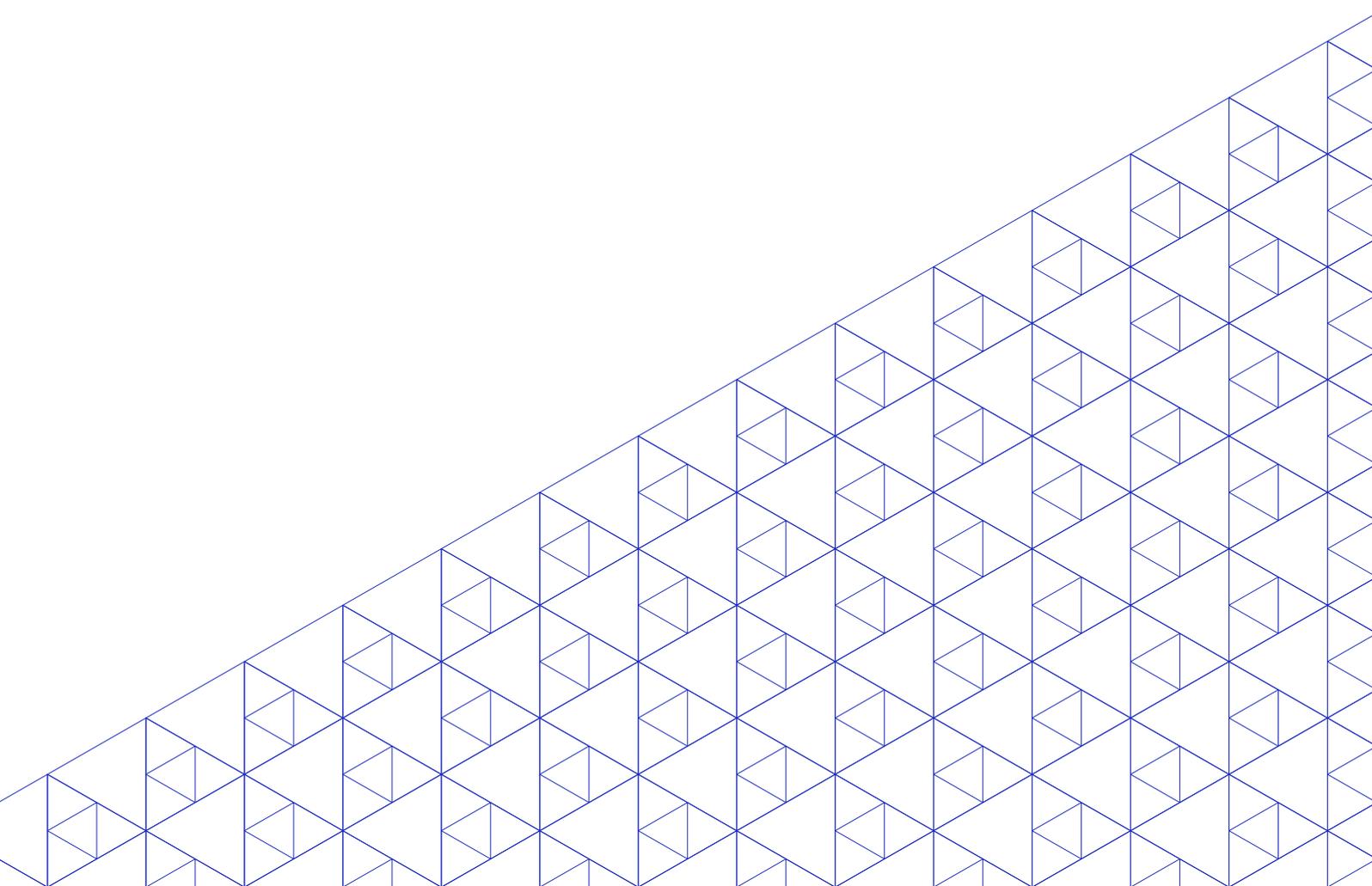




► **Composition, structure and affordability of the consumer basket of different income groups in the Republic of Tajikistan**

Survey report



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and affordability
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Faridun Vasiev,
Scientific Research Institute for Labour

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Contents

▶ 1. Foreword	1
▶ 2. Purposes and tasks	2
▶ 3. Methodology	3
▶ 4. Indicators	4
▶ 5. Approach	5
▶ 6. Sampling plan	6
▶ 7. Overview of the socio-economic situation in the labour market and analysis of the population's income in Tajikistan	8
7.1. General socio-economic situation in Tajikistan's labour market	8
7.2. Studies of the income of various population groups in the Republic of Tajikistan	10
7.3. Analysis of the income of various social groups of the Republic of Tajikistan in order to assess the shortfall of income to expenses	13
▶ 8. Overview of the legislation	15
▶ 9. Analytical results	22
▶ 10. Research conclusions	44
▶ 11. Recommendations	50
▶ 12. References	51
▶ 13. Annex	53

List of tables

Table 1.1. Changes in average monthly earnings for a single worker in the Republic of Tajikistan	11
Table 1.2. Average monthly accrued earnings for the Republic of Tajikistan's regions (som)	12
Table 1.3. Average nominal accrued earnings for men and women (from annual accounts, in som)	13
Table 1.4. Changes in the indices of nominal and real earnings and in the consumer price index (percent referenced to 2013 values)	13
Table 1.5. Index of consumer prices, (year-on-year percentages)	14

List of figures

Figure 1. Age of respondents	23
Figure 2. Gender of respondents	24
Figure 3. Family situation	24
Figure 4. Distribution of respondents by region	25
Figure 5. Distribution of urban and rural respondents	26
Figure 6. Number of members in the family	27
Figure 7. Do you have earnings from farming a small plot?	35
Figure 8. Do you have additional earnings?	37
Figure 9. Please indicate your total family income	38
Figure 10. How many people work in your family?	40
Figure 11. How often do prices change?	41
Figure 12. By what percentage have prices increased?	43

▶ 1. Foreword

In accordance with the Law of the Tajikistan Republic “On the subsistence minimum”, the basket of consumer goods constitutes the principal basis for determining the minimum wage, wage rates, and the amounts of pensions and social benefits for the citizens of the Republic of Tajikistan. Consequently, the state must be guided by the price of the consumer basket in arriving at the relative indexation for the population’s income for inflation (Tajikistan’s average inflation rate has hovered around 12.5% in recent years). In addition, the price of the consumer basket plays a large role in determining the state’s social policy. For example, it influences the socio-economic forecasts involved in short-term programmes, medium-term strategies, and long-term concepts for the country’s social advancement. The results of the scientific research conducted on the content and structure of the consumer basket and its affordability for various social groups in the Republic of Tajikistan will identify the expenditures of the populace on services and nutritious food. Proper diet and the population’s spending for nutritious food have a direct impact on maintaining the health of the country’s population. The direction for development of state policy for controlling and maintaining the nation’s health therefore depends upon these benchmarks.

► 2. Purposes and tasks

The purpose of this survey is to evaluate the content and structure of the consumer basket and its affordability for various social groups in the country's population. This will also be the basis for planning future strategy for the socio-economic development of the Republic of Tajikistan's population.

To achieve this purpose, the following tasks have been undertaken:

1. Listing the items in the consumer basket for all social groups in the Republic of Tajikistan's population.
2. Clarifying the content and structure of the consumer basket while accommodating new kinds of services for the country's populace.
3. Analysing changes in the income of the population and their impact on the level of social development in society as a whole.
4. Identifying problems that hinder growth of income and social equality for the country's population.
5. Determining the strata and composition of the country's population by income level, and in relation to the consumer basket and to social status.
6. Re-evaluating the content and structure of the Republic of Tajikistan's consumer basket.
7. Developing scenarios for increasing level of income and ensuring social protection of the country's populace.

▶ 3. Methodology

The research methodology incorporates the following techniques for collecting data:

1. Observations and diaries, which record daily expenses and needs of population groups selected according to familial types. These include a married couple with two children, a married couple with three children, a married couple with four children, a married couple with a child who has special needs, and a married couple (with one to four children) in which one parent has special needs. This method is employed to assess the actual daily needs of various social, gender, and age groups in the population. It will identify the strengths and weaknesses in the content and structure of the consumer basket, as well as the wage and income level of the population; and this will bear on the problems that work against increasing the income of the populace in the Republic of Tajikistan.
2. Quantitative research by means of a survey and questionnaire. These are to be in written form, arranged through personal contacts, and based on a specially devised sampling selection and use of the questionnaire and survey questions as tools.
3. Expert assessments, including expert analysis of the general socio-economic situation in the labour market and the income of various segments of the country's population, will be the basis for arriving at potential ways to resolve the issues in question.
4. Group discussions are to be conducted in order to obtain additional information and to collect general data and discover what different social segments of the population prefer.
5. The fundamental sources of information on these topics are:
 - ▶ the country's official statistics;
 - ▶ specialised printed media on the topics;
 - ▶ online sources;
 - ▶ specialised technical research literature;
 - ▶ the information provided by the survey's 3,600 respondents.

► 4. Indicators

The main indicators for this study are:

- A. Gender and age of respondents.
- B. Employment status.
- C. Family situation and number of members in the family.
- D. Cost (at the location of residence, city or region) of frequently consumed food items.
- E. Transport costs for respondents and the members of their families.
- F. Housing costs.
- G. Cost of nutritious food items.
- H. Cost of clothing and footwear.
- I. Cost of healthcare and other caring services.
- J. Cost (per month) of children's education (secondary school, lyceum, college or university).
- K. Communication costs.
- L. Monthly minimum expenses for the family (the statistically average family comprises five persons of whom two are adults and three are children). (Please answer as specifically as possible.)
- M. Monthly earnings of respondents.
- N. Number of family members who work and receive earnings.
- O. Income from any additional sources.
- P. Income (if any) from small farming plots (such as a garden, orchard, vineyard, gourds, poultry, cattle, sheep, goats or other).
- Q. Total monthly income for the family.
- R. Frequency of price changes for food items where the respondent resides (city or region).
- S. Amount or percentage change in prices for food items where the respondent resides (city or region).
- T. Reason for price changes for food items where the respondent resides (city or region).

▶ 5. Approach

The study incorporated the features described below including the survey together with focus groups. Survey respondents represented various population groups in all regions of the Republic of Tajikistan and resided in both urban and rural areas. Among them there were men and women of working age, retirees, youth, the employed and the unemployed, migrant workers who had returned from abroad, and others. The focus groups also had participants from various social groups. Research was conducted from February through June 2022. The study also produced a socio-economic evaluation across the indicators published by international organisations as well as by governmental agencies of the Republic of Tajikistan. The basic purpose of this research was to identify the contents and structure of the consumer basket and its affordability for various population groups in Tajikistan.

► 6. Sampling plan

The sociological research encompassed respondents from different social segments of the country (including youth, women, men, persons of both working and retirement age, persons with special needs, while also taking into account age, family situation and geographic location) in order to determine the structure of their income and their minimum needs as consumers. The total number of respondents was set at 3,600 individuals.

The study's geographic coverage of the questionnaire and survey included the cities of Dushanbe, Khujand, Kulob, Khorugh, Isfara, Bokhtar, Tursunzoda, Vahdat, Guliston, and Panjakent (**urban populations**) and also the districts of Bobojon Gufarov, Gorny Mastchoh, Vanj, Ishkoshim, Yovon, Dzh. Rumi, Shamsiddin Shohin, Rudaki, Rasht, and the Lakhsh region (**regions which contain mostly rural households**).

The research apparatus required composition of the questionnaire for respondents covering their daily (or monthly) consumption needs, income, level of earnings, total family income, and total daily (or monthly) family expenses as follows:

- food consumed;
- utilities;
- transportation, public transit, cost of insurance and maintenance of a small used car, transportation assistance for persons with special needs;
- communication and internet, purchase of a computer or mobile telephone, SIM cards, online charges per minute for conversations;
- costs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic;
- preventive medical treatment, treatment for injuries and accidents, routine illnesses, costs arising from special needs;
- children's education, school supplies, school uniforms, transportation, pocket money for school, cost of extra-curricular activities;
- housing and utilities, including potable water, hot water, sewerage, heat and electricity;
- and questions concerning inflation and fluctuations in currency exchange and their effect on the price of goods and services.

Questions were developed to elicit discussion of the topics at hand in focus groups and disclose the problems that various segments of Tajikistan's population have in matching their income to the consumer basket.

The sampling plan below was meant to include youth, women, men, persons of both working and retirement age, and persons with special needs across the country's regions.

No.	City or district	Number of respondents	Gender (%)		Working age or retirement age (%)	
			Women	Men	Working age	Retirement age
1	Dushanbe	360	50	50	70	30
2	Khujand	250	50	50	70	30
3	Kulob	250	50	50	70	30
4	Bokhtar	250	50	50	70	30
5	Isfara	200	50	50	70	30
6	Khorugh	200	50	50	70	30
7	Tursunzoda	200	50	50	70	30
8	Vahdat	200	50	50	70	30
9	Guliston	170	50	50	70	30
10	Panjakent	170	50	50	70	30
11	Bobojon Gufarov	170	50	50	70	30
12	Rudaki	150	50	50	70	30
13	Rasht	150	50	50	70	30
14	Ishkoshim	130	50	50	70	30
15	Yovon	130	50	50	70	30
16	Dzh. Rumi	130	50	50	70	30
17	Shamsiddin Shohin	130	50	50	70	30
18	Gorny Mastchoh	120	50	50	70	30
19	Vanj	120	50	50	70	30
20	Lakhsh	120	50	50	70	30
21	Total	3600	50	50	70	30

Five focus groups were conducted with participants drawn from different segments of the population (youth, women, men, persons of both working and retirement age, and persons with special needs). The focus groups took place in Dushanbe, Bokhtar, Kujand, Kulob and the Rasht district.

