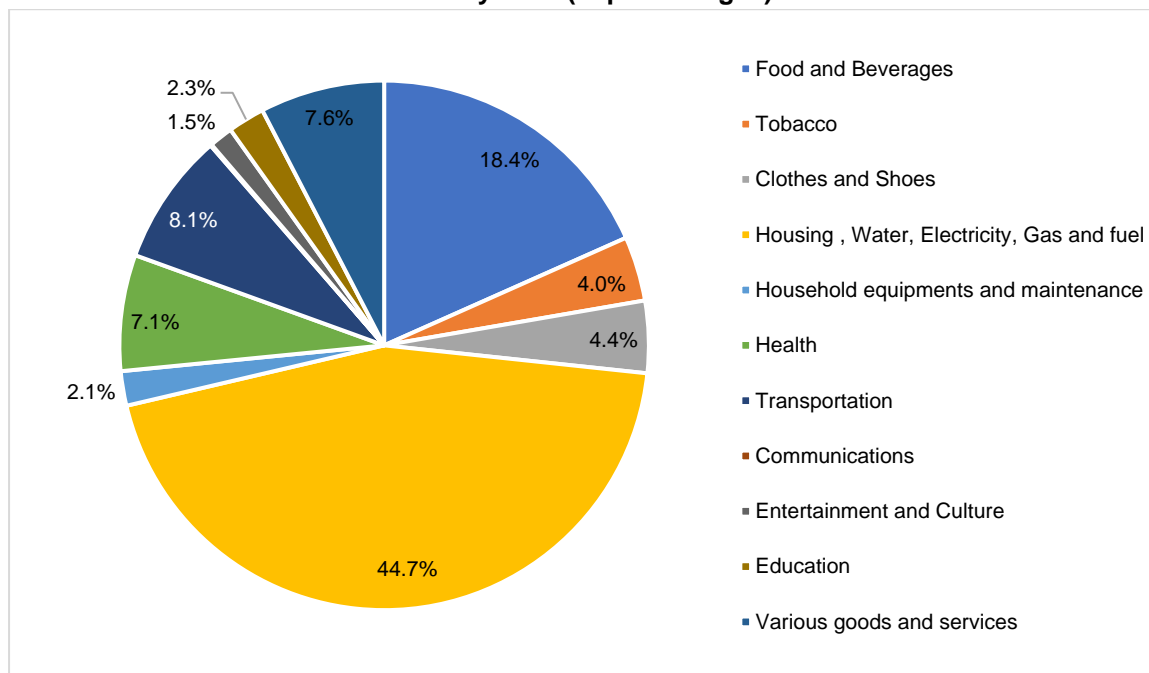


Source: Syrian Center for Policy Research, Monthly consumer price survey in Syria 2024.

4. Contributors to Inflation

In May 2024, the Housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuel oils group⁵ contributed significantly to the monthly inflation (M-o-M) with 2.4 per cent, making up 44.7 per cent of the total, followed by the group of Food and non-alcoholic beverages with a contribution of 18.4 per cent, trailed by the Transportation group at 8.4 per cent.

Figure (5): Contribution of major consumption groups to the monthly inflation rate (M-o-M) for May 2024 (in percentages)



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

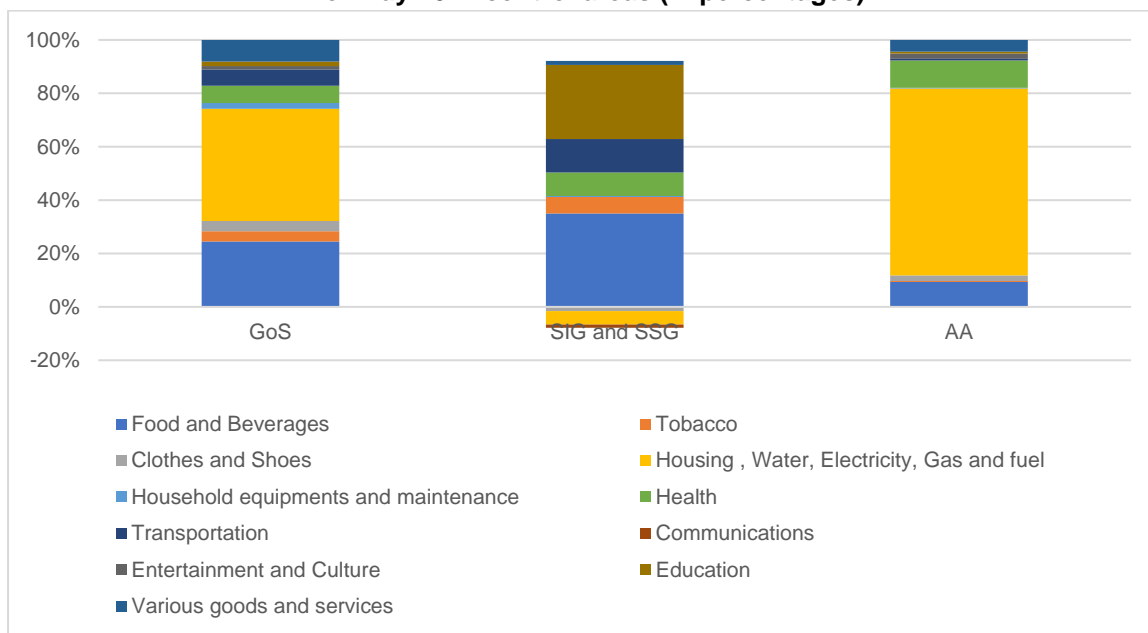
The Food and non-alcoholic beverages group contributed the largest percentage of monthly inflation in the SIG & SSG areas during May 2024, at 41.5 per cent, and contributed 25 per cent of monthly inflation in the GoS areas, and 9 per cent of monthly inflation in the AA areas.

The Housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels group contributed 70 per cent of the monthly inflation in the AA areas, with the Autonomous Administration raising the price of a liter of heating oil from SYP 325 to SYP 1150 (by 254 per cent),⁶ the Housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels group contributed 42 per cent of the monthly inflation in the GoS areas.

⁵ The contribution rate to inflation means the percentage of the contribution of each consumption group to annual inflation out of 100%.

⁶ Arta. (May 1, 2024). [The Autonomous Administration sets new prices for diesel types.](#)

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



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

5. Wages in Syria, May 2024

In May 2024, the wages at current prices increased slightly within Syria. The average monthly salary stood at approximately SYP 656 thousand for a university-educated employee newly appointed in the public sector. The wages in the private sector reached around SYP 935 thousand, while it counted in the civil sector at SYP 2.58 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 and the 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 25 per cent in the civil one within Syria.⁷

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

	GoS areas	SIG and SSG areas	AA areas	Whole of Syria
A- Public sector workers				
Staff wages (professor)	1090044	7026960	3090000	2122903
Staff wages (university-educated)	311501	2030900	1060000	655915
Staff wages (4th band)	286038	1241402	1040000	536156
B- Private sector workers				
Company director salary	2657955	5455140	2775000	3023141
Shop worker salary	825130	1647260	986144	935180
C- Civil sector workers				
Staff wages (university-educated)	1500433	6379740	4603156	2579415

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 May 2024 led to a decrease in the real wages⁸ of workers in the public sector in the AA areas by 3.9 per cent compared to April 2024. Inflation also led to a decrease in the real wages of employees in the institutions of the GoS areas by 3 per cent, and in the SIG and SSG areas by 1.3 per cent.

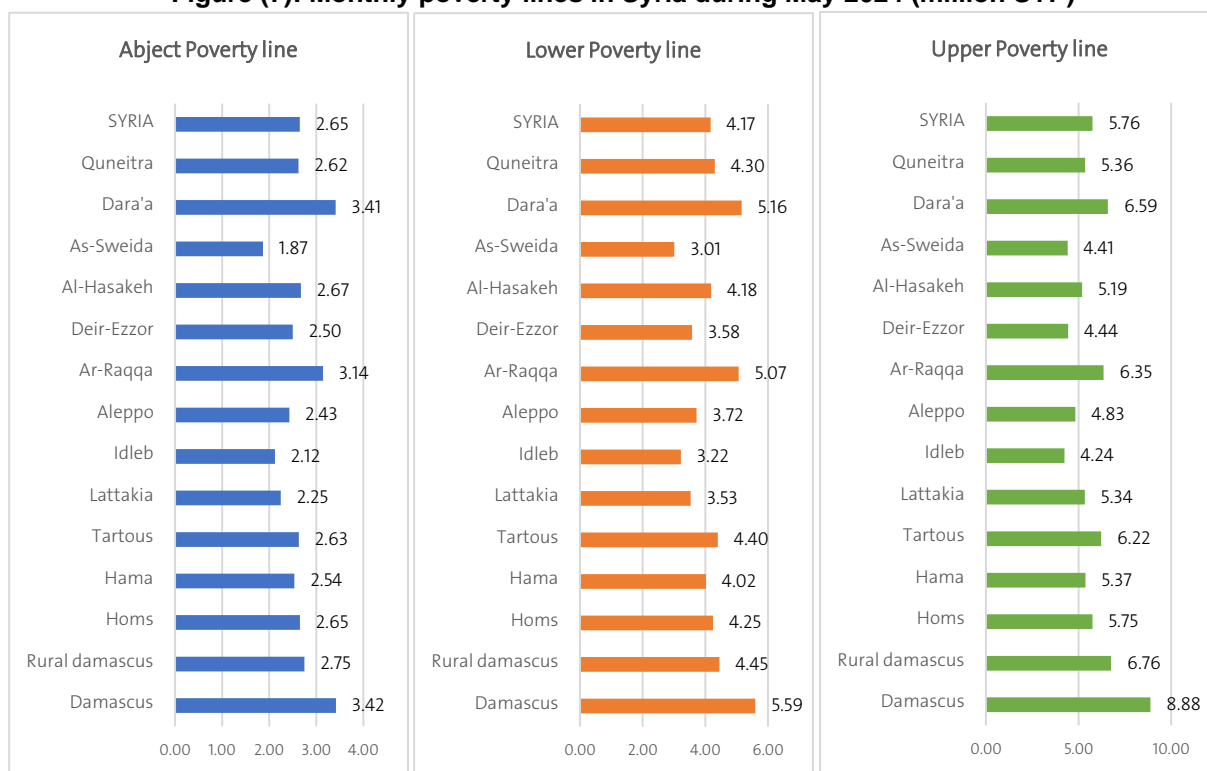
⁷ Although the wages of civil sector workers in the GoS areas are relatively high compared to public and private sector wages, they are low compared to the rest. It equates to 33 per cent of the civil sector worker wage in the AA areas and 24 per cent in the SSG and SIG areas in May 2024.

