In October 2021, the national average price of WFP’s standard reference food basket reached its highest ever recorded level since monitoring started (2013), increasing by nine percent between September and October 2021. The average price of the reference basket was SYP 202,231 (USD 81 at the official exchange rate of SYP 2,500/USD).

On 23 October, the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection (MoITCP) increased the price of subsidized industrial and commercial diesel from SYP 750/liter to SYP 1,700/liter (up 127 percent) for private industrial facilities and private commercial and service activities. On 24 October, the MoITCP also set the price of domestic and industrial butane gas cylinders for consumers and all sectors outside the electronic card at SYP 30,600/10 kg and SYP 49,000/16 kg, respectively.

In October 2021, the Syrian pound’s informal exchange rate weakened by one percent, reaching SYP 3,476/USD. Compared to October 2020, the informal Syrian pound exchange rate has depreciated by 33 percent and by 82 percent compared to October 2019 (start of Lebanese financial crisis).

For further information, please contact: Jaan Michiels at Jan.Michiels@wfp.org and Abdelrahman Hamza at Abdelrahman.Hamza@wfp.org.

**Highlights**

- In October, the national average price of WFP’s standard reference food basket reached its highest ever recorded level since monitoring started (2013), increasing by nine percent between September and October 2021. The average price of the reference basket was SYP 202,231 (USD 81 at the official exchange rate of SYP 2,500/USD).
- On 23 October, the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection (MoITCP) increased the price of subsidized industrial and commercial diesel from SYP 750/liter to SYP 1,700/liter (up 127 percent) for private industrial facilities and private commercial and service activities. On 24 October, the MoITCP also set the price of domestic and industrial butane gas cylinders for consumers and all sectors outside the electronic card at SYP 30,600/10 kg and SYP 49,000/16 kg, respectively.
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**Standard Food Basket**

In October 2021, the national average price of a standard reference food basket1 increased by nine percent compared to September 2021, reaching SYP 202,231. The national average food basket price was 15 percent higher than that of April 2021 (six months ago) and was 128 percent higher compared to October 2020 (Figure 1). October marked the highest ever recorded monthly average reference food basket price since monitoring started in 2013. This increase is mainly attributed to the ongoing fuel shortage in Syria, and the prices of commodities worldwide, which have increased by 30 percent compared to last year (FAO Food Price Index September 2021).

M-o-m, 12 governorates recorded an increasing average reference food basket price in October 2021. The highest m-o-m increase of 25 percent was reported in Tartous reaching SYP 227,074, while the lowest m-o-m increase, of two percent, was reported in Idleb reaching SYP 231,420. The reference food basket price in Al-Hasakah and Ar-Raqqa remained unchanged m-o-m.

Year-on-year (y-o-y), the price of the reference food basket has significantly increased across all 14 governorates. Hama recorded the highest increase (up 149 percent), while Al-Hasakah recorded the lowest increase (up 63 percent).

The gap between the highest and lowest average food basket prices increased by four percent from SYP 87,452 in September 2021 to SYP 91,368 in October 2021, and by 222 percent since October 2020 (Chart 1). This gap highlights continued supply chain and fuel disruptions affecting the country nationwide.

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1. The standard food basket is a group of essential food commodities. In Syria, the food basket is set at a group of dry goods providing 2,060 kcal a day for a family of five during a month. The basket includes 37 kg bread, 19 kg rice, 19 kg lentils, 5 kg of sugar, and 7 litres of vegetable oil.
Fuel Crisis

Overview

The fuel supply situation has continued to worsen across Syria, with fuel shortages leading to a growing increase in fuel prices. On 23 October, the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection (MoITCP) increased the price of subsidized industrial and commercial diesel from SYP 750/liter to SYP 1,700/liter (up by 127 percent) for private industrial facilities and private commercial and service activities. Additionally, as a result of the skyrocketing butane gas prices in the informal markets that exceeded SYP 100,000/cylinder, on 24 October, the MoITCP set the price of domestic and industrial butane gas cylinders for consumers and all sectors outside the electronic card at SYP 30,600/10 kg and SYP 49,000/16 kg, respectively. This decision does not affect the price of subsidized butane gas cylinders sold through the electronic card. MoITCP reported it would only aim to control the price of butane gas in the informal market and prevent the manipulation of weight and specifications of the cylinder.