► 7. Overview of the socio-economic situation in the labour market and analysis of the population's income in Tajikistan

7.1. General socio-economic situation in Tajikistan's labour market

The Republic of Tajikistan is a state located in Central Asia. According to information from the Statistical Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, the country's population is 9.506 million. It should be noted that since 1991 (when the republic became independent) population has increased by 73.2%.¹ Distribution of ages in the country shows 34.3% (3.258 million) under the working age (0 to 14 years); 59.9% (5.664 million) of working age (from 15 to 63 for men and to 58 for women); 6.1% (584,000) of retirement age (over 63 for men and over 58 for women), while youth (from 14 to 30 years old) make up 30.3% (or 2.879 million) of Tajikistan's total population. Disaggregation (distribution) of children and youth by age is as follows: 12.08% (1.149 million) from 0 to 4 years; 11.54% (1.097 million) from 5 to 9 years; 10.64% (1.011 million) from 10-14 years; 13.9% (822,000) from 15-19 years; 9.03% (858,000) from 20-24 years; and 8.89% (846,000) from 25 to 29 years old.²

The nationwide average life expectancy at birth is 75.1 years; for men it stands at 73.5 years while for women it is 76.8 years.³ Population density in Tajikistan is 67.2 persons per square kilometre.⁴ As of 1 January 2021 the total number of men in Tajikistan was 4.822 million, and the total for women was 4.683 million.⁵ A 73.6% majority of the population (7.004 million)⁶ lives in rural areas, while only 26.33% (2.501 million)⁷ live in cities. The Agency's statistics for 2020 places the country's workforce at over 5.625 million persons, of which 60.8 % are employed in farming and agribusiness.⁸ However, about 71.1% of those employed in farming work for employers who are owners of private property (mainly dekhan farms, i.e., independent economic units tied to certain plots of land).^{9,10}

The UN Human Development Programme in 2019¹¹ put the Republic of Tajikistan in 125th place worldwide with a human development index of 0.668. The country's official rate of unemployment is 2.1% According to the statistics from the Statistical Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan.¹² It should be emphasised that employment in Tajikistan increased by 32.7% from 2009¹³ to 2019.¹⁴ These

1 Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Tajikistan, Tajikistan: 30 Years of Independent Statehood, Dushanbe, 2021, p. 37.

2 Op. cit., note 1, p. 41.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Op. cit., note 1, p. 25.

8 Op. cit., note 1, p. 133.

9 Op. cit., note 1, p. 82.

10 Ibid.

11 United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Reports. Human Development Index (HDI) Ranking. Tajikistan. Available online at: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>.

12 Op. cit., note 1, p. 81.

13 ILO. The Statistical Agency of Tajikistan has undertaken a study of the workforce. Available online at: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_429188/lang--ru/index.htm.

unemployment figures are for the unemployed who have registered as such at local employment centres¹⁵ and therefore may not reflect the actual amount of unemployment in the country. Estimates by ILOSTAT based on research from 2016¹⁶ found a 6.9% rate of unemployment in the Republic of Tajikistan.¹⁷ Unfortunately, no unemployment figure is available for 2021 (statistics during the COVID-19 pandemic). Of course, the country's unemployment would have increased due to the pandemic for the obvious reason that workers in certain categories, especially those employed to provide such services as catering, restaurants, transport, hotels and more, were laid off and so became unemployed as demand for those services declined.

Tajikistan's labour market falls into three components: the officially employed, the informally employed, and external labour migrants.

External labour migration is a factor because Tajikistan has a workforce surplus and is not able to create enough new jobs to keep its population employed. This has caused external labour migration that began in the early 1990s after the country gained its independence. The majority of Tajikistan's external labour migrants seek earnings in the Russian Federation (90%) and the rest in the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Belarus, EU countries, the USA and also the United Arab Emirates. The number of external labour migrants to those countries had steadily increased from 2009 to 2013, a year in which they numbered 799,000.¹⁸ However, from 2014 to 2019 that figure had decreased by about 270,000 and finally totalled less than 530,000.¹⁹ Other sources, however, have found that in 2019 about 518,000 Tajik citizens were in Russia alone in order to work.²⁰

It is pertinent to state that remittances from Tajikistan's external labour migrants underwrite a substantial portion of consumer demand in the country's economy. (There are at present no research results that assess consumer needs and the extent to which they are met through remittances.) The data for 2009 to 2013 from the Migration Service of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan show a significant annual increase in remittances from Tajik external labour migrants. The peak year for these remittances was 2013 when total bank transfers to Tajikistan (90% from Russia and the rest from other countries) reached over 4.154 billion US dollars.²¹ A turning point came in 2019 as remittances from the country's external labour migrants began to decrease. The main reason for this was that most of the external labour migrants were working in Russia, and in 2014 the exchange rate for Russian rubles to US dollars began turning less favourable (due to sanctions) while the population and, of course, labour migrants were earning about the same amount as before. For example, up until 2014 the average earnings of a migrant in Russia came to 30,000 Russian rubles, which were approximately equivalent to 1,000 US dollars (labour migrants sent about 60% of their earnings home); but after the sharp decline in the value of Russian rubles, the same earnings converted into US currency for transfer would buy only about

14 Op. cit., note 1, p. 81.

15 For more on this, see: Programme of cooperation between the tripartite partners of the Republic of Tajikistan and the International Labour Organisation Decent Work Team for 2015 to 2017. Available online at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---sro-moscow/documents/publication/wcms_432703.pdf.

16 ILO. Regions and countries. Eastern Europe and Central Asia. News room. Labour Force Survey Data Processed in Tajikistan. 28 October 2016. Available online at: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_533861/lang--en/index.htm.

17 International Labour Organisation. ILOSTAT Database. Country Profiles, Tajikistan. Unemployment rate. Available online at: <https://ilostat.ilo.org/data/country-profiles/>.

18 Report of the Migration Service of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2009–2013.

19 Report of the Migration Office of the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Republic of Tajikistan, Dushanbe, 2019.

20 Report of the Migration Office of the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Republic of Tajikistan, Dushanbe, 2020.

21 Op. cit., note 18.

450 or 500 US dollars. Labour migrants then would still retain perhaps 40% for their own expenses and send 60% home, but the value of remittances began to diminish in 2014. In fact, remittances to Tajikistan from abroad continued to decline from 2014 through 2019. For example, by 2019 remittances were 2.4 times less than in 2013 and came to a total of 1.730 billion US dollars.²² As practically all countries experienced the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the number of external labour migrants substantially decreased, and Tajikistan was no exception. In 2020 the amount of remittances fell even in comparison to the previous year, and this meant that families had even less means to purchase food and services, etc. May to October 2020 was considered the peak of the (first) COVID-19 wave in Tajikistan. During that time, Tajikistan's labour market saw layoffs without severance and reductions in wages, which worsened the position of families and restricted their consumption of food, domestic services, transport, communications and the internet as well as other daily needs of the country's population.²³

Various sources indicate that a significant rate of informal employment is another feature of Tajikistan's labour market. Studies of the workforce conducted in 2004, 2009 and 2016 arrived at quite elevated estimates of informal employment. For example, the workforce study conducted in 2004 found that informal employment stood at 46%,²⁴ and another study from 2014 set informal employment three percent higher at 49%.²⁵ Results of the workforce study conducted in 2019 indicated that Tajikistan's informal employment was 29.4% (which did not include those employed in agriculture).²⁶ The World Bank's estimate of informal employment in Tajikistan placed it at about 60%.²⁷ Also in 2019, the Tajikistan Research Institute for Labour, Migration and Employment conducted a sociological study that found informal employment running at 45.4%.²⁸ All the studies above lead to the conclusion that researchers and specialists share a similar opinion about informal employment in Tajikistan. And informal employment directly affects income levels among the population and their consumer spending.

7.2. Studies of the income of various population groups in the Republic of Tajikistan

As of the end of 2021, Tajikistan had not established any officially approved benchmark for minimum subsistence. Along with this, there is the issue that the country's minimum wage applies only to those officially employed. As already mentioned, Tajikistan has a very substantial proportion of its workforce employed informally, and in agriculture a certain number are self-employed, for example on dekhan plots, who are paid wages mostly without official documentation.

Table 1.1 shows changes in average monthly earnings for a single worker in the Republic of Tajikistan from 2016 through the first two quarters of 2021.

²² Op. cit., note 19.

²³ Effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the labour market of the Republic of Tajikistan: A sociological study (commissioned research).

²⁴ Programme for reducing unregistered (informal) employment in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2019–2023, approved by Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan No. 439 dated 30 August 2019, p. 17.

²⁵ Op. cit., note 24, p. 20.

²⁶ Op. cit., note 24, p. 30.

²⁷ Ajwad M.I., Hut S., Abdulloev I. et al., *The skills road: Skills for employability in Tajikistan*, Washington DC: World Bank, 2014, p.6. Available online at: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/20388/910090WPOP14350d000Tajikistan0Final.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

²⁸ Research Institute for Labour, Migration and Employment under the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Republic of Tajikistan, *Diagnostic analysis of informal employment and ways to reduce it*, Dushanbe, 2019, p. 49.

► **Table 1.1. Changes in average monthly earnings for a single worker in the Republic of Tajikistan²⁹**

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Q1&2, 2021
Average monthly earnings of a worker, som	962.20	1,144.20	1,233.80	1,335.50	1,393.70	1,491.30
Average monthly earnings of a worker, USD	122.80	133.80	134.80	140.10	123.30	131.90

These results show that average monthly earnings in local currency (som) increased over the period by 54.9%. The change when converted to US dollars amounts to an increase (for 2016 to 2019) of about 14%. Then from 2019 to 2020 there was a decrease of 12%. For the entire period studied (from 2016 to the first two quarters of 2021), the average monthly earnings of a single worker in terms of US dollars increased by only 7.4%. When this increase (7.4%) is compared to the increase in som (54.9%), the difference comes to 47.5%. The conclusion from this would be that there has been a decrease in consumer purchasing power due to inflation (and also due to the less favourable exchange rate of local currency into US dollars). Another conclusion would be that over the period studied (2016 to the first two quarters of 2021) average monthly earnings of a single worker in Tajikistan grew by a total of 7.4%. This occurred alongside increasing prices for food and services, etc., all of which was naturally reflected in the population's consumer spending, needs, and satisfaction. Table 1.2 shows nominal average monthly accrued earnings for the Republic's regions from 2013 to 2019.

²⁹ Office of Labour Relations and Standard of Living under the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Republic of Tajikistan, Dushanbe, 2021.

► Table 1.2. Average monthly accrued earnings for the Republic of Tajikistan's regions (som)

No.		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
1	Republic of Tajikistan	694.90	816.20	878.90	962.10	1,144.20	1,233.80	1,335.50
2	US dollars	145.90	165.40	142.60	122.80	133.80	134.80	140.10
3	Dushanbe	1,246.00	1,402.70	1,526.60	1,619.50	1,800.50	1,935.30	2,040.50
4	US dollars	261.50	284.20	247.80	206.70	210.60	211.50	214.10
5	Gorny-Badakhshan (GBO)	587.10	672.00	701.50	796.20	917.00	1,034.70	1,200.30
6	US dollars	123.40	136.20	113.80	101.60	107.30	113.10	126.00
7	Sughd region	552.80	645.70	696.80	774.20	1,012.90	1,072.30	1,182.70
8	US dollars	116.00	130.80	113.00	98.80	118.50	117.20	124.10
9	Khatlon region	503.90	615.20	645.00	714.10	843.40	913.30	998.50
10	US dollars	105.80	124.70	104.60	91.10	98.60	99.80	104.80
11	Regions of Republican Subordination (RRP)	634.20	756.80	823.20	901.80	968.50	1,038.20	1,120.10
12	US dollars	133.10	153.40	135.00	115.100	113.30	113.50	117.50

These data lead to the following results. For the period examined (2013 to 2019), nationwide income as a whole increased by 92.2%, but it declined in terms of US dollars by 3.9%. The purchasing power of average monthly earnings received was consequently trending downward by 3.9%. Looking at the city of Dushanbe in isolation, average nominal monthly earnings for this period rose by over 63.7% in local currency, but in US dollar terms there was a decrease of 18.1%. If results for Dushanbe are compared to the decline in average monthly nominal earnings for the country as a whole, then Dushanbe's loss of purchasing power was about 4.6 times greater. In the GBO, the growth in som reached 104.4%, but only 2.1% in US dollars. In the Sughd region, the increase in som came to 113.9%, while in US dollars there was also an increase of about 6.9%. In the Khatlon region, the som change was plus 98%, but in US dollars minus 0.9%. In the Regions of Republican Subordination, the som rose by 76.6%, while average monthly nominal earnings in US dollars declined by 11.7%.

Consequently, the decline in average monthly accrued earnings for the period reviewed (2013 to 2019) was 3.9% for the country as a whole, 18% for Dushanbe, 0.9% for Khatlon region, and 11.7% for the Regions of Republican Subordination. But in the Gorny-Badkhshan region (GBO), there was increase of 2.1%, while the increase in the Sughd region reached 6.9%. Most of the country therefore experienced a reduction in the purchasing power of average monthly accrued earnings from 2013 to 2019. Over this period there was a corresponding steady increase in prices of consumer goods and services throughout the country (see Table 1.4 and 1.5). **This situation has a negative impact on the country's level of consumption and on the degree of satisfaction with the consumer basket. That is, the population began to reduce its consumption in keeping with the decline in the purchasing power of earnings.** Due to the observed change in prices (price increases) and the loss of purchasing power by the earnings of Tajikistan's populace, it is necessary to make an evaluation of consumption and to reconsider the content and amount of the consumer basket for the country with consideration of current prices for goods and services and for the actual purchasing power of earnings received by the population in Tajikistan's regions.

7.3. Analysis of the income of various social groups of the Republic of Tajikistan in order to assess the shortfall of income to expenses

Table 1.3 presents average monthly nominal accrued earnings broken out by gender for 2018 to 2019.

► Table 1.3. Average nominal accrued earnings for men and women (from annual accounts, in som)

No.	Categories	2018		2019	
		Men	Women	Men	Women
1	Average monthly accrued earnings	1,711.10	1,020.40	1,623.40	1,039.80
2	Real sector	1,935.10	1,072.40	1,761.30	1,072.30
3	Service sector	1,617.10	1,015.70	1,561.90	1,036.40

Inspection of the results for 2018 shows that the average monthly nominal accrued earnings for men was 40.3% greater than for women. In 2019 the difference was 35.9%, and this indicates that men received substantially more than women over this period. The difference broken down by economic sectors would be 44.5% for 2018 and 39.1% for 2019 in the real sector, and in the service sector this becomes 37.2% in 2018 and 33.6% in 2019. **This comparison then shows that men have average monthly nominal accrued earnings that are about 35 to 40 percent greater than those of women. This disproportion will necessarily affect the purchasing power of men and women.**

Table 1.4 presents changes in the indices of nominal and real earnings and in the index of consumer prices.

