



WFP/Deniz Akkus

## Emergency Social Safety Net Quarter 4 2017 Monitoring Report

### Highlights

- **395,060** applications were registered in the MoFSP database as of 29 December 2017.
- In December, the ESSN assisted **199,336** eligible households, corresponding to **1,175,254** individual beneficiaries.
- By the end of 2017, over **€250 million** had been injected into the Turkish economy through ESSN assistance transferred to beneficiaries.
- **91%** of ESSN beneficiaries are Syrians, followed by **6.5%** Iraqis and **2.2%** Afghans. The remaining come from other countries such as Somalia and Iran.
- In Q4, WFP and TRC field teams completed **44** Focus Group Discussions (FGD) across **17 provinces**, with participation of over **400** eligible and ineligible refugees.
- In Q4, WFP field teams conducted visits to **320** SASF offices, **143** Halkbank branches and **16** TRC Service centers in **63 provinces** of Turkey.
- By December, the ESSN Facebook page reached **67,000** followers and the 168 call center had received over **450,000** calls.

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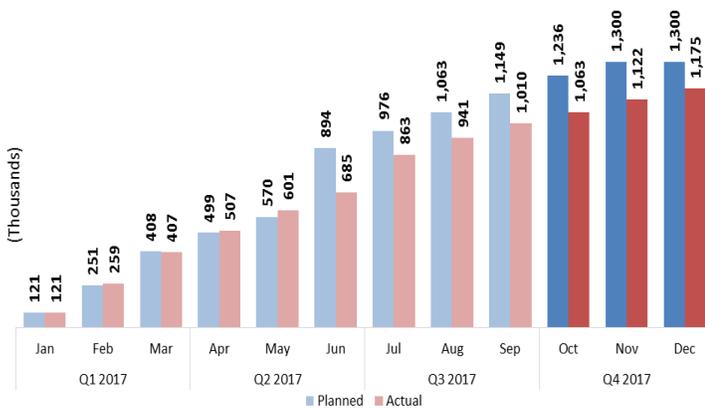
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# ESSN 2017 Quarter Four Monitoring Report

## Tracking outputs of ESSN operations

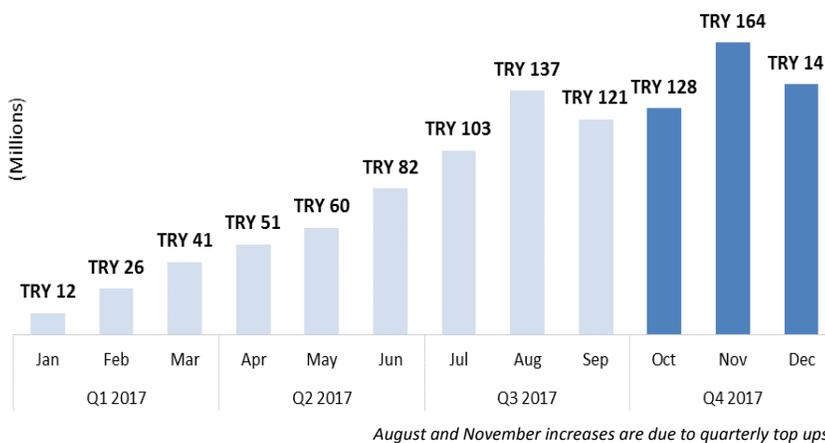
Number of ESSN Beneficiaries Planned vs Actual (Individuals)



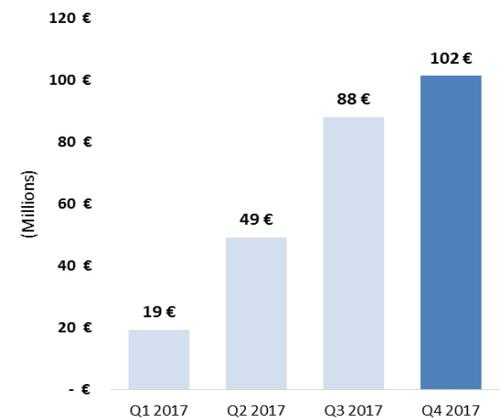
Number of ESSN Cards Distributed to Beneficiaries