The fuel shortages have also negatively affected public transportation. This problem that has been further exacerbated with the advent of the new scholastic year in September. With the increased demand for fuel, some public transport drivers have reportedly opted for selling their subsidized fuel allocations on the informal markets rather than offering their transport services. Since August 2021, Damascus Governorate started to control the work of public transporters by stamping the monthly fuel supply cards for each vehicle during each trip. As a result, on 23 October, Damascus Governorate issued a decision to deprive 150 public transport vehicles from refueling, as their monthly fuel supply cards had not been stamped. The drivers of these public transport vehicles were alleged to be not committed to working on their designated transportation routes or reaching their destinations, further indicating use of their subsidized fuel allocations for other purposes, such as possibly selling fuel on the informal market.

Simultaneously, on 19 October, President al-Assad of Syria issued a legislative Decree No. 23 of 2021 to establish a fund in order to support renewable energy sources and raise energy efficiency. The fund also aims to reduce the consumption of fuel and electric energy used in the main sectors of the country, in addition to reducing gas emissions that are harmful to the environment and contribute to climate change.

Diesel

In October 2021, the formal national average price of diesel increased by four percent compared to September 2021 and by 171 percent y-o-y, reaching SYP 471/litre. Moreover, the informal national average price of transport diesel increased by nine percent m-o-m, reaching SYP 3,038/litre. The price also increased by 34 percent compared to April 2021 (six months ago) and by 326 percent y-o-y. The informal price remains five times higher than the formal price (SYP 471/litre) - Chart 2. As-Sweida recorded the highest informal price at SYP 3,938/litre (up 17 percent m-o-m), while Al-Hasakeh recorded the lowest price at SYP 363/litre (up 59 percent m-o-m).

Broken down by regions, the Southern region recorded the highest price of informal transport diesel at SYP 3,684/litre (up 12 percent m-o-m), while Northeast Syria recorded the lowest price at SYP 1,155/litre (up 13 percent m-o-m).

Butane gas prices

In October 2021, the price of a formal butane gas cylinder (25,000 L) increased by three percent m-o-m, reaching SYP 4,653/refill. However, compared to October 2020, the price has increased by 67 percent. Moreover, the informal national average price of one butane gas cylinder (25,000 L) increased by three percent m-o-m, reaching SYP 75,862/refill in October 2021. The price also increased by 165 percent compared to April 2021 (six months ago) and by 471 percent y-o-y. Tartous recorded the highest price at SYP 147,361/refill (down 14 percent m-o-m), while Al-Hasakeh recorded the lowest price at SYP 12,792/refill (up 5 percent m-o-m).

Broken down by regions, the Coastal region recorded the highest informal butane gas refill price at SYP 102,326/refill (down six percent m-o-m), followed by the Middle region at SYP 93,105/refill (down five percent m-o-m). Northeast Syria recorded the lowest price at SYP 22,650/refill (up six percent m-o-m), followed by the Cross-border region at SYP 41,903/refill (up eight percent m-o-m)- Chart 3.

*No formal prices have been reported in the cross-border region because there is no subsidized diesel or butane gas in the region.

*The price of domestic and industrial gas cylinders sold outside the electronic card: http://www.sana.sy/?p=1504213

*Depriving 150 public transport vehicles from refueling: http://www.sana.sy/?p=1504213

*Decree No.23: http://sana.sy/en/?p=251783
Staple cereals retail prices

**Wheat Flour**
M-o-m, the national average retail price of wheat flour throughout Syria increased in October 2021 by five percent, reaching SYP 2,135/kg. The wheat flour price also increased by 10 percent compared to April 2021 and by 95 percent y-o-y. Damascus recorded the highest wheat flour price in October at SYP 2,300/kg (up 5 percent m-o-m), followed by Tartous at SYP 2,292/kg (up three percent m-o-m). However, Idleb recorded the lowest price of SYP 1,887/kg (up 10 percent m-o-m), followed by Quneitra at SYP 1,988/kg (up two percent m-o-m).

Broken down by region, Northwest Syria recorded the highest retail price at SYP 2,331/kg (up three percent m-o-m), followed by the Coastal region at SYP 2,253/kg (up four percent m-o-m). While the Cross-border region recorded the lowest retail price at SYP 1,936/kg (up 11 percent m-o-m), followed by Northeast Syria at SYP 2,069/kg (up three percent m-o-m) - Chart 4.