► Table 1.4. Changes in the indices of nominal and real earnings and in the consumer price index (percent referenced to 2013 values)³⁰

No.	Indices	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
1	Nominal earnings	100	117.5	126.5	138.5	164.7	177.6	192.2
2	Consumer prices	100	111.5	118.0	124.9	134.1	139.2	150.1
3	Real earnings	100	105.3	107.2	110.8	122.8	127.6	128.0

³⁰ Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Tajikistan 2020, Dushanbe, 2021, p. 132.

The table above shows a steady increase in the index of nominal earnings (92.2%) for the period, while the consumer price index grew comparatively less (to reach about 50.1%). Despite the relatively high index of nominal earnings, the local currency (som) exchange rate fell by more than two times compared to the US dollar (in 2013 one US dollar was equivalent to 485 some, but by 2019 it was worth 975 som). Because about half of consumer merchandise in Tajikistan is imported from abroad (usually for payment in US dollars and with continually increasing prices in terms of som), this obviously decreases the purchasing power of the country's populace. The index of real earnings shows a growth by 28%, but that falls quite short of the growth in nominal earnings (by 64.2 percentage points) and the consumer price index (by 22.1 percentage points).

Table 1.5 shows the indices of consumer prices including those for food items, non-food items, and paid services.

► Table 1.5. Index of consumer prices, (year-on-year percentages)³¹

No	Indices	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
1	Consolidated consumer price index	105.1	106.6	105.8	105.9	107.3	103.8	107.9
	<i>consisting of:</i>							
2	Food items	105.4	107.6	102.6	104.2	109.1	102.4	111.3
3	Non-food items	106.3	103.8	104.8	108.2	104.3	105.2	105.1
4	Paid services	101.6	104.3	103.0	104.9	106.0	105.9	102.6

These values indicate a continuous annual increase in consumer prices from 2013 to 2019. The peak increases came in 2017 when they rose by 7.3% and again in 2019 with an increase of 7.9% (the main reason for that substantial increase was that important food items are imported, such as flour and grain from Kazakhstan, sugar and vegetable oil from Russia, etc., and any interruptions in supply of basic foodstuffs from abroad cause substantial price increases in the domestic market). Food items also rose most in 2019 at 11.3% more than in 2018, while 2017 came in at 9.1% above 2016. The average increase for non-food items over the entire period was about 5.4%, while paid services rose by about 3.7%. Tajikistan experienced a sustained annual increase in prices for food items, non-food items and paid services. The growth in real earnings, however, did not always match the increase for consumer goods. The foregoing information would support the conclusion that the purchasing power of the country's population undergoes both negative and positive changes.

³¹ Op. cit., note 30, p. 143.

► 8. Overview of the legislation

The Republic of Tajikistan has several laws and legal regulatory acts in force that regulate the consumer basket; among them are the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On the subsistence minimum”, the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On state social standards”, and the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On targeted social assistance”. It is necessary first of all to define the term “consumer basket”. The Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On the subsistence minimum” states the following: “...the consumer basket is the minimum set of food items, non-food items, and services necessary for maintaining a person’s health and vitality.”³² In fact, the consumer basket comprises the list of food items necessary for a person to sustain their vitality as well as the list of non-food items along with services such as maintenance of common areas in housing, clothing, transport, education, communication, and medical treatment and preventive medicine. The next important term to define is the “subsistence minimum”. On this topic, the Law “On the subsistence minimum” mentions the following: “...the subsistence minimum consists of the cost of the consumer basket and total mandatory payments.”³³

For this study, we sought to canvass various social and demographic groups among Tajikistan’s population. These included men, women, persons of working age, pensioners, and persons with special needs. “The basic social and demographic groups of the population are categories of citizens aggregated by age and gender, social position, and level of material well-being (population of working age, pensioners, and children).”³⁴

The results from this sociological research will provide information about the standard of living of the respondents who took part in the study. “The standard of living is the totality of material and spiritual goods and services that ensure satisfaction of people’s essential needs.”³⁵ The research results will also yield information about the average income of families that participated as respondents in the study. “Average family income is the average consolidated income divided by the number of family members.”³⁶ Article 3 of the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On the subsistence minimum” states the main goals and definitions of the subsistence minimum:

- ...assessing the standard of living of the population in order to formulate and implement social policy and targeted social programmes;
- analysis of and prognosis for the standard of living of the population;
- justification for providing state targeted social assistance to those in poverty;
- gradual convergence among the established amounts for the minimum wage, pensions, benefits, and social payments;
- identifying the poverty level, and implementing measures to support the population.³⁷

32 Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On the subsistence minimum” No. 638 dated 18 May 2009, approved by the Majlisi Milli (Supreme Assembly) and Majlisi Oli (Supreme Assembly of the National Parliament).

33 Op. cit., note 32.

34 Op. cit., note 32.

35 Op. cit., note 32.

36 Op. cit., note 32.

37 Op. cit., note 32.

These sociological research results may then be used by offices of the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Republic of Tajikistan in evaluating the population's standard of living by analysing it and making projections; providing assistance to those in poverty; and in gradually making the minimum wage and other payments match the amount of the consumer basket. Article 5 of the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On the subsistence minimum" indicates what the consumer basket comprises: "The consumer basket consists of: a set of food items; a set of non-food items; and a range of services."³⁸

The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan has approved a resolution on the methodology for arriving at the consumer basket for the main social and demographic groups in the population and notes the following:

The Methodological Recommendations are to be applied in the following circumstances:

- as an indicator in setting priorities for social policy and for determining the minimum wage, pensions, benefits and compensations, and for other social payments;
- in evaluating the standard of living in order to subsequently devise social policy and refine the necessary targeted social programmes;
- in the course of devising targeted social programmes for low-income groups in the population;
- in setting minimum social standards for the standard of living guaranteed by the state for its population;
- and as a criterion (indicator) for identifying the low-income level which would result in entitlement to social benefits and compensations.

The contents of the set of food items, non-food items, and services is determined taking into account the following:

- technical recommendations concerning the minimum volume of consumption and a list of goods and services that are necessary for sustaining a person's health and vitality;
- the actual volume of consumption of food items, non-food items, and services among low-income families;
- the socio-economic and demographic factors that are characteristic for the income levels of the population, the composition and structure of the population by age and gender, the size and structure of families, and the financial capacity of the state to ensure social protection for the population at the regional and local levels;
- the objective distinctions in the consumption of food items, non-food items, and services in the Republic of Tajikistan with due regard for natural and climatic conditions, national traditions, and local distinctive features.

In determining the set of food items, non-food items, and services that will comprise the minimum set, groups are to be aggregated in accordance with this Methodological Recommendation.³⁹

The Methodological Recommendations used in determining the consumer basket for basic social and demographic groups also define the fundamental principles for establishing the minimal set of food items necessary to sustain human health and vitality:

- ... meeting the needs of basic social and demographic groups of the population based on nutrients derived from the chemical composition and caloric value of food items;

³⁸ Op. cit., note 32.

³⁹ Methodological Recommendations for Determining the Consumer Basket for Basic Social and Demographic Groups in the Republic of Tajikistan, approved by Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan No. 775 dated 29 December 2012.

- ▶ the existing profile of nutrition taking into account the actual consumption of food items in low-income families;
- ▶ and choosing food items that make up a nutritious diet at minimal cost.⁴⁰

The minimum set of food items and the nutritional standards for various groups of the population were developed on the basis of the Standards for the Physiological Requirements for Nutrition and Energy among Particular Groups of the Population (approved in 2010 by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Tajikistan and duly registered with the Ministry of Justice) and in keeping with the recommendations of the World Health Organisation.

The minimum set of food items for persons of working age was arrived at based on the physiological profile characteristic of men and women not engaged in strenuous physical labour.

The minimum set of food items for pensioners was arrived at based on an age-related reduction in the requirement for caloric intake.

The minimum set of food items for children was arrived at based on the need to provide them with nutrition adequate for developing a healthy organism (ages 0 to 6) and also on additional nutrition for active social and physical development (ages 7 to 14).

The minimum set of food items for basic social and demographic groups in the population of the Republic of Tajikistan was determined in accordance with tables attached to the Methodological Recommendations (Annexes 2 to 4).⁴¹

Determining the minimum set of non-food items

The fundamental principles used in determining the minimum set of non-food items necessary to sustain human health and vitality are:

- ▶ meeting the needs of basic social and demographic groups of the population in the territorial and administrative districts where they reside while taking into account the natural and climatic conditions as they pertain to non-food items, and also taking into account the age-related factors in protecting the organism from environmental impact as well as in arranging everyday living;
- ▶ the current level of provision of non-food items to low-income families;
- ▶ updating the selection of minimum non-food items, their minimum variety, their lower-bound retail prices, and the availability of non-food items which present no health hazard in use.

The minimum set of non-food items was arrived at based on non-food items for both individual use and use in common.

In arriving at the set of non-food items for individual use by basic social and demographic groups of the population, the qualitative diversity of items for women due to the physiological features of their bodies as well as the need to more frequently update the goods for the working-age population because of their relatively intense social and physical activity and the goods for children because of the natural growth of their organisms were all taken into account.

The minimum set of non-food items for use in common by families was arrived at based on statistical data that imputed it for a single family in the Republic of Tajikistan from a table presented in the Methodological Recommendations (Annex 9).⁴²

40 Op. cit., note 39.

41 Op. cit., note 39.

42 Op. cit., note 39.

Determining the minimum set of services

The fundamental principles used in determining the minimum set of services required to sustain human health and vitality are:

- meeting the needs of basic social and demographic groups of the population for housing, providing for a healthy lifestyle, and using public transit (buses and trolleybuses);
- the existing use of public transit services (buses and trolleybuses);
- recognition that such services require payment.

The minimum set of services includes housing and common area maintenance, use of public transit (buses and trolleybuses) as well as other services.

The housing and common area services include provision of housing, heating, hot and cold water, sewerage, gas and electricity.

The minimum set of services for housing is arrived at in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan concerning the social standard (standard living space) established for one member of a family consisting of three or more persons.

Heating, hot and cold water, sewerage, and gas and electricity are included in the set of minimum services and are derived from the sectoral standard cost of water, electricity and gas for household needs and from the cost of energy required for heating dwellings.

The quantity of transportation services takes into account:

- that the working-age population requires a greater number of trips compared to children and pensioners and that women for domestic and cultural purposes require more than men and residents of major population centres, including for the use of several modes of transportation;
- that discounted prices for public transit services (buses and trolleybuses) apply to pensioners and children.

Other kinds of services (for communication and repairs to clothing and footwear, hairdressing, public baths, laundry, cinema, etc.) are included in the set of minimum services as a percentage of the total expenditures on those services derived from statistical research.

Services of organisations providing healthcare, education, culture, and social services are not included in the set of minimum services. In accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan, the minimum amounts of these services are to be provided at no charge by organisations financed from budgets at various levels and from extrabudgetary state social funds.

The minimum set of services for the Republic of Tajikistan is presented in a table attached to the Methodological Recommendations (Annex 10).⁴³

⁴³ Op. cit., note 39.

Method for determining the minimum consumer basket

The minimum consumer basket for basic social and demographic groups is based upon the minimum set of food items, non-food items, and services.

The food items in the minimum set are divided into the following eleven groups:

- ▶ bread, bread products, legumes, and grains;
- ▶ potatoes;
- ▶ vegetables and gourds;
- ▶ fresh fruit;
- ▶ sugar and confectionery items;
- ▶ meat;
- ▶ fish;
- ▶ milk and dairy products;
- ▶ eggs;
- ▶ vegetable oil, margarine and other fats;
- ▶ other products.

Potatoes, fresh fruit, and eggs are each in the minimum consumer basket in the amounts prescribed for the minimum set of food items. Vegetables and gourds, meat, fish, margarine and other fats, as well as other products are added together as a single group for inclusion in the minimum consumer basket.⁴⁴

The Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On targeted social assistance” states that “targeted social assistance is the provision of monetary and material assistance to low-income citizens (families).⁴⁵

The purpose of targeted social assistance is:

- ▶ to help ease difficult living situations and support low-income citizens (families) whose minimum earnings are less than the criterion for poverty;
- ▶ to provide conditions that offer low-income citizens (families) opportunities to improve their standard of living;
- ▶ to strengthen social support for low-income citizens (families);
- ▶ to reduce the segment of the population in the low-income category;
- ▶ to use budget and extrabudgetary funds efficiently.⁴⁶

The Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On state social standards” states the following: State social standards are standards and benchmarks established by the state in order to ensure the realization of the social rights which are guaranteed to citizens by the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan and the procedures provided for the exercise of those rights.⁴⁷ The system of state social standards consists

44 Op. cit., note 39.

45 Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On targeted social assistance” adopted by Resolution No. 626 dated 10 November 2016 of the Majlis Namoyandagon of Majlis Olli of the Republic of Tajikistan and approved by Resolution No. 335 dated 16 February 2017 of the Majlis Namoyandagon of Majlis Olli of the Republic of Tajikistan.

46 Op. cit., note 45.

47 Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On state social standards” (in the version of Law of the RT No. 1842 dated 23 December 2021).

of the totality of state social standards applicable to basic areas of socio-economic relations.⁴⁸ The basic social and demographic groups are main categories of citizens designated by age, social position, or level of material well-being (working age, pensioners and children).⁴⁹ The standard of living is the totality of material and intangible goods and services that ensure satisfaction of people's essential needs.⁵⁰

Assigning state social standards

State social standards are established in order to:

- identify the guaranteed structure and standard for citizens' consumption of basic material goods and services;
- apply a single social policy in the country's various regions;
- serve as benchmarks for justifying budget expenditures for varying degrees of social needs;
- assess the population's standard of living and progress in implementing social policy;
- refer to in designing social programmes;
- justify the necessity of and amounts established for targeted social assistance to the population that stands in need of it.⁵¹

The state system of social standards

The state system of social standards extends to the following basic areas of social relations:

- wages and labour relations;
- promoting employment and supporting the unemployed;
- providing pensions and social insurance;
- providing goods in high demand;
- providing housing, common area and household services;
- education;
- science;
- healthcare;
- physical culture and sport;
- culture;
- social assistance and social services;
- ensuring environmental safety;
- protecting citizens' social rights;
- application of taxation and pricing methods.⁵²

48 Op. cit., note 47.

49 Op. cit., note 47.

50 Op. cit., note 47.

51 Op. cit., note 47.

52 Op. cit., note 47.

State standards for wages and labour relations

1. State social standards for wages stipulate establishing:

- ▶ the minimum wage in keeping with the subsistence minimum;
- ▶ the regulations and procedure applied to wages of workers in public service;
- ▶ the procedure for indexing wages in the event that inflation exceeds a given level or that there are wage arrears;
- ▶ procedures for overtime work and working on weekends and holidays.