Amount of Assistance Transferred to Beneficiaries



Value of ESSN Assistance to Beneficiaries

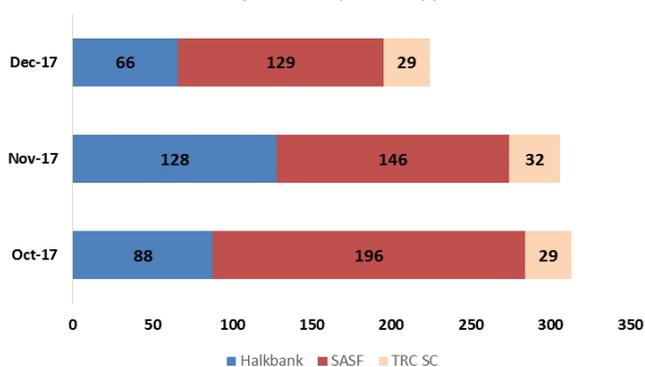


## On-site monitoring

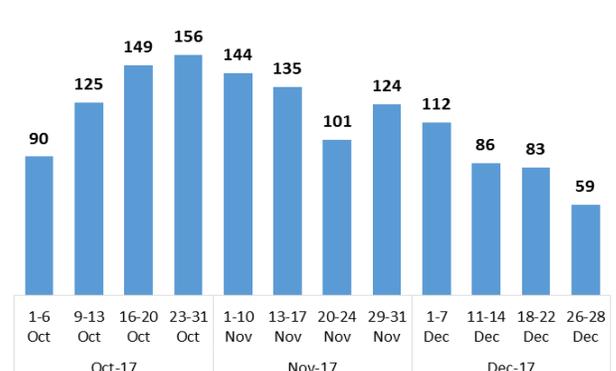
In the last quarter of 2017, WFP field teams conducted a total of **1,364 visits** in **391 districts** of **63 provinces** in Turkey. This visits included on-site monitoring activities while interacting with beneficiaries at different stages of the ESSN process, providing on-site assistance, and tracking correct implementation of the programme at the various sites.

The most frequently visited sites were SASF offices (**471 visits**), Halkbank branches (**282 visits**) and TRC Service centers (**90 visits**) respectively. In December, in order to focus also on other activities such as outreach and sensitization visits, field teams slightly reduced the frequency of SASF and Halkbank on-site monitoring visits.

Monitoring Visits by Site Type



Number of Monitoring Visits



# ESSN 2017 Quarter Four Monitoring Report

## Main application and card distribution monitoring findings

WFP monitoring teams recorded **102** ESSN operational issues in the **MEDS** database in the fourth quarter of 2017, **80** of which were resolved immediately through on site support provided by WFP field teams and **22** were referred to related authorities and are being followed up by WFP programmatic units. In Q4, the most commonly reported issues were related to the application process, followed by card distribution and cash utilization.

### DGMM/PDMM issues causing delays in the ESSN application process:

- Cases of minors accompanied by adult relatives with different family serial number were reported in Istanbul, Esenler district PDMM office. In these cases, the family serial number given by DGMM and the Police is different.
- Registration procedures conducted by the police cause delays in the PDMM registration process of refugees.

The issue of non-matching family numbers has been referred to TRC and is being followed up by WFP programmatic units. WFP field offices have also been notified to investigate similar incidences in other regions.

DGMM/PDMMs took over the fingerprint registration process from the police starting in November.

### SASF Procedures

- Ankara AO field teams identified delays in the reassessment of ineligible applications after the criteria change at Sinop SASF center.
- The SASF Office in Gumushane province was not accepting all ESSN applications. Only **8** out of **55** refugee families in the province were registered.
- Four SASF offices, Sehzade office (Manisa), Adalar office (Istanbul), Tarsus office (Mersin) and Darica office (Kocaeli) appear to have modified the standard criteria; field monitors reported some offices were rejecting applications based on their own criteria even if the beneficiaries fit the national ESSN criteria.

WFP field team visited the SASF in Sinop accompanied by the Sinop PDMM manager. The PDMM manager supported the SASF through provision of two translators to expedite their work. In addition, the SASF staff assured WFP/TRC staff they would accept all applications regardless of their eligibility.

WFP field teams accompanied by TRC staff members visited the SASF office in Gumushane and explained the importance of accepting all applications. The issue will be followed up by WFP field teams through further visits to the SASF office.

Issues of SASF offices with their own criteria have been referred to WFP programme unit in Ankara to be followed up with MoFSP and identify a solution for the issue.

### Operational issues during card distributions:

- The Halkbank branch manager in Kilis reported that the photos on some new ID cards are darker, so the staff have difficulty in confirming the identify of the ID holders. Bank staff also stated that they were occasionally withholding ESSN cards due to difficulties identifying the beneficiaries based on their ID pictures.
- High numbers of uncollected Kizilay cards in Halkbank branches continue to pose a challenges to the expansion of ESSN coverage. In Nizip Halkbank branch, Gaziantep, there are over **100** cards remaining to be collected. One of the uncollected cards contains over **6000 TRY** of accumulated ESSN and CCTE assistance payments. Uncollected payments are swept back to the project account for reuse after three months if the cards are not collected, and after six months for dormant accounts.