**Rice**
The national average retail price of Egyptian white rice increased by six percent compared to September 2021 and by 92 percent y-o-y, reaching SYP 2,833/kg in October 2021. Tartous recorded the highest price at SYP 4,121/kg (up 66 percent m-o-m), followed by Dar’a at SYP 3,407/kg (up nine percent m-o-m). However, Al-Hasakeh recorded the lowest price at SYP 2,319/kg (down two percent m-o-m), followed by Ar-Raqqa at SYP 2,533 (up three percent m-o-m).

M-o-m, the Coastal region recorded the highest price at SYP 3,401/kg (up 32 percent m-o-m), followed by the Southern region at SYP 3,012/kg (up six percent m-o-m). Northwest Syria recorded the lowest average Egyptian white rice price by region at SYP 2,536/kg (up three percent m-o-m) - Chart 5.

**Bulgur**
M-o-m, the national average retail price of bulgur increased by six percent at SYP 2,321/kg in October 2021, whereas y-o-y, the price of bulgur increased by 85 percent. As-Sweida recorded the highest bulgur retail price at SYP 2,577/kg (up seven percent m-o-m), followed by Homs at SYP 2,534/kg (up two percent m-o-m). However, Al-Hasakeh recorded the lowest price at SYP 1,885/kg (up one percent m-o-m), followed by Idleb at SYP 2,061/kg (up 15 percent m-o-m).

The Middle region recorded the highest average bulgur price by region at SYP 2,484/kg (up three percent m-o-m), followed by the Southern region at SYP 2,456/kg (up seven percent m-o-m). While the Cross-border region recorded the lowest average bulgur price at SYP 1,782/kg (up eight percent m-o-m), followed by Northeast Syria at SYP 2,123/kg (up five percent m-o-m) - Chart 6.
Exchange rate**
In October 2021, the informal SYP/USD exchange rate slightly depreciated m-o-m by one percent, reaching SYP 3,476/USD. Moreover, compared to a year ago, the Syrian pound significantly depreciated by 33 percent. The highest informal exchange rate was reported in Damascus at SYP 3,506/USD (depreciated by one percent m-o-m), followed by Rural Damascus at SYP 3,505/USD (depreciated by one percent m-o-m). While the lowest rate was reported in Aleppo and Tartous at SYP 3,454/USD (depreciated by 0.3 and one percent, respectively, m-o-m), followed by Lattakia at SYP 3,455/USD (depreciated by one percent m-o-m).

Moreover, the formal exchange rate and the UN operational rate have both remained unchanged m-o-m at SYP 2,500/USD.

Bread***
The national average price of a subsidized bread bundle increased by two percent m-o-m, reaching SYP 237/bundle in October. The price of the subsidized bread bundle increased by 101 percent compared to April 2021 and by 374 percent y-o-y. The price of commercial bread increased by three percent m-o-m and by 26 percent y-o-y, reaching SYP 1,985/bundle in October. Lattakia recorded the highest average commercial bread price at SYP 2,667/bundle (up four percent m-o-m), followed by Damascus at SYP 2,281/bundle (up two percent m-o-m). While Tartous recorded the lowest average price at SYP 1,261/bundle (down 10 percent m-o-m), followed by Al-Hasakeh at SYP 1,425/bundle (up 0.3 percent m-o-m).

Broken down by region, the Southern region recorded the highest average price of SYP 2,214/bundle (up four percent m-o-m), followed by Northwest Syria at SYP 2,200/bundle (down one percent m-o-m). On the other hand, Northeast Syria recorded the lowest average price at SYP 1,482/bundle (up by 0.2 percent m-o-m), followed by the Cross-border region at SYP 1,964/bundle (up two percent m-o-m). - Chart 7.

Vegetables retail prices
The national average retail price of eggplants increased by 26 percent compared to September 2021 and by 168 percent y-o-y, reaching SYP 1,056/kg in October 2021. Northwest Syria recorded the highest eggplant retail price at SYP 1,384/kg (up 73 percent m-o-m), while the Southern region recorded the lowest price at SYP 877/kg (up six percent m-o-m).

In October 2021, the national average retail price of potatoes increased by 45 percent m-o-m and by 263 percent y-o-y, reaching SYP 1,692/kg. The Coastal region recorded the highest retail price for potatoes at SYP 1,942/kg (up 37 percent m-o-m), while the Cross-border region recorded the lowest price at SYP 1,315/kg (up 18 percent m-o-m).