2. State social standards for labour relations stipulate:

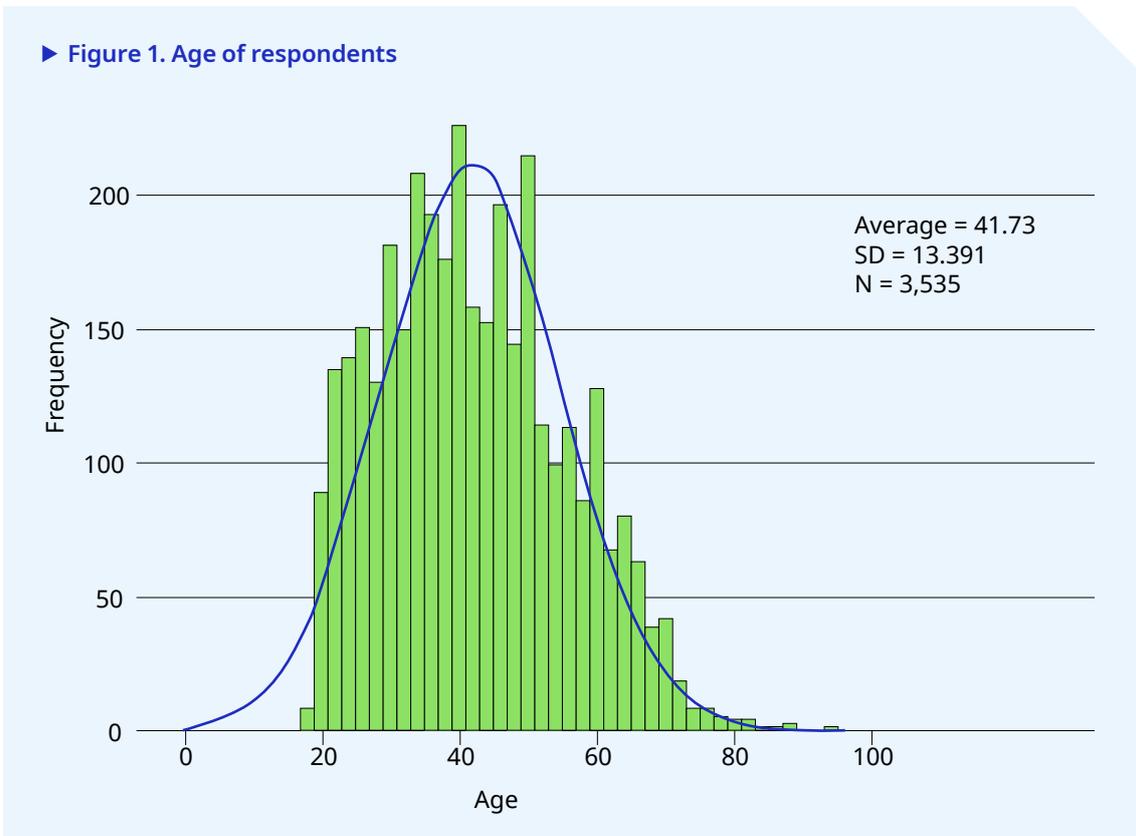
- ▶ the procedures for hiring and dismissing workers and calculating their length of service;
- ▶ the maximum length of a workday, work week and month;
- ▶ the procedure for providing annual paid leave and for determining its length;
- ▶ reduction in the workday for workers in strenuous or underground jobs or jobs performed under harmful conditions.

► 9. Analytical results

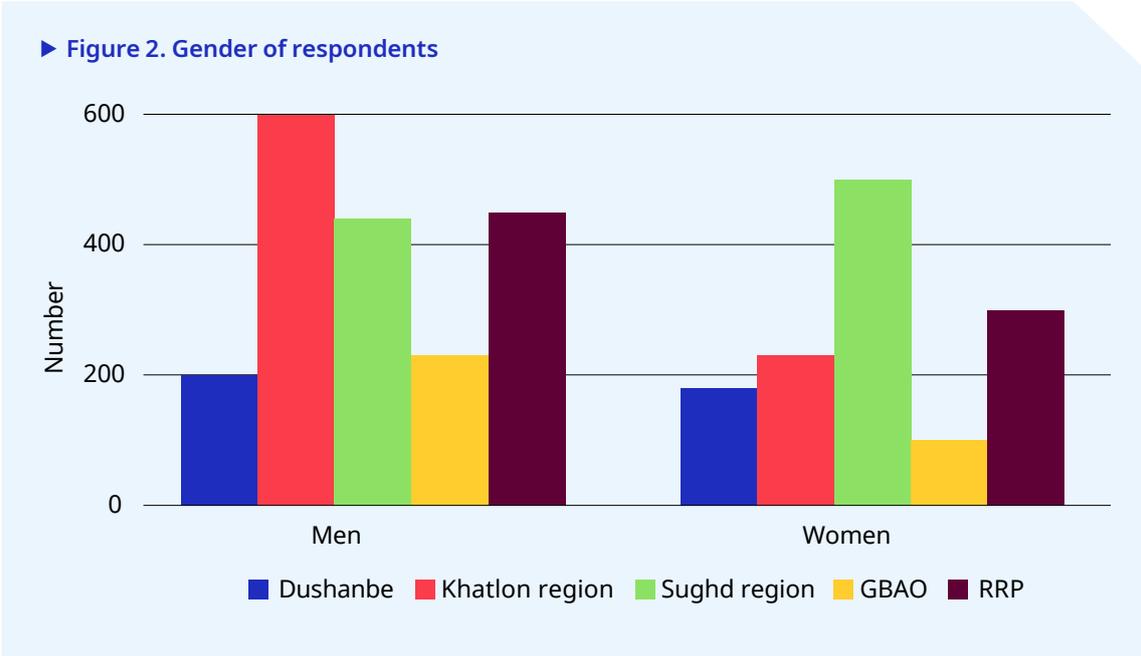
Analytical results of the sociological survey

Analysis was carried out for different segments of the country's population with 3,600 persons in all participating. The geographical coverage of this research was to encompass nearly all of the country's regions including both urban and rural residents in the cities of Dushanbe, Khujand, Kulob, Isfara, Bokhtar, Isfara, Khorugh, Tursunzoda, Vahdat, Guliston, and Panjakent as well as in the rural regions of Bobojon Gufarov, Rudaki, Rasht, Ishkoshim, Yovon, Jaloliddin Balkhi, Shamsiddin Shohin, Gorny Mastchoh, Vanj, and Lakhsh. The survey of respondents was conducted from 10 February to 10 May 2022, and the analysis was processed with SPSS software. For purposes of analysis, the survey locations were divided into five districts: the city of Dushanbe, the RRP (Regions of Republican Subordination), Khatlon region, Sughd region, and the GBAO (Gorniy-Badakhshan Autonomous Region). Of the total number of respondents (3,535), 10.2% (361 persons) were from Dushanbe, 23.1% (818 persons) from the RRP, 25.2% (892 persons) from Khatlon region, 29.0% (1,024 persons) from Sughd region, and 12.4% (440 persons) from the GBAO.

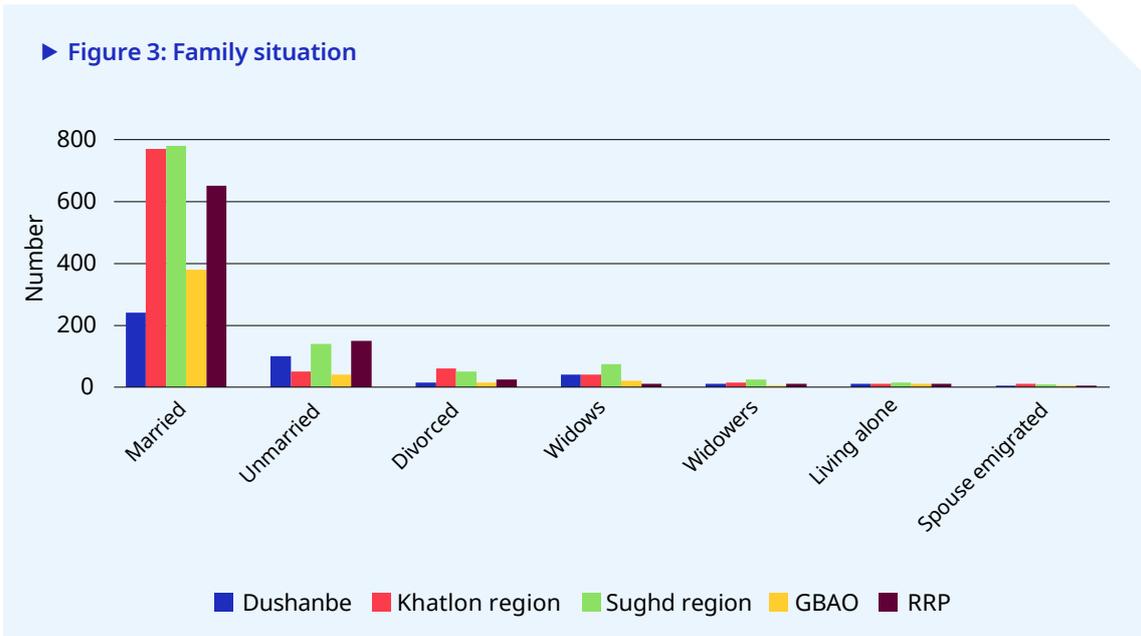
1. The **age of respondents** ranged from 18 to 82, and they were grouped by age with the first group consisting of those aged 18 to 30, the second group aged 30 to 45, the third aged 45 to 60, and the fourth group for those over 60 years old. The most numerous group of respondents was the 30 to 45 (medium age) group with 39.3% (1,386 persons) of the total. The second most numerous group was aged 45 to 60 (older) with 28.5% (1,006) persons; the youngest group aged 18 to 30 accounted for 20.1% (710 persons) was third largest. The fourth and least numerous group aged 60 and older included 12.2% (433 persons). Hence, two thirds of respondents (67.7% or 2,392 persons) were between the ages of 30 and 60 (see Figure 1).



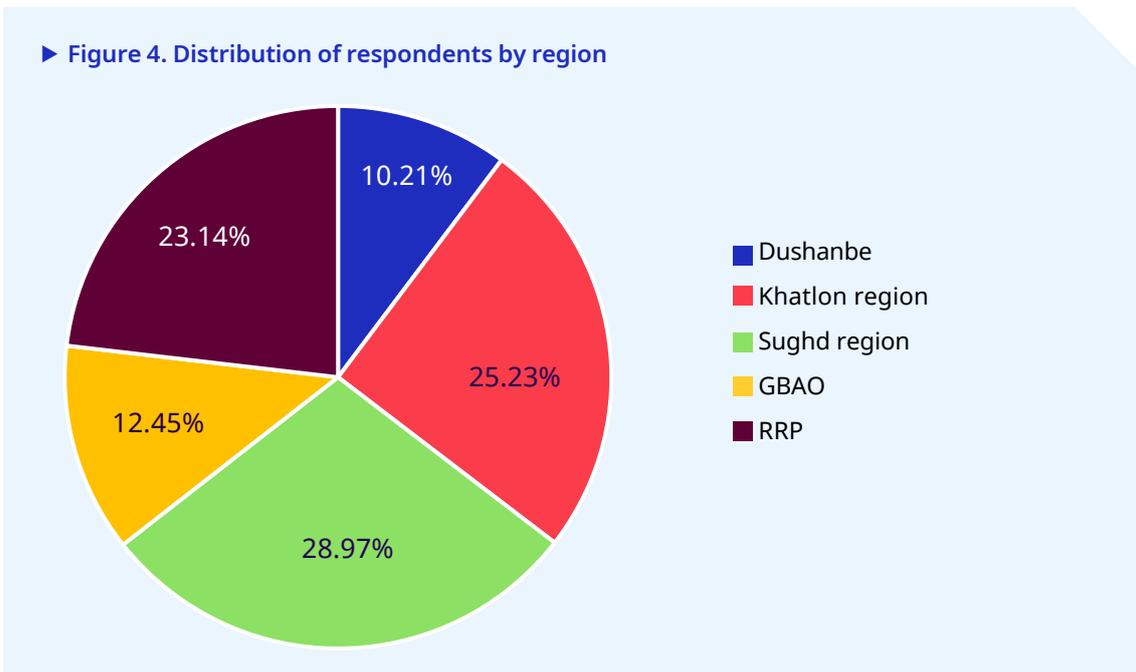
2. The **breakdown of respondents** by gender shows 58.7% (2,060 persons) were men and 41.73% (1,475 persons) were women. The same gender analysis carried out for the regions indicates the following: Dushanbe of 361 persons total 56.2% (203) were men and 43.8% (158) were women; in the RRP of 818 total 59.4% (486) were men and 40.6% (158) were women; in Khatlon region of 892 total 68.6% (612) were men and 31.4% (280) were women; in Sughd region of 1,024 total 45.8% (469) were men and 54.2% (555) were women; and in the GBAO of 440 total 65.9% (290) were men and 34.1% (150) were women (see Figure 2).



3. **Family situation** for the 3,535 total respondents breaks down into 79.1% (2,796 persons) married and in complete families. There were 420 persons or 11.8% of respondents not married, and 130 (3.7%) had been divorced. Widows living alone made up 3.4% (120 persons), and 1.1% (40 persons) were widowers. Another 0.45% (16 persons) had spouses who had emigrated. This means that about 80% of respondents were married and in intact families. A breakdown by regions is available in Figure 3.