⁸ 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, May 2024

In May 2024, the abject poverty line for families,⁹ serving as an indicator of food insecurity, rose to SYP 2.65 million per month, marking an increase of SYP 55 thousand from April 2024. The lower poverty line increased by SYP 87 thousand from the previous month to reach 4.17 million, while the upper poverty line saw an SYP 120 thousand increase, reaching 5.76 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 May 2024.

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



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

In comparison between the control areas, the SIG & SSG areas recorded the lowest values for the three poverty lines during May 2024, with an abject poverty line of SYP 1.95 million, a lower poverty line of SYP 2.97 million, and an upper poverty line of SYP 3.88 million. The AA areas topped the ranking in terms of the abject and lower poverty lines in May 2024, as the abject poverty line reached SYP 2.79 million, and the lower poverty line reached SYP 4.3 million. It was followed by the GoS areas, with an abject poverty line of SYP 2.66 million, and a lower poverty line of SYP 4.2 million per month. The value of the upper poverty line in the GoS areas exceeded the level of SYP 5.8 million per month, while it reached SYP 5.3 million in the AA areas.

⁹ 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 gap¹⁰ from the abject poverty line within Syria level in May 2024 reached about 75 per cent for a university-educated employee in the public sector, 64.7 per cent for a private sector worker, and 2.7 per cent for a civil sector worker. Notably, wages of civil sector workers in the SIG, the SSG, and the AA areas surpassed the abject poverty line by 227 per cent and 64.8 per cent, respectively. Wages in the civil sector in the GoS areas were 43.6 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, and AA areas.

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

	GoS areas	SIG and SSG areas	AA areas	Whole of Syria
A- Wage gap from the abject poverty line				
University-educated employees in the public sector	-88.3%	4.1%	-62.1%	-75.3%
Private sector worker	-69.0%	-15.6%	-64.7%	-64.7%
Civil sector worker	-43.6%	227.1%	64.8%	-2.7%
B- Wage gap from the lower poverty line				
University-educated employees in the public sector	-92.6%	-31.7%	-75.2%	-84.3%
Private sector worker	-80.4%	-44.6%	-77.0%	-77.6%
Civil sector worker	-64.3%	114.6%	7.5%	-38.1%
C- Wage gap from the upper poverty line				
University-educated employees in the public sector	-94.6%	-47.7%	-80.1%	-88.6%
Private sector worker	-92.07%	-83.30%	-81.33%	-81.80%
Civil sector worker	-74.2%	64.3%	-13.7%	-55.2%

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

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

The wage gap between public sector employees in the areas of the GoS areas and the upper poverty line reached 94.6 per cent, 80.1 per cent in the AA areas, and 47.7 per cent in the SIG & SSG areas during May 2024. This is a dangerous indicator that all government employees in the three areas receive wages that do not cover the minimum required goods and services they need for a decent life, and the severity of suffering varies between areas; public sector employees in the areas of the GoS areas are the most suffering because their wages cover only 5.4 per cent of their basic needs despite a 50 per cent increase in wages in March 2024, while the wages of employees in the AA areas cover 19.9 per cent of the basic needs required for a decent life, while the wages of workers in the SIG & SSG areas cover 52.3 per cent of the basic needs.

¹⁰ 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 May 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	856	688	708	660	788	696	441	668	710	610	842	707	730	729	660
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	678	666	685	660	690	700	444	638	613	631	717	653	683	666	635
Tobacco	513	493	526	501	513	550	336	418	374	491	520	542	507	501	485
Clothing and footwear	742	845	688	762	1,027	1,125	488	724	883	564	1,162	947	780	647	786
Housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels	1,182	795	804	698	1,048	750	530	766	1,072	599	1,178	838	856	936	763
Household equipment and maintenance	892	679	751	797	742	666	304	483	583	573	922	629	879	827	649
Health	704	819	774	660	809	823	413	658	967	762	764	753	1,003	681	739
Transportation	938	753	773	797	793	814	503	700	630	710	948	907	841	984	797
Communications	324	325	324	321	324	326	87	423	330	326	336	318	320	314	221
Culture and entertainment	534	805	659	587	834	570	310	648	1,024	578	871	570	752	602	655
Education	577	461	548	467	756	414	732	450	676	485	712	549	603	482	564
Various goods and services	550	714	809	664	774	617	390	702	690	621	547	819	684	676	658

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



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