WFP programmatic units are following up on the issues of unrecognizable ID card photos with UNHCR, who has just started verification of refugee IDs in Kilis.

SMS texts were sent to owners of uncollected cards in December. WFP field teams noted that the SMS texts resulted in a decrease in the number of uncollected ESSN cards. Reminder SMS texts will continue to be sent to uncollected card owners on a monthly basis, while WFP teams continue to notify TRC service centers in order to reach out to owners of the uncollected cards.

## Updates on implementation of ESSN VAM & M&E strategy

### Post Distribution Monitoring

In Q4, the first round of the remote Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) data collection was completed and the clean dataset was shared with WFP by TRC at the end of November. For improved analysis of the impact of the ESSN assistance on refugee households, the same households included in the Pre-Assistance Baseline (PAB) were called for the PDM. Of the **8,690** households from the PAB, **6,958** also responded to the first round of PDM calls – a response rate of **80%**, which is considered very successful for the second round of a phone-based survey. Examples from other operations show lower response rates for this data collection method.

This is the first dataset providing insight into the effect of the ESSN cash transfers on the lives of beneficiaries. The analysis was conducted in December; results – showing a comparison between the PAB (Feb-May) and the PDM (Aug-Oct) – will be presented in early Q1 2018.

### Comprehensive Vulnerability Monitoring Exercise

During Q4, WFP and TRC joint teams completed the data collection for the second round of the CVME. From September to November 2017, a total of **600** households were interviewed in face-to-face visits, including **240 beneficiary**, **240 ineligible** and **120 non-applicant** households. Completion of the data cleaning and subsequent analysis of the CVME data is planned for January 2018. Comparative analysis will be done against the first round of CVME results in order to understand the changes in refugee vulnerability across Turkey. The CVME aims to understand refugee vulnerability with detailed questions on food security, health, living conditions and education. The CVME report for the 2nd cycle is expected in Q1 2018. CVME 3rd cycle data collection is planned to start in March 2018.

### Market Analysis

Despite the economic growth in Turkey throughout Q4, inflation remained high. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) reached an **11.92** percent annual increase in December 2017, constituting the highest inflation rate since 2014. Inflation is expected to remain in the double digits until at least Q4 2018. High annual inflation was largely driven by an **18.24** percent increase in the cost of transportation, and a **13.79** percent increase in the cost of food and non-alcoholic beverages. These price increases are affected by rising oil prices and the weakening Turkish lira in foreign exchange markets. Van, Mus and Bitlis provinces experienced the highest annual inflation rates at **13.59** percent. As a result of high inflation, the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey announced plans to tighten monetary policy further, aiming to ensure price stability until inflation is closer in line with CBRT targets.

### Focus Group Discussions

WFP Field teams conducted **44** focus group discussions (FGDs) in **22 districts** of **17 provinces** of Turkey with the participation of **447** refugees, including **270** ESSN beneficiaries, **125** ineligible as well as **31** applicants waiting for their application outcomes and **20** non-applicants.

The October FGD questionnaires were designed to capture perceptions of refugees on subjects related to social cohesion. Workplaces, shops and hospitals are the places where refugees interact with the local community most frequently. Hospitals, police stations and DGMM offices were most frequently mentioned locations regarding negative experience with government officials. Although low frequency, in general interactions between refugees and local people in their neighborhoods are positive. Mukhtars were praised as the most helpful local officials in the majority of the FGDs.

November FGDs investigated matters of livelihoods and resilience. Across all groups, participants raised their concerns about sustaining their livelihoods during winter months. Many participants reported fewer job opportunities in agriculture and construction as well as general casual labour in urban areas. It seems very common that refugee children work to support their families, some starting as early as nine years old, often as apprentices in barber and tailor shops. In many cases, children are pulled out of school to work full time during periods of financial stress. In Istanbul and Izmir, more female FGD participants reported they were working than in other locations. Traditionally it is not common for Syrian women to work or generate income outside their home, however, their current conditions require them to support their families, and the cultural environment in Turkey allows them to participate in the labour force.

In December, refugees' financial inclusion was discussed. The majority of participants stated their satisfaction with receiving the assistance via a bank account. A low number of participants reported sending money to relatives in Syria and other locations in Turkey, and fewer reported receiving remittances from relatives in Europe. The majority of the participants reported borrowing money from friends and relatives without interest. Overall, ESSN assistance reduced beneficiary households' reliance on debt significantly. Despite the growing confidence in the programme, still the most commonly reported rumors were the amount of ESSN assistance will increase or that assistance will stop in 2018.