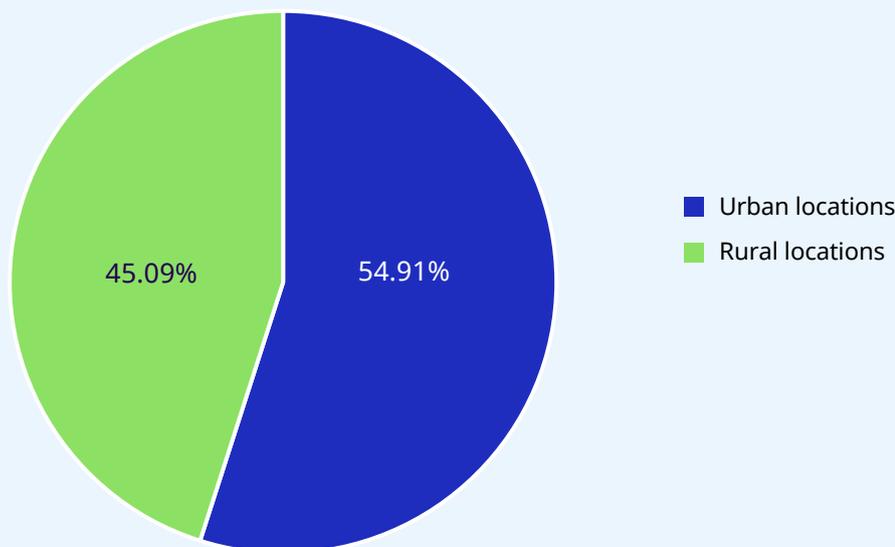


4.1 The **regional distribution** of the sample was designed to reflect the proportion of the total population in each city or region. This meant that 10.2% were from Dushanbe, 25.2% from Khatlon region, 29.0% from Sughd region, 12.4% from the GBAO and 23.1% from the RRP. The majority of respondents (over 54.2%) then were from Tajikistan’s Khatlon and Sughd regions. More detail on the distribution by city and region is available in Figure 4.

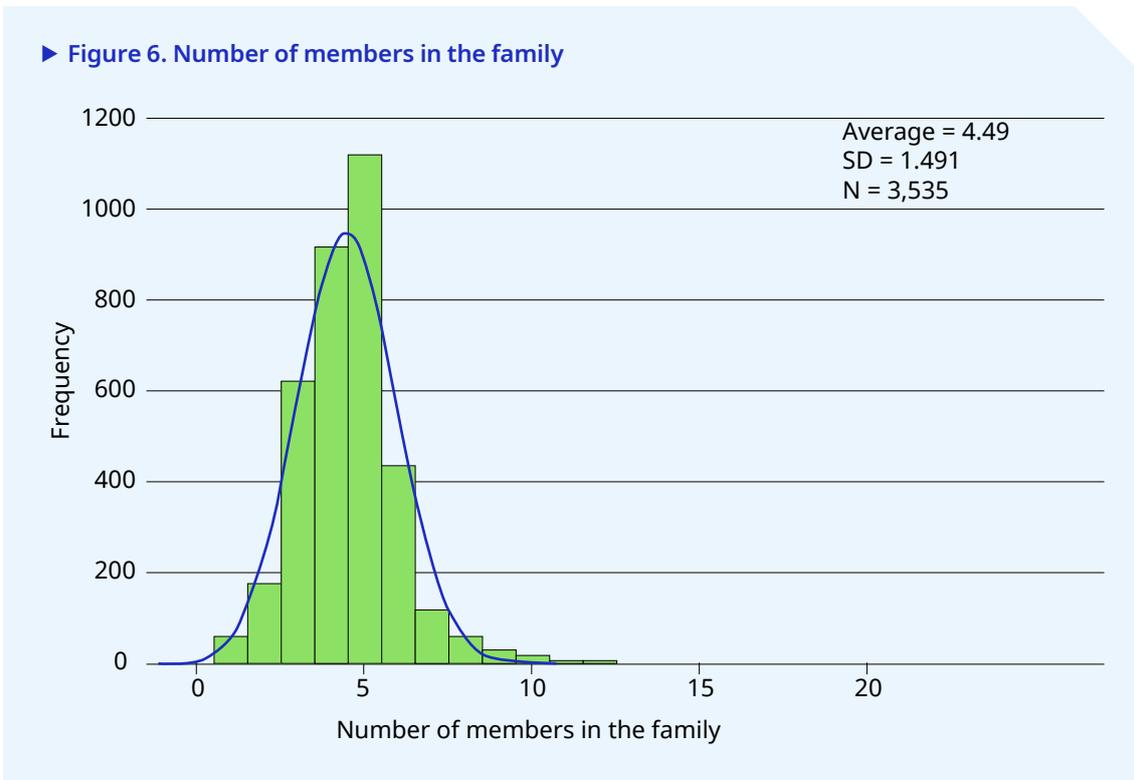


4.2 The distribution of the 3,535 total respondents across either urban or rural locations indicated that 54.9% (1,941 persons) were urban dwellers and 45.1% (1,594 persons) rural residents.

► Figure 5. Distribution of urban and rural respondents



5. **Number of family members.** Almost all the respondents were members of a family. Families had from one to fifteen members, while the average family consisted of 4.49 members. Families with five members accounted for 31.5% (1,114 persons) of the total; those with four members made up 25.8% (913 persons); those with three members 17.5% (619 persons); with six members 12.3% (434 persons); with seven members 3.3% (116 persons); and with 8 members 1.8% (62 persons). That data was used to arrive at the average family size of 4.49 members, and it also indicates that Tajikistan's families have many children even in comparison with other countries in Central Asia (see Figure 6).



6. **The price of food items**, it should be noted, has been under pressure for the last eight to nine years from instability in the exchange rate for Tajikistani som into US dollars, and this has had an immediate impact on the prices of goods and services in the country.

Even as the survey was conducted from 10 February to 10 May 2022, the US dollar exchange rate for Tajikistan's economy rose from 10.8 som to 13 som per US dollar (according to statistics for 24 February to 10 April 2022) and then fell from 13 som to 11.3 som per US dollar (statistics from 11 April to 30 May 2022). The survey's respondents reported the following prices for food items averaged across the country:

- A. Flour, national average of 333.5 som.
- B. Milk (1 litre) – 5.42 som.
- C. Flatbread or bread (500 grams) – 6.56 som.
- D. Rice (1 kilogram) – 14.24 som.
- E. Sugar (1 kilogram) – 12.99 som.
- F. Eggs (30) – 32.26 som.
- G. Beef (1 kilogram) – 64.88 som.
- H. Mutton (1 kilogram) – 66.58 som.
- I. Poultry (1 kilogram) – 34.74 som.
- J. Vegetable oil (sunflower/cottonseed) (1 litre) – 30.49 som.
- K. Apples (1 kilogram) – 10.11 som.

- L. Grapes (1 kilogram) – 14.62 som.
- M. Pomegranates (1 kilogram) – 19.18 som.
- N. Tangerines (1 kilogram) – 15.25 som.
- O. Potatoes (1 kilogram) – 6.16 som.
- P. Onions (1 kilogram) – 7.22 som.
- Q. Tomatoes (1 kilogram) – 19.27 som.
- R. Cucumbers (1 kilogram) – 13.67 som.
- S. Carrots (1 kilogram) – 11.99 som.
- T. Peas (1 kilogram) – 18.29 som.
- U. Beans (1 kilogram) – 17.45 som.
- V. Tea (green/black) (1 kilogram) – 72.88 som.
- W. Salt (1 kilogram) – 4.77 som.

The results above were obtained from the survey across the country's regions in order to ascertain average prices (for the period from 10 February to 10 May 2022). Specific prices within the regions are presented in Annex 6. The information mentioned above (on prices for food items) supports the conclusion that there are separate price trends for food items depending upon the region of Tajikistan (city, village, mountainous region, plain, and the extent of transportation infrastructure and logistics).

7. Transportation costs were elicited through the following queries:

- A. Daily transportation expenses for one family member – 22.97 som.
- B. How many in the family use public transit? – 4.5 persons.
- C. Approximate monthly public transit expenses for one family member – 170.15 som.
- D. If you have access to an automobile, how many litres of gasoline per month are used? – 34.87 litres.
- E. How much does one litre of gasoline cost? – 11.85 som.
- F. How much does insurance and routine maintenance of an automobile cost? – 79.88 som.
- G. If you have a family member with special needs, how much does their transportation cost per month? – 21.33 som.

These are average expenses for all of Tajikistan; transportation expenses broken out by region are presented in Annex 7. Study of these responses from the survey participants indicates that daily expenses of families on transportation constitute a substantial share (11.7%, the fourth largest monthly expense for families) of total living expenses for a family.

8. Housing costs were elicited through the following queries:

- A. What is your monthly cost of housing? (for homeowners) – 46.15 som.
- B. What is your monthly cost of housing? (for tenants) – 58.57 som.
- C. Monthly cost of electricity (in winter) – 158.65 som.
- D. Monthly cost of electricity (in summer) – 179.63 som.
- E. Monthly cost of trash collection – 17.35 som.
- F. Monthly cost of common area maintenance – 22.66 som.
- G. Cost of potable water – 3.68 som.

H. Cost of hot water – 3.35 som.

I. Cost of sewerage – 3.89 som.

J. Cost of heating – 59.51 som.

The figures above are averages of the survey results from across all regions of Tajikistan. It should be noted that certain services related to housing may be lacking, especially in rural areas. For example, most rural areas record no cost for trash collection (trash is usually burned or simply discarded in a pit or ravine). Also, most rural areas in Tajikistan impose no cost for potable water because it is drawn from springs, rivers and other sources where payment is not required. Payment for hot water applies only to certain districts in the capital. There are almost no sewerage systems in rural areas, hence no payment for sewerage. When heating cost is considered, it should be kept in mind that for more than ten years Tajikistan's cities have had no central heating provided. Over the last four or five years paid heating has begun being provided in Dushanbe, but in rural areas houses are heated independently by burning firewood, dung, coal or other materials.

9. **Cost of food** items refers to the following:

A. Cost of food for an adult family member of working age for a month (nationwide average) – 656.32 som.

B. Cost of food for an adult family member above working age for a month (nationwide average) – 209.41 som.

C. Cost of food for a family member of preschool age for a month (nationwide average) – 179.79 som.

D. Cost of food for a family member of school age for a month (nationwide average) – 215.17 som.

E. Cost of food for a family member with special needs for a month, if applicable (nationwide average) – 40.39 som.

F. Cost of cookware – 94.41 som.

The figures above show that feeding one family member of working age costs about 656.23 som, while feeding older family members costs roughly 209.41. It should also be noted that food prices in the country are variable. According to statistics of the National Bank of Tajikistan, average annual inflation over the past ten years has been 12.5%, and it should therefore be understood that Tajikistan experiences steady inflation of food prices (about 12 to 15%).

10. **The cost of clothing and footwear** like other expenses has been calculated for population groups, separately for each region, and as an average for the country as a whole. The cost of clothing and footwear for population groups will be provided later.

A. Cost of clothing and footwear for a family member of working age for a month – 439.16 som.

B. Cost of clothing and footwear for an adult family member above working age for a month – 141.44 som.

C. Cost of clothing and footwear for a family member of preschool age for a month – 168.44 som.

D. Cost of clothing and footwear for a family member of school age for a month – 189.61 som.

E. Cost of clothing and footwear for a family member with special needs for a month, if applicable – 40.16 som.

It is important to add that clothing and footwear are mostly purchased seasonally. The majority of respondents observed that they buy clothing and footwear on an annual basis and make purchases for themselves twice a year, for example, during the autumn-winter period and the spring-summer period. This means that on average Tajiks buy clothing and footwear for themselves twice each year (every six months). It was necessary to ascertain the expenses of different population groups in buying clothing and footwear. The total spent for clothing and footwear intended for the spring-summer season (six

months) was determined as well as for the autumn-winter season (six months), and an average cost for clothing and footwear was arrived at for different population groups in Tajikistan.

11. **Costs of healthcare and other caring services** were divided into the following categories for analysis (the resulting information and average expenses for healthcare and other caring services for the country as a whole appear below):

- A. Cost of medical attention (treatment, consultation) (nationwide monthly average) – 133.64 som.
- B. Cost of preventive treatment (nationwide monthly average) – 82.37 som.
- C. Cost for treatment of accidental injury (nationwide monthly average) – 422.45 som.
- D. Cost for treatment of chronic illness (nationwide monthly average) – 101.72 som.
- E. Costs incurred for managing special needs (nationwide monthly average) – 16.22 som.
- F. Costs related to the COVID-19 pandemic (including masks, antiseptic, medication and other items) – 65.28 som.

The conclusion here is that nearly all regions of Tajikistan experienced increased healthcare costs while COVID-19 was spreading (from April 2020 to November 2021). Because Tajikistan's medical workers have insufficient wages, the population had a relatively high amount of unreported expenses for medical attention; preventive treatment was much less in comparison. This is the reason why a large portion of the population waited until after disease had spread before consulting a doctor. The culture of early intervention to prevent illness is not widespread enough in Tajikistan.

Over the past five to seven years, Tajikistan especially in its large cities – Dushanbe, Khujand, Kulob, Isfara, Bokhtar, Khorugh, Vahdat and other cities – underwent a construction boom. This led to an increased number of accidents and occupational injuries and may explain the relatively large expenses of the country's population for treatment of accidental injuries.

The survey identified diabetes, cardiac illness, and hypertension as the most common chronic illnesses. The survey also found that a rather large number of families have one or more members suffering from chronic illness.

The survey results indicate that about 2.5% of respondents have family members with special needs; however, the costs incurred for healthcare are substantial.

12. **Cost of communications included** the following:

- A. Purchase of a mobile phone or computer (national average expense for a month) – 612.62 som.
- B. Purchase of a SIM card (price of a single SIM card) – 29.41 som.
- C. Internet per minute for conversation (national average expense for a month) – 97.98 som.

This indicates that the average price of a computer or mobile phone is quite high. The younger (18 to 30 years old) and middle-aged (30 to 45 years old) segments of Tajikistan's population are most interested in buying computers and mobile phones even though they are rather expensive.

Most of the respondents noted that they have either one or two SIM cards that last from one to five years, this means that SIM card purchases occur once or twice in several years.