Moreover, the national average retail price of onions increased by six percent compared to September 2021 and by 61 percent y-o-y, reaching SYP 823/kg in October 2021. The Coastal region recorded the highest retail price for onions at SYP 1,053/kg (up nine percent m-o-m), while Northwest Syria recorded the lowest price at SYP 617/kg (up one percent m-o-m). - Chart 8.

**When measuring exchange rates, there are two quotations. The first is the direct quotation where the US dollar is the base of measuring the change in exchange rate against the local currency. The second one is the indirect quotation where the local currency is the base of measuring the change in the exchange rate against the US dollar. The change in the exchange rate used below reflects the indirect quotation (measuring how much has the Syrian pound improved (appreciated) or worsened (depreciated) against the US dollar).

***Starting from March 2021, WFP-monitored commercial bread has been switched from resold public bread bundles to commercial bread sold at shops. Prices for the past year have been adjusted to include commercial bread resold from shops. Moreover, all prices have been adjusted to reflect bread bundle size of 1.1 kg instead of 1.3 kg since November 2020.

### Table 1: Informal market exchange rate, 1 USD to SYP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governorate</th>
<th>October 2021</th>
<th>% change (m-o-m)</th>
<th>% change (y-o-y)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aleppo</td>
<td>3,454</td>
<td>-0.3%</td>
<td>-32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al-Hasakeh</td>
<td>3,464</td>
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<td>-33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ar-Raqqa</td>
<td>3,465</td>
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<td>-33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As-Sweida</td>
<td>3,479</td>
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<td>-33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damascus</td>
<td>3,506</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dar’a</td>
<td>3,496</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deir-ez-Zor</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>-3%</td>
<td>-32%</td>
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<td>Hama</td>
<td>3,460</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homs</td>
<td>3,460</td>
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<td>-34%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Idleb</td>
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<td>Lattakia</td>
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<td>-31%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Quneitra</td>
<td>3,488</td>
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<td>-32%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Rural Damascus</td>
<td>3,505</td>
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<td>-32%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tartous</td>
<td>3,454</td>
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<tr>
<td>National average</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official rate</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>-50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WFP field offices

### Chart 7: Retail Prices of commercial bread, SYP

Source: WFP

### Chart 8: Retail vegetables prices, SYP

Source: WFP
**Terms of Trade (ToT)**

**ToT between wage labour and wheat flour**

The national average non-skilled labour wage, representing construction, off-loading and agricultural labour, was recorded at SYP 7,988/day (up six percent m-o-m) in October 2021. Moreover, the wage rate was 81 percent above its y-o-y level and 29 percent above levels recorded in April 2021 - Chart 9.

Lattakia recorded the highest daily wage rate at SYP 12,194/day (up 17 percent m-o-m), while Deir-ez-Zor recorded the lowest daily wage rate at SYP 4,631/day (up three percent m-o-m). Broken down by region, the Coastal region recorded the highest wage rate of SYP 12,153/day (up 20 percent m-o-m), while Northeast Syria recorded the lowest wage rate of SYP 6,008/day (up two percent m-o-m).

The national average ToT between wheat flour and wage labour, a proxy indicator for purchasing power, slightly increased by one percent between September and October 2021, reaching 3.74 kgs of wheat flour/daily wage compared to 3.72 kgs of wheat flour in September 2021.

The national average ToT between wheat flour and wage labour increased by 17 percent compared to April 2021 (six months ago), while it decreased by seven percent compared to October 2020. In other words, the national average daily wage of a non-skilled labourer could buy 3.74 kgs of wheat flour in October 2021 compared to 3.2 kgs in April 2021, and 4.0 kgs in October 2020.

Broken down by region, the Coastal region recorded the highest ToT at 5.4 kgs (up 15 percent m-o-m), while Northwest Syria recorded the lowest ToT at 2.7 kgs (almost unchanged m-o-m) - Chart 10.

**ToT between sheep and wheat flour**

The national average price of a two-year old alive male sheep decreased by four percent m-o-m, however it witnessed an increase by 33 percent since October 2020, reaching SYP 503,093/sheep in October 2021 (Chart 11).

Tartous recorded the highest average price of a two-year old alive male sheep at SYP 628,472/head (up three percent m-o-m), while Damascus recorded the lowest price at SYP 473,906/sheep (up 0.2 percent m-o-m).