WFP field teams will continue conducting monthly FGDs in 2018. A list of topics has been prepared for use in upcoming FGDs with the inputs from WFP programmatic units and field teams.

# ESSN 2017 Quarter Four Monitoring Report

## Social Safety Nets & Protection

### Informal Housing

Refugees living in informal housing have been facing barriers to access ESSN assistance because they are not able to register their address with Nüfus offices, a prerequisite for applying to the ESSN. Informal housing refers to shelters without an official street address and/or not officially recognized by authorities as residential property. This includes: tents, containers, unfinished buildings, shops, warehouses, caves, and any other dwelling that is not in compliance with building regulations or that is not registered with the authorities as residential property.

WFP and TRC have been working closely with ESSN stake-holders, in particular the Directorate General of Population and Citizenship, to advocate on this issue and support vulnerable refugees living in informal housing to access the ESSN. In November 2017, DGPC reported that there has been a large number of resolved informal housing cases across **34** provinces. In addition, WFP field staff have been identifying cases through monitoring visits and coordinating with local authorities to resolve cases. A total of **4,891 HH / 30,772**

refugees living in informal housing have been reported. The majority of these refugees (81%) are agricultural workers living in tents and containers. WFP teams have been successful in resolving a number of cases in **Sanliurfa, Kayseri, Nevşehir, Hatay, Canakkale** and **Bursa** through coordination with local authorities (**207 HHs / 1,131** individuals).

### Registration

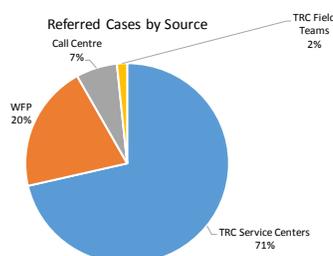
Refugees who have not completed DGMM registration or who have other challenges with registration (such as living in a different city from the one where they are registered) can face difficulties in applying to the ESSN. In September 2017, DGMM, TRC and WFP established a referral system to support the most vulnerable refugees with registration challenges to access the ESSN. Cases identified by WFP and TRC are referred to PDMMs on weekly basis for expedited resolution where possible. As at the end of 2017, WFP had referred a total of **120 cases, representing 484 persons**, through this referral mechanism. The majority of registration cases identified were in Gaziantep and Istanbul.

### Resolved Informal Housing Cases

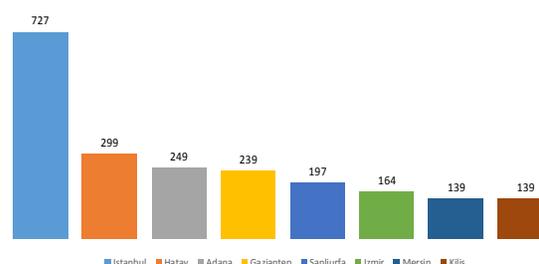
| Province  | District    | Type of Shelter  | No. of Families | No. of Persons |
|-----------|-------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Şanlıurfa | Eyyübiye    | Caves            | 30              | 150            |
| Nevşehir  | Derinkuyu   | Tents            | 60              | 400            |
| Hatay     | Kırıkhan    | Tents/containers | 26              | 75             |
| Kayseri   | Yeşilhisar  | Tents/containers | 20              | 100            |
| Şanlıurfa | Halfeti     | Shops            | 62              | 360            |
| Şanlıurfa | Bozova      | Tents            | 7               | 35             |
| Çanakkale | Merkez      | Public building  | 1               | 5              |
| Bursa     | Mehmet Akif | Shop             | 1               | 6              |

### Protection Cases and Referrals

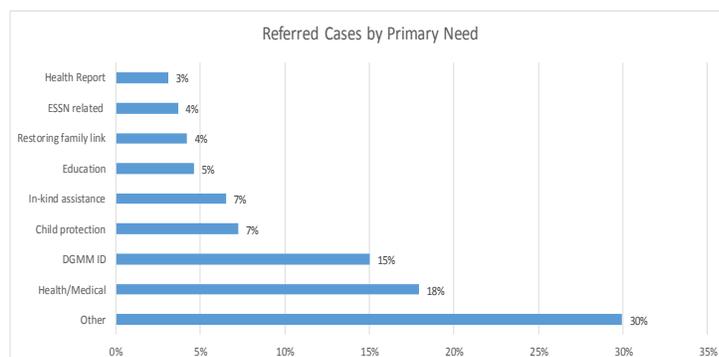
A referrals system has been established to ensure protection cases and refugees with needs outside the ESSN are referred to relevant service providers for assistance. Referrals are primarily made by TRC Service Centre staff, TRC Call Centre operators and WFP/TRC field teams. As of the end of 2017, a total of **2,290** cases in need have been identified for referral to other actors for assistance. The majority of cases, **71%**, were referred by Service Centre staff, followed by WFP staff (**20%**). By province, most referrals were made in **Istanbul, Hatay, Adana, Gaziantep**, and **Şanlıurfa**. Most cases (**30%**) were health related/persons requiring medical assistance, followed by DGMM registration cases (**18%**), and child protection cases (**15%**). From the WFP referrals, **92%** of referred persons were Syrian, **4%** were Iraqi, **2%** Afghan, **1%** Iranian, and **1%** other nationalities. The breakdown further shows that **53%** of referrals were family/group referrals, **26%** were male, and **21%** were female.