The survey results also show that the respondents use a wide variety of services from telecom companies. These companies offer different rates (from a minimum of 30 som to a maximum of 350 som per month for a minute of internet conversation). The nationwide average for internet minutes of conversation among survey respondents was less than 100 som. This rate is below the average for all users.

13. **The most common expenses for the education of children** were as follows:

- A. Annual cost for educating one child (Tajikistan traditionally charges an annual fee for education) – 419.95 som.
- B. Cost of school supplies (bookbags, books, notebooks, pens, pencils and more) (cost for a year inasmuch as school supplies are usually purchased once each year) – 122.46 som.
- C. Cost of school uniforms (the tradition in Tajikistan is to purchase a school uniform once each year) – 287.79.
- D. Cost of transportation to and from school (per month) – 56.14 som.
- E. Cost of extracurricular activities (for the school year) – 139.97 som.

The survey results concerning expenses for the education of children lead to the following conclusions.

First, in Tajikistan over 95% of secondary schools are state-run and as such are nominally free of charge. However, because the earnings of teachers are so low, they are compelled to request that parents pay a certain amount toward the education of their children. This practice is replicated in most of the country's regions. Therefore, the research found that parents pay 419.95 som as a nationwide average to educate one child for a year (Tajikistan's academic year consists of ten months). Dividing that average value by ten equals to $419.95/10 = 41.99$ som or about 42 som per month. It should be noted that this practice is most common in Tajikistan's cities and is encountered much less in rural areas.

Second, school supplies (bookbags, books, notebooks, pens, pencils and more) are typically purchased once each year. Since the average expense is 122.46, $122.46/10 = 12.24$ som, which would be the average monthly expense for school supplies.

Third, the survey found that most families purchase school uniforms for their children once each year. The annual average cost is 287.79 som or $287.79/10 = 28.8$ som per month spent on school uniforms.

Fourth, transportation costs for schoolchildren to and from school in Tajikistan are mostly paid by the children's families, and this takes into account that most families surveyed had one or more children in secondary school.

Fifth, pocket money includes the cost of food for children while at school. The survey found that the nationwide average for pocket money in school was about 65.12 som per month. For a family with two or three children in secondary school, pocket money occupies a significant fraction of the family budget.

Sixth, the cost of extracurricular activities (celebrating Navruz [vernal equinox], New Year, Teachers' Day, Mothers' Day, Defenders' Day, etc.) averaged 139.97 som over the school year, and $139.97/10 = 13.99$ or about 14 som is the average monthly cost of extracurricular activities.

This information coupled with the fact that most Tajik families have many children (three to five children) means that the expense of education children consumes a large fraction of the family budget in the country.

14. **Monthly earnings** among respondents were either less than 1,000 som per month, from 1,000 to 1,500 som per month, from 1,500 to 2,000 som, from 2,000 to 2,500 som, or over 2,500 som per month. The monthly earnings reported by respondents in various regions follow.

1. Dushanbe respondents reported the following monthly earnings including any remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants:

- A. Less than 1,000 som – 18.3%
- B. From 1,000 to 1,500 som – 16.9%.
- C. From 1,500 to 2,000 som – 16.9%.
- D. From 2,000 to 2,500 som – 10.2%

E. Over 2,500 som – 10.5%

F. Remittances from any family members working abroad – 27.1%.

The largest group of respondents (18.3%) earned less than 1,000 som. Some 16.9% earned from 1,000 to 2,000 som per month. More than a quarter of respondents (27.1%) reported that they receive remittances from a family member working abroad as a labour migrant (in an amount from 1,500 to 2,500 som).

The results show that a substantial portion of Dushanbe's population (35.2%) earns less than 1,500 som. Also, the budgets of a quarter of respondents (27.1%) depend heavily upon remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants.

2. Khatlon region reported the following monthly earnings including any remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants:

A. Less than 1,000 som – 39.6%

B. From 1,000 to 1,500 som – 19.7%.

C. From 1,500 to 2,000 som – 4.0%.

D. From 2,000 to 2,500 som – 2.0%

E. Over 2,500 som – 2.2%

F. Remittances from any family members working abroad – 32.4%.

About two thirds (59.3%) of respondents from Khatlon region earned less than 1,500 som per month. About one third (32.4%) reported that they were living mostly on remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants.

3. Sughd region reported the following monthly earnings including any remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants:

A. Less than 1,000 som – 47.5%

B. From 1,000 to 1,500 som – 24.6%.

C. From 1,500 to 2,000 som – 10.4%.

D. From 2,000 to 2,500 som – 6.5%

E. Over 2,500 som – 4.5%

F. Remittances from any family members working abroad – 6.4%.

About three fourths of respondents (72.1%) in Sughd region reported earnings under 1,500 som. It should be noted that fewer respondents (6.5%) receive remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants, and therefore family budgets depend primarily on income from within the country.

4. Respondents in the GBAO reported the following monthly earnings including any remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants:

A. Less than 1,000 som – 52.3%

B. From 1,000 to 1,500 som – 24.8%.

C. From 1,500 to 2,000 som – 11.1%.

D. From 2,000 to 2,500 som – 6.6%

E. Over 2,500 som – 3.6%

F. Remittances from any family members working abroad – 1.6%.

More than 77.1% of respondents in the GBAO earned less than 1,500 som per month, and the GBAO had the fewest respondents (1.6%) reporting remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants. Family budgets in the GBAO then are based almost exclusively on employment within Tajikistan.

5. Respondents in the RRP reported the following monthly earnings including any remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants:

- A. Less than 1,000 som – 35.0%
- B. From 1,000 to 1,500 som – 13.3%.
- C. From 1,500 to 2,000 som – 14.5%.
- D. From 2,000 to 2,500 som – 9.2%
- E. Over 2,500 som – 21.6%
- F. Remittances from any family members working abroad as labour migrants – 6.4%.

Almost half of respondents (48.3%) in the RRP earned less than 1,500 som. In the RRP as in Sughd region 6.4% reported that they receive remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants.

A comparison for monthly earnings along with remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants yields the following:

A. Monthly earnings under 1,000 som: GBAO – 52.3%, Sughd region – 47.5%, Khatlon region – 39.6%, RRP – 35.0%, Dushanbe – 18.3%. This means that the majority of the population in both the GBAO and Sughd region earn less than 1,000 som.

B. Monthly earnings from 1,000 to 1,500 som: GBAO – 24.8%, Sughd region – 24.6%, Khatlon region – 19.7%, Dushanbe – 16.9%, and RRP – 13.3%.

C. Monthly earnings from 1,500 to 2,000 som: Dushanbe – 16.9%, RRP – 14.5%, – 11.1%, Sughd region – 10.4%, and Khatlon region – 4.0%.

D. Monthly earnings from 2,000 to 2,500 som: Dushanbe – 10.2%, RRP – 9.2%, GBAO – 6.6%, Sughd region – 6.5%, and Khatlon region – 2.0%. Dushanbe then has the greatest number (10.2%) earning between 2,000 and 2,500.

E. Monthly earnings over 2,500: RRP – 21.6%, Dushanbe – 10.5%, Sughd region – 4.5%, GBAO – 3.6%, and Khatlon region – 2.2%. Most of the respondents earning over 2,500 som were in the RRP (21.6%) and Dushanbe (10.5%). It should also be noted that Khatlon region had the fewest (2.2%) earning over 2,500 som.

F. Remittances from any family members working abroad as labour migrants: Khatlon region – 32.4%, Dushanbe – 27.1%, Sughd region – 6.4%, RRP – 6.4%, and GBAO – 1.6%. Khatlon region had a relatively high number of family budgets dependent upon remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants.

The monthly earnings of respondents across all of Tajikistan are summed up as follows:

- A. Monthly earnings less than 1,000 som – 40.2%
- B. Monthly earnings from 1,000 to 1,500 som – 20.0%.
- C. Monthly earnings from 1,500 to 2,000 som – 10.5%.
- D. Monthly earnings from 2,000 to 2,500 som – 8.4%
- E. Monthly earnings over 2,500 som – 6.4%
- F. Remittances from any family members working abroad – 14.5%.

The majority of respondents (40.2%) had monthly earnings less than 1,000 som. About 8.4% reported monthly earnings over 2,500 som. This supports the conclusion that a substantial portion of respondents (40.2%) earn less than the average and that their family budgets are quite restricted. In addition, over 14.5% reported that their family budget depends for the most part upon remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants.

15. **Minimum family expenses** (which must take into account the fact that the respondents' average family size was 4.49 persons "from analysis of question No. 5") were ascertained by putting several queries to respondents that were answered as follows (nationwide averages):

- A. Minimum (monthly) cost of housing – 255.24 som.
- B. Minimum (monthly) cost of food – 1,528.92 som.
- C. Minimum (monthly) cost of transportation – 481.24 som.
- D. Minimum (monthly) cost of healthcare and other caring services – 237.18 som.
- E. Minimum (monthly) cost of educating children – 784.46 som.
- F. Minimum (monthly) cost of clothing and footwear – 668.81 som.
- G. Minimum (monthly) cost of other goods and services – 230.71 som.
- H. Minimum (monthly) cost of communications and internet – 157.21 som.

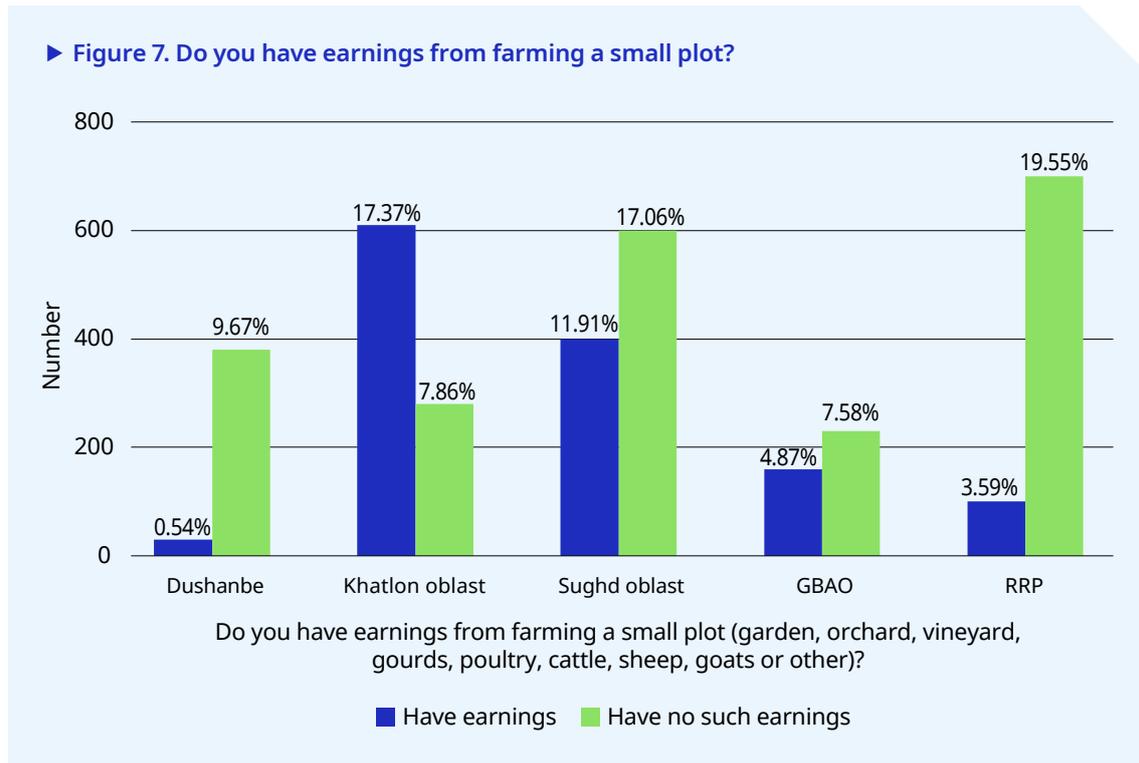
Total monthly expenses for a family (4,343.77 som) may be derived from the figures above and divided by the average family size (4.49 persons) resulting in: $4,343.77/4.49 = 967.43$ som. Therefore, based on results from survey respondents, the **minimum cost of the consumer basket in Tajikistan is 967.43 som.**

16. Regarding **income**, if any, **from farming small plots** the respondents reported as follows:

- 1. Dushanbe:
 - A. Have income from farming small plots – 5.3%.
 - B. No income from farming small plots – 94.7%.
- 2. Khatlon oblast:
 - A. Have income from farming small plots – 68.6%.
 - B. No income from farming small plots – 31.2%.
- 3. Sughd oblast:
 - A. Have income from farming small plots – 41.1%.
 - B. No income from farming small plots – 58.9%.
- 4. GBAO:
 - A. Have income from farming small plots – 39.1%.
 - B. No income from farming small plots – 60.9%.
- 5. RRP:
 - A. Have income from farming small plots – 15.5%.
 - B. No income from farming small plots – 84.5%.

Dushanbe at less than 5.3% and the RRP at a total of 15.5% had the fewest respondents reporting income from farming small plots, and this is because large cities offer little opportunity for farming small plots. However, the majority of respondents in Khatlon region (68.6%), the GBAO (60.9%), and Sughd region

(58.9%) did have earnings from farming small plots. Interviews with respondents in the regions above indicated that earnings from farming small plots substantially reduce expenses for family consumption. Nationwide, a total of 38.3% of respondents reported earnings from farming small plots, while the majority (61.7%) reported no such earnings.



17. Concerning **additional earnings**, if any, the respondents answered as follows:

1. Dushanbe:

- A. No additional earnings – 88.6%.
- B. Monthly additional earnings for our family of up to 1,000 som – 6.1%.
- C. Monthly additional earnings for our family from 1,000 and 1,500 som – 2.8%.
- D. Monthly additional earnings for our family from 1,500 and 2,000 som – 0.8%.
- E. Monthly additional earnings for our family from 2,000 to 2,500 som – 0.3%.
- F. Monthly additional earnings for our family above 2,500 som – 1.4%.

2. Khatlon region:

- A. No additional earnings – 83.0%.
- B. Monthly additional earnings for our family of up to 1,000 som – 9.6%.
- C. Monthly additional earnings for our family from 1,000 and 1,500 som – 4.9%.