Broken down by region, the Coastal region recorded the highest average price across Syria at SYP 577,778/sheep (up one percent m-o-m), followed by the Middle region at SYP 553,237/sheep (down eight percent m-o-m). While Northeast Syria recorded the lowest price at SYP 450,327/sheep (down 0.2 percent m-o-m), followed by Northwest Syria at SYP 473,906/sheep (up 0.2 percent m-o-m).

In October 2021, the ToT between an alive two-year old male sheep and wheat flour was 236 kg/sheep (down nine percent m-o-m). However, the ToT worsened by 32 percent since October 2020.

Broken down by region, the Middle region recorded the highest ToT at 263 kg/sheep (down 13 percent m-o-m), followed by the Coastal region at 256 kg/sheep (down three percent m-o-m). While Northwest Syria recorded the lowest ToT at 203 kg/sheep (down three percent m-o-m), followed by Northeast Syria at 218 kg/sheep (down three percent m-o-m) - Chart 12.
COVID-19 NFIs

Between September and October 2021, the prices of all monitored COVID-19 items increased. M-o-m, the price of soap bars and plastic gloves increased by five percent for each item, reaching SYP 578/bar and SYP 716/pair, respectively. Moreover, m-o-m, the price of hand gel, surgeon masks, alcohol spray and bleach increased by four, one, three and 0.3 percent, reaching SYP 1,189/50 ml, SYP 396/mask, SYP 2,503/200 ml and SYP 1,547/litre, respectively.

Compared to October 2020, the price of all COVID-19 items increased. The price of surgeon masks, plastic gloves and alcohol spray increased by 15, 118 and 60 percent, respectively. Moreover, the price of hand gel, bleach and soap bars increased by 27, 44 and 62 percent, respectively.

Additionally, compared to February 2020 (prior to the COVID-19 outbreak in Syria), the price of all items in October 2021 increased. For example the price of hand gel, alcohol spray and plastic gloves increased by 393, 499 and 968 percent, respectively. Also, the price of bleach, soap bars and surgeon masks increased by 272, 288 and 401 percent, respectively.

Key food-items retail prices

Red Split Lentils

M-o-m, the national average retail price of red split lentils increased by 12 percent throughout Syria, reaching SYP 3,476/kg. The price of red split lentils also increased by 23 percent since April 2021 (six months ago) and by 145 percent since October 2020.

Hama recorded the highest red split lentils price at SYP 4,218/kg (up 29 percent m-o-m), followed by Ar-Raqqa at 4,095/kg (down one percent m-o-m). While Al-Hasakeh recorded the lowest price at SYP 2,163/kg (up one percent m-o-m), followed by Deir-ez-Zor Syria at 2,960/kg (up 35 percent m-o-m).

Broken down by region, Northwest Syria recorded the highest price at SYP 4,407/kg (up 15 percent m-o-m), followed by the Middle region at SYP 3,705/kg (up 19 percent m-o-m). While Northeast Syria recorded the lowest price of red split lentils at SYP 3,135/kg (up nine percent m-o-m), followed by the Southern region at SYP 3,333/kg (up 13 percent m-o-m).

Fresh eggs

M-o-m, the national average retail price of fresh eggs throughout Syria increased by 14 percent reaching SYP 10,357/30 eggs. Moreover, the price of fresh eggs increased by 53 percent since April 2021 (six months ago) and by 125 percent since October 2020. As-Sweida recorded the highest fresh eggs price at SYP 10,948/30 eggs (up 16 percent m-o-m), while Al-Hasakeh recorded the lowest price at SYP 9,863/30 eggs (up nine percent m-o-m).

Broken down by region, Northwest Syria recorded the highest price at SYP 10,698/30 eggs (up 19 percent m-o-m), followed by the Southern region at SYP 10,551/30 eggs (up 16 percent m-o-m). The Cross-border region recorded the lowest price of fresh eggs at SYP 9,955/30 eggs (up 10 percent m-o-m), followed by the Coastal region at SYP 10,131/30 eggs (up 14 percent m-o-m).
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**Key:**
- ↑: Increase equal to or greater than 25 percent
- ➔: Increase between 0.1 and 25 percent
- ➔: No price change
- ➔: Decrease below normal price fluctuation
- *: Increase or decrease due to unskilled labor, wage and exchange rate fluctuations

* Breed (fattier) in Aleppo and Deir-ez-Zor represents slaughtered breed in government of Syria areas