Referrals by Province



Referred Cases by Primary Need



## Accountability to Affected Populations

### Tackling Rumours & Misinformation

During the reporting period, a major challenge has been the spread of misinformation and rumours, from within communities, through Facebook sites, news sites and fake SMS messages in the name of Kizilaykart. This has been tackled by contacting the source for correction of the error, sending messages to the target population about official programme communication channels, and using beneficiary facing programme channels to communicate accurate information.

The below pictures show fake SMS messages received in the name of Kizilaykart and Turkcell informing recipients that all Syrians would be deported in January 2018. The source of the news was contacted and readers were provided with an official statement from TRC informing them that these SMS messages and their contents were fake.

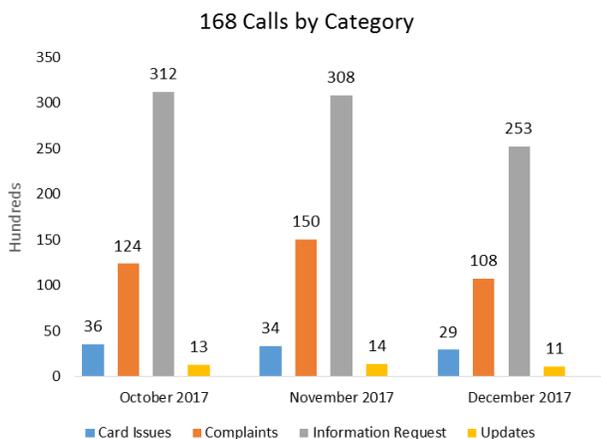


### 168 Call Centre

By the end of December, the Call Centre had received 454,243 calls. Overall there was a decrease in the number of calls in all categories from the previous period, with a slight increase in complaints in November.

#### Increasing awareness of ESSN communication channels

In November an SMS on ESSN complaints and communication channels was sent to all previous ESSN applicants in order to increase awareness of official channels. This can account for the increase in complaints in November. This SMS is also sent to new applicants every month.



### Uncollected Cards & Dormant Accounts

In November, the ESSN sent its first warning messages to households with uncollected cards and dormant accounts. If beneficiary households do not collect their cards for **3 months** or more, or do not use any assistance in their accounts for **6 months** or more, then the financial balance in their accounts will be swept and returned to the programme. These households were warned about this process via SMS and phone calls. On 20th November **2,202 SMS** messages were sent to uncollected card holders, and **438** to dormant account holders whose accounts were scheduled to be swept in December. This process will continue on a monthly basis.

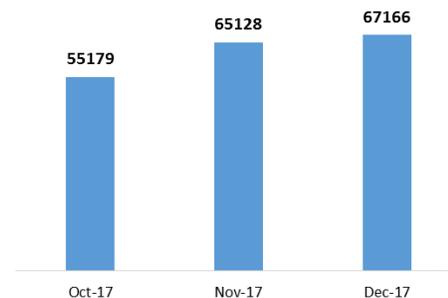
#### Increasing communication in other languages

ESSN printed communication material is now available in **5 languages: Arabic, Farsi, Pashto, Turkish and English**. Due to continuing demand, a new round of material was printed and distributed at the end of 2017.

As of October, the ESSN is sending SMS messages in Turkish to non-Arabic speakers. This will make a significant difference to non-Arabic speaking applicants and help to limit misunderstandings regarding eligibility status.

ATMs in **38** Istanbul Halkbank branches have had the Turkish language option reintroduced. This will support non-Arabic speakers to use the ATM machines more easily, including by seeking help from Turkish speaking branch staff. Nationwide rollout is expected in the coming months.

ESSN Facebook Page Followers



This report was prepared by the VAM/M&E unit of WFP Turkey Country Office, Ankara.

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