D. Monthly additional earnings for our family from 1,500 and 2,000 som – 0.9%

E. Monthly additional earnings for our family from 2,000 to 2,500 som – 0.8%.

F. Monthly additional earnings for our family above 2,500 som – 0.8%.

3. Sughd region:

A. No additional earnings – 94.3%.

B. Monthly additional earnings for our family of up to 1,000 som – 3.4%.

C. Monthly additional earnings for our family from 1,000 and 1,500 som – 1.4%.

D. Monthly additional earnings for our family from 1,500 and 2,000 som – 0.1%

E. Monthly additional earnings for our family from 2,000 to 2,500 som – 0.5%.

F. Monthly additional earnings for our family above 2,500 som – 0.3%.

4. GBAO:

A. No additional earnings – 97.3%.

B. Monthly additional earnings for our family of up to 1,000 som – 1.6%.

C. Monthly additional earnings for our family from 1,000 and 1,500 som – 0.2%.

D. Monthly additional earnings for our family from 1,500 and 2,000 som – 0.2%.

E. Monthly additional earnings for our family from 2,000 to 2,500 som – 0.2%.

F. Monthly additional earnings for our family above 2,500 som – 0.5%.

5. RRP:

A. No additional earnings – 89.2%.

B. Monthly additional earnings for our family of up to 1,000 som – 3.4%.

C. Monthly additional earnings for our family from 1,000 and 1,500 som – 1.8%.

D. Monthly additional earnings for our family from 1,500 and 2,000 som – 1.7%.

E. Monthly additional earnings for our family from 2,000 to 2,500 som – 1.6%.

F. Monthly additional earnings for our family above 2,500 som – 2.2%.

The great majority of respondents (90.1%) reported that they had no additional earnings.



18. On the topic of **overall family monthly earnings**, the respondents reported the following:

1. Dushanbe:

- A. Less than 1,000 som per month – 4.4%.
- B. From 1,000 to 1,500 som per month – 5.5%.
- C. From 1,500 to 2,000 som per month – 16.6%
- D. From 2,000 to 2,500 som per month – 28.3%.
- E. Over 2,500 som per month – 45.2%.

2. Khatlon region:

- A. Less than 1,000 som per month – 16.4%.
- B. From 1,000 to 1,500 som per month – 49.95%.
- C. From 1,500 to 2,000 som per month – 17.3%
- D. From 2,000 to 2,500 som per month – 4.5%.
- E. Over 2,500 som per month – 12.0%.

3. Sughd region:

- A. Less than 1,000 som per month – 26.4%.
- B. From 1,000 to 1,500 som per month – 19.4%.
- C. From 1,500 to 2,000 som per month – 23.1%
- D. From 2,000 to 2,500 som per month – 16.8%.
- E. Over 2,500 som per month – 14.3%.

4. GBAO:

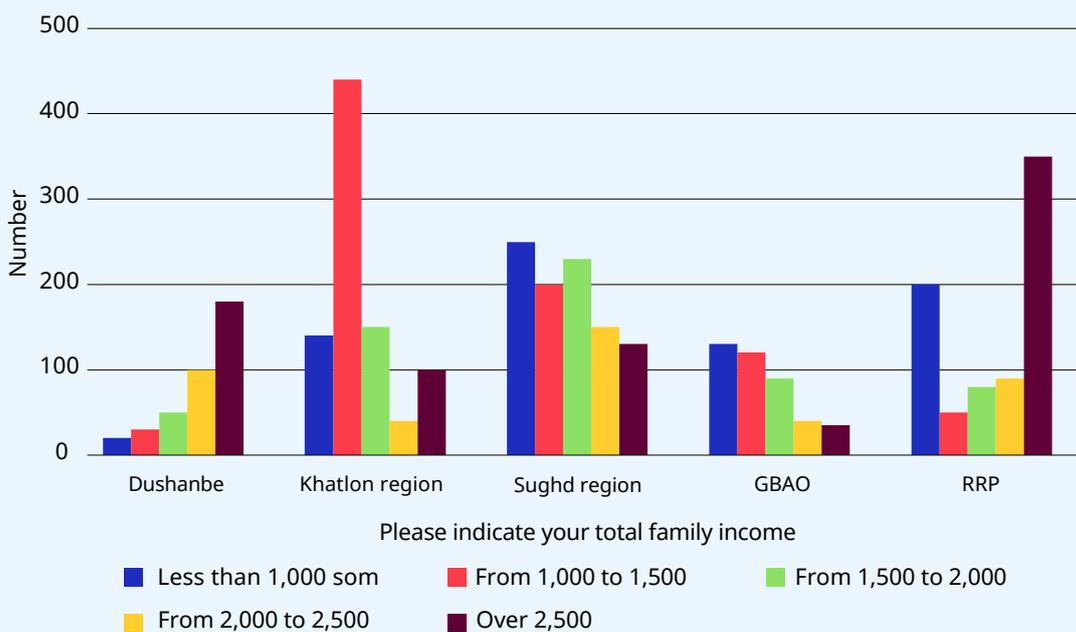
- A. Less than 1,000 som per month – 33.4%.
- B. From 1,000 to 1,500 som per month – 31.8%.
- C. From 1,500 to 2,000 som per month – 20.5%
- D. From 2,000 to 2,500 som per month – 7.5%.
- E. Over 2,500 som per month – 6.8%.

5. RRP:

- A. Less than 1,000 som per month – 24.8%.
- B. From 1,000 to 1,500 som per month – 7.0%.
- C. From 1,500 to 2,000 som per month – 10.9%
- D. From 2,000 to 2,500 som per month – 12.7%.
- E. Over 2,500 som per month – 44.6%.

These results show that most of the families with earnings over 2,500 som per month are in Dushanbe (45.2%) and the RRP (44.6%). The bulk of families with low income, that is, under 1,000 som per month, are in the GBAO (33.4%) and Sughd region (26.4%). This means that, according to the assessment of the respondents, about half of families in Dushanbe and the RRP have relatively high monthly earnings. Families in the GBAO and the Sughd and Khatlon regions have relatively low monthly earnings. It should be added here that prices for food and various services in Dushanbe are higher than in other regions of the country. Nationwide monthly family earnings overall are as follows: 22.1% less than 1,000 som per month, 24.4% from 1,000 to 1,500 som per month, 17.8% from 1,500 to 2,000 som per month, 12.8% from 2,000 to 2,500 som per month, and 22.9% over 2,500 som per month.

► Figure 9. Please indicate your total family income



19. Concerning **how many in their families work**, the survey respondents answered as follows:

1. Dushanbe:

- A. One person in the family works – 32.4%.
- B. Two persons in the family work – 52.6%.
- C. More than two persons in the family work – 15.0%

2. Khatlon region:

- A. One person in the family works – 51.6%.
- B. Two persons in the family work – 42.2%.
- C. More than two persons in the family work – 15.0%

3. Sughd region:

- A. One person in the family works – 42.8%.
- B. Two persons in the family work – 42.9%.
- C. More than two persons in the family work – 14.4%

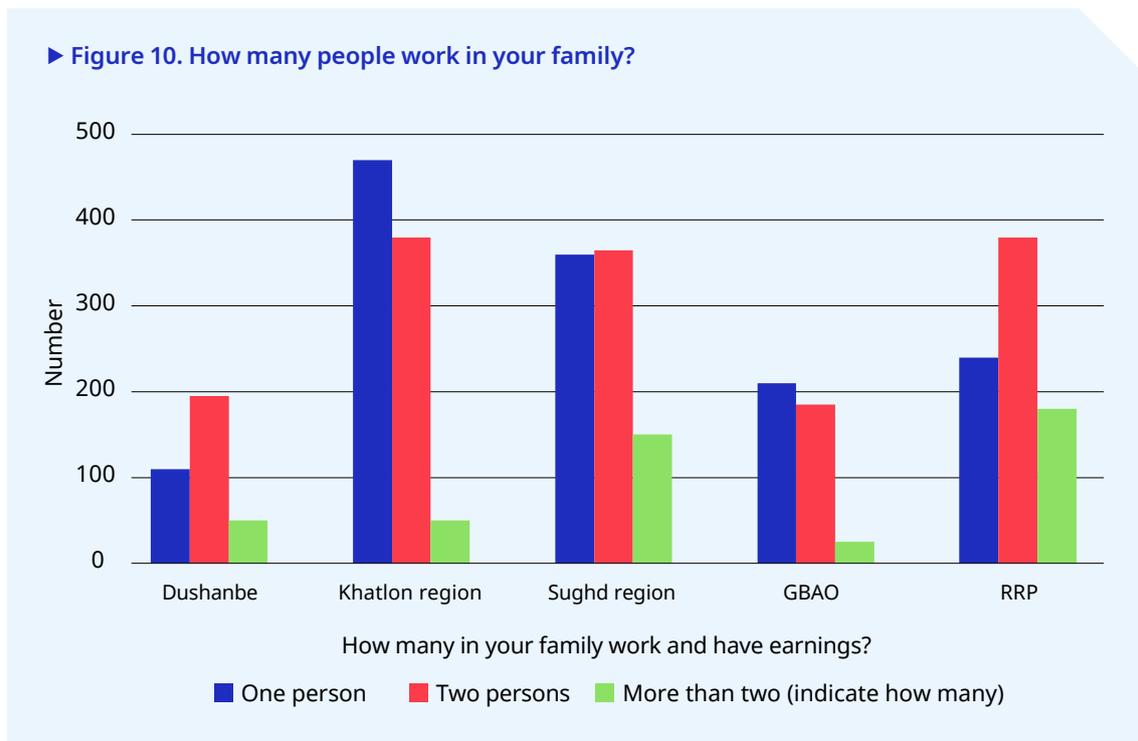
4. GBAO:

- A. One person in the family works – 50.0%.
- B. Two persons in the family work – 43.4%.
- C. More than two persons in the family work – 6.6%

5. RRP:

- A. One person in the family works – 32.0%.
- B. Two persons in the family work – 47.7%.
- C. More than two persons in the family work – 20.3%

The most families with one person working were in Khatlon region (51.6%) and the GBAO (50.0%). Dushanbe at 52.6% and the RRP at 47.7% had the most families with two persons working. The RRP at 20.3% and Dushanbe at 15.0% also had the most families with more than two persons working. It has already been established (through Question 5) that the average family consists of 4.49 persons. Hence, in Dushanbe and the RRP two or more people in an average family work. This is consistent with the fact that family earnings in Dushanbe and the RRP are greater than the monthly family earnings in Tajikistan's other regions.



20. When asked **how often prices change**, respondents felt that this was a definite concern and something they paid attention to. Their responses are as follows:

1. Dushanbe:

- A. Prices increase once a year – 6.1%.
- B. Prices increase every six months – 16.3%.
- C. Prices increase every three to four months – 77.6%

2. Khatlon region:

- A. Prices increase once a year – 20.6%.
- B. Prices increase every six months – 48.9%.
- C. Prices increase every three to four months – 30.5%

3. Sughd region:

- A. Prices increase once a year – 14.9%.
- B. Prices increase every six months – 16.9%.
- C. Prices increase every three to four months – 68.2%

4. GBAO:

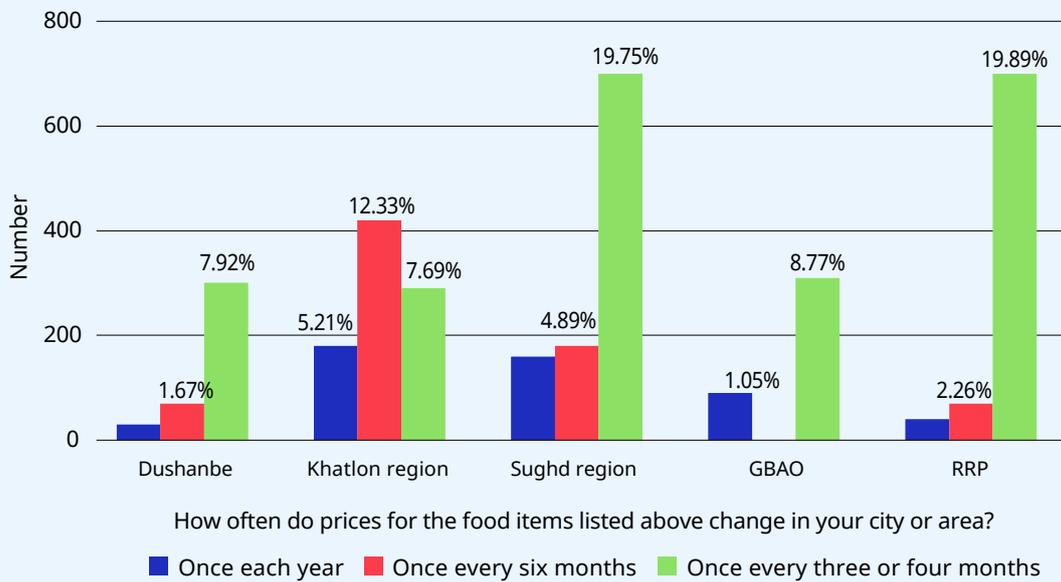
- A. Prices increase once a year – 21.1%.
- B. Prices increase every six months – 8.4%.
- C. Prices increase every three to four months – 70.5%

5. RRP:

- A. Prices increase once a year – 4.3%.
- B. Prices increase every six months – 9.8%.
- C. Prices increase every three to four months – 85.9%

Food prices increased every two to three months mainly in the RRP (85.9%), Dushanbe (77.6%), GBAO (70.5%), and Sughd region (68.2%). Across the country as a whole, prices increased every two to three months for 64.0% of respondents. There has in fact been a persistent decline in the value of Tajikistan's currency against the US dollar over the past seven to eight years. Inasmuch as the bulk of food items (grain, flour, sugar, vegetable oil and so on) are imported from abroad and so valued in US dollar terms, there are chronic price increases for food and services.

► Figure 11. How often do prices change?



21. Concerning the **percentage change in prices** for goods and service, the respondents offered various answers.

1. Dushanbe:

- A. From 5% to 10% – 79.5%.
- B. From 30% to 50% – 16.1%.
- C. About double – 4.2%

2. Khatlon region:

- A. From 5% to 10% – 69.5%.
- B. From 30% to 50% – 20.6%.
- C. About double – 9.8%

3. Sughd region:

- A. From 5% to 10% – 56.2%.
- B. From 30% to 50% – 33.8%.
- C. About double – 10.1%

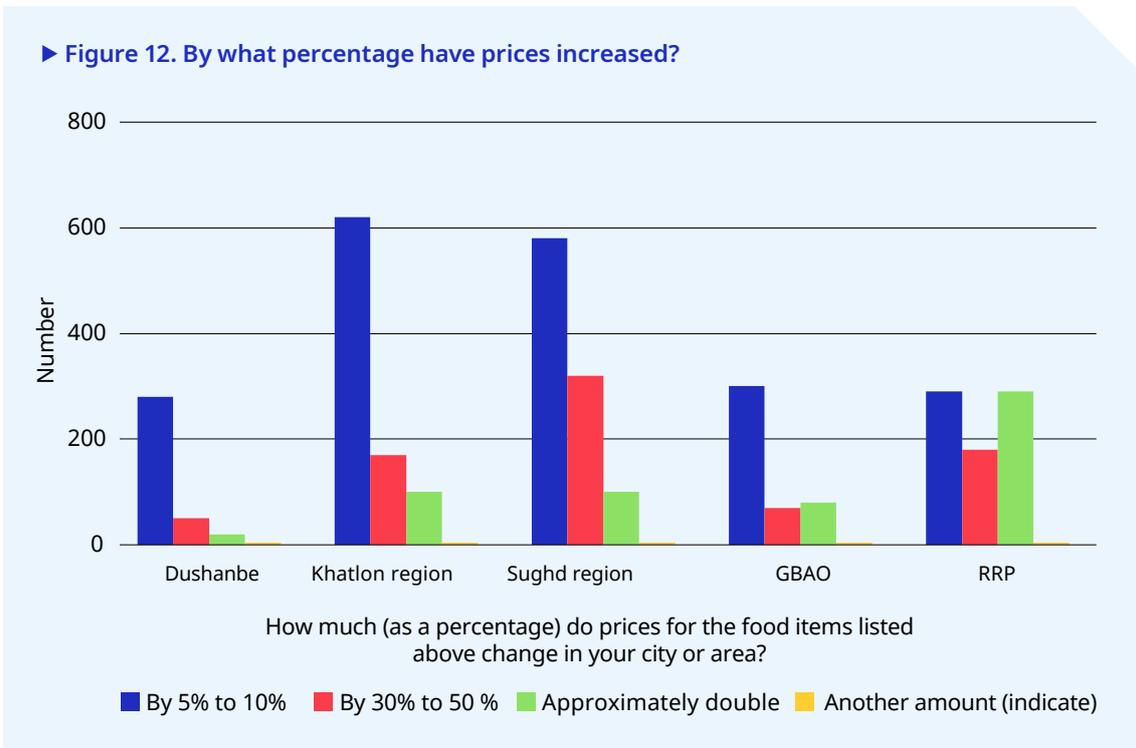
4. GBAO:

- A. From 5% to 10% – 68.2%.
- B. From 30% to 50% – 15.0%.
- C. About double – 16.4%

5. RRP:

- A. From 5% to 10% – 34.7%.
- B. From 30% to 50% – 24.0%.
- C. About double – 41.2%

These results indicate that a majority of respondents (79.5% in Dushanbe, 69.5% in Khatlon region, 56.2% in Sughd region, and 68.2% in the GBAO) experienced price increases of 5% to 10%, although in the RRP only 34.7% reported increases in that range. A substantial number of respondents registered price increases from 30% to 50% in Sughd region (33.8%) and the RRP (24.0%). Particularly over the past four to five months, there has been drastic price fluctuation for goods and services in Tajikistan. The underlying cause is that most merchandise (over 60%) is imported and usually valued in terms of US dollars. The US dollar exchange rate has been exceptionally variable from 25 February through 10 June. Prior to 24 February one US dollar was worth 11 som. Between 25 February and 5 May 2022, the value of a US dollar rose to 13 som (an increase of 18.1%), and the price of goods and services underwent a corresponding increase. After 6 May the value of a US dollar in som began gradually declining and by 10 June 2022 had reached 11.3 som per US dollar (which means the som had increased in value by 13%). Despite the more favourable exchange rate for the som into US dollars, the elevated prices for goods and services have remained high, that is, they have stayed where they were. Consequently, people have had to curtail their monthly expenditures for goods and services.



22. Concerning the **reason prices have changed**, the following options were available: inflation, lack of timely delivery, lack of competition among vendors, seasonality, or inadequate roadways in mountainous regions. The responses were 78.1% that prices changed because of inflation in Tajikistan (and over the past ten years the average annual inflation has been about 12.5%).

► 10. Research conclusions

This study has arrived at the following conclusions:

1. Over the past eight to nine years, Tajikistan's economy has been subject to an unstable exchange rate between the Tajikistani som and the US dollar, and this has had an immediate impact on the cost of goods and services in the country. Even as the survey was being conducted from 10 February to 10 May 2022, the US dollar exchange rate for Tajikistan's economy rose from 10.8 som to 13 som per US dollar (according to statistics for 24 February to 10 April 2022) and then fell from 13 som to 11.3 som per US dollar (statistics from 11 April to 30 May 2022).
2. There are definite differences in the price of food and the trend in those prices depending upon Tajikistan's regions (city, village, mountainous region, plain, and the extent of transportation infrastructure and logistics).
3. Study of responses from the survey participants indicates that daily expenses of families for transportation make up a substantial share (11.7%, the fourth largest monthly expense for families) of total living expenditures for a family.
4. The survey results on housing averaged across all regions of Tajikistan should be considered in light of the fact that certain services related to housing are lacking, especially in rural areas. For example, most rural areas record no cost for trash collection (trash is usually burned or simply discarded in a pit or ravine). Also, most rural areas in Tajikistan impose no cost for potable water because it is drawn from springs, rivers and other sources where payment is not required. Payment for hot water applies only to certain districts in the capital. There are almost no sewerage systems in rural areas, hence no payment for sewerage. When heating is considered, it should be kept in mind that for more than ten years Tajikistan's cities have had no central hot water provided. Over the last four or five years paid heating has begun being provided in Dushanbe, but in rural areas houses are heated independently by burning firewood, dung, coal or other materials (on average housing costs account for 5.87% of total monthly expenditures for a family).
5. The average cost in Tajikistan for feeding one family member of working age is about 656.23 som, while feeding family members older than working age costs roughly 209.41 som. It should also be noted that food prices in the country are variable. According to statistics of the National Bank of Tajikistan, average annual inflation over the past ten years has been 12.5%, and it should therefore be understood that Tajikistan experiences steady inflation (about 12 to 15%) in food prices. (Food accounts for 35.19% of total monthly expenditures for a family, and food is the largest category of expense for Tajikistan's families.)
6. Clothing and footwear are mostly purchased seasonally. The majority of respondents observed that they buy clothing and footwear on an annual basis and make purchases for themselves twice a year, for example, during the autumn-winter period and the spring-summer period. This means that on average Tajiks buy clothing and footwear for themselves twice each year (every six months). It was necessary to ascertain the expenses of different population groups in buying clothing and footwear. The total spent for clothing and footwear intended for the spring-summer season (six months) was determined as well as for the autumn-winter season (six months), and an average cost for clothing and footwear was arrived at for different population groups in Tajikistan (clothing and footwear make up 15.39% of total monthly expenditures for a Tajik family).
7. Nearly all regions of Tajikistan experienced increased healthcare costs while COVID-19 was spreading (from April 2020 to November 2021). Because Tajikistan's medical workers have insufficient wages, the population had a relatively high amount of unreported expenses for medical attention; preventive treatment was less in comparison. This is because a large portion of the population waited until after disease had spread before consulting a doctor. The culture of early intervention to prevent illness is

not widespread enough in Tajikistan. Over the past five to seven years, Tajikistan especially in its large cities – Dushanbe, Khujand, Kulob, Isfara, Bokhtar, Khorugh, Vahdat and other cities – underwent a construction boom. This led to an increased number of accidents and occupational injuries and may explain the relatively large expenses of the country's population for treatment of accidental injuries. The survey identified diabetes, cardiac illness, and hypertension as the most common chronic illnesses. The survey also found that a rather large number of families have one or more members suffering from chronic illness. The survey results indicate that about 2.5% of respondents have family members with special needs; nevertheless, the costs incurred for healthcare are substantial (healthcare costs constitute 5.46% of total monthly expenditures for a family).

8. The average price of a computer or mobile phone is quite high. The younger (18 to 30 years old) and middle-aged (30 to 45 years old) segments of Tajikistan's population are most interested in buying computers and mobile phones even though they are rather expensive. Most of the respondents noted that they have either one or two SIM cards that last from one to five years, this means that SIM card purchases occur once or twice in several years. The survey results also show that the respondents use a wide variety of services from telecom companies. These companies offer different rates (from a minimum of 30 som to a maximum of 350 som per month for internet minutes of conversation). The nationwide average for internet minutes of conversation among survey respondents was less than 100 som, a rate below the average for all users (communication costs make up 3.62% of total monthly expenditures for a family).

9. The survey results concerning expenses for the education of children lead to the following conclusions: First, in Tajikistan over 95% of secondary schools are state-run and as such are nominally free of charge. However, because the earnings of teachers are so low, they are compelled to request that parents pay a certain amount toward the education of their children. This practice is replicated in most of the country's regions. Therefore, the research found that parents pay 419.95 som as a nationwide average to educate one child for a year (Tajikistan's academic year consists of ten months). Dividing that average value by ten equals to $419.95/10 = 41.99$ som or about 42 som per month. It should be noted that this practice is most common in Tajikistan's cities and encountered much less in rural areas. Second, school supplies (bookbags, books, notebooks, pens, pencils and more) are typically purchased once each year. Since the average expense is 122.46, $122.46/10 = 12.24$ som, which would be the average monthly expense for school supplies. Third, the survey found that most families purchase school uniforms for their children once each year. The annual average cost is 287.79 som or $287.79/10 = 28.8$ som per month spent on school uniforms. Fourth, transportation costs for schoolchildren to and from school in Tajikistan are quite significant for the children's families, and this takes into account that most families surveyed had one or more children in secondary school. Fifth, pocket money includes the cost of food for children while at school. The survey found that the nationwide average for pocket money in school was about 65.12 som per month. For a family with two or three children in secondary school, pocket money takes up a significant portion of the family budget. Sixth, the cost of extracurricular activities (celebrating Navruz [vernal equinox], New Year, Teachers' Day, Mothers' Day, Defenders' Day, etc.) averaged 139.97 som over the school year, and $139.97/10 = 13.99$ or about 14 som is the average monthly cost of extracurricular activities. This information coupled with the fact that most Tajik families have many children (three to five children) means that the expense of education children is a large fraction of the family budget in the country (the cost of educating children constitutes 8.05% of the total monthly expenditures for a Tajikistani family).

10. The largest group of respondents (18.3%) earned less than 1,000 som. Some 16.9% earned from 1,000 to 2,000 som per month. More than a quarter of respondents (27.1%) reported that they receive remittances from a family member working abroad as a labour migrant (in an amount from 1,500 to 2,500 som). The results show that a substantial portion of Dushanbe's population (35.2%) earns less than 1,500 som. Also, the budgets of a quarter of respondents (27.1%) depend heavily upon remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants. About two thirds (59.3%) of respondents from Khatlon region earned less than 1,500 som per month. About one third (32.4%) reported that they were living mostly on remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants. About three fourths of respondents (72.1%) in Sughd region reported earnings under 1,500 som. It should be

noted that fewer respondents (6.5%) receive remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants, and therefore family budgets depend primarily on income from within the country. More than 77.1% of respondents in the GBAO earned less than 1,500 som per month, and the GBAO had the fewest respondents (1.6%) reporting remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants. Family budgets in the GBAO then are based almost exclusively on employment within Tajikistan. Almost half of respondents (48.3%) in the RRP earned less than 1,500 som. In the RRP as in Sughd region 6.4% reported that they receive remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants. A comparison of monthly earnings including remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants yields the following:

- A. Average monthly earnings less than 1,000 som: GBAO – 52.3%, Sughd region – 47.5%, Khatlon region – 39.6%, RRP – 35.0%, and Dushanbe – 18.3%. The GBAO and Sughd region have the highest proportion earning less than 1,000 som.
- B. Average monthly earnings from 1,000 to 1,500: GBAO – 24.8%, Sughd region – 24.6%, Khatlon region – 19.7%, Dushanbe – 16.9%, and RRP – 13.3%.
- C. Average monthly earnings from 1,500 to 2,000 som: Dushanbe – 16.9%, RRP – 14.5%, GBAO – 11.1%, Sughd region – 10.4%, Khatlon region – 4.0%.
- D. Average monthly earnings from 2,000 to 2,500 som: Dushanbe – 10.2%, RRP – 9.2%, GBAO – 6.6%, Sughd region – 6.5%, Khatlon region – 2.0%. Dushanbe has the most respondents (16.9%) with earnings from 2,000 to 2,500 som.
- E. Average monthly earnings over 2,500 som: RRP – 21.6%, Dushanbe 10.5%, Sughd region – 4.5%, GBAO – 3.6%, Khatlon region – 2.2%. The RRP at 21.6% and Dushanbe at 10.5% have the most respondents with earnings over 2,500 som, while Khatlon region has the fewest (2.2%) with earnings over 2,500 som.
- F. Remittances from a family member working abroad as a labour migrant (if any): Khatlon region – 32.4%, Dushanbe – 27.1%, Sughd region – 6.4%, RRP – 6.4%, and finally the GBAO – 1.6%. In Khatlon region the highest proportion (32.4%) of family budgets are dependent upon remittances from a family member working abroad as a labour migrant.

11. The majority of respondents (40.2%) had monthly earnings less than 1,000 som. About 8.4% reported monthly earnings over 2,500 som. This supports the conclusion that a substantial portion of respondents (40.2%) earn less than the average and that their family budgets are quite restricted. In addition, over 14.5% reported that their family budget depends for the most part upon remittances from family members working abroad as labour migrants.

12. Total monthly expenses for a family (4,343.77 som) may be derived from the figures above and divided by the average family size (4.49 persons) resulting in: $4,343.77/4.49 = 967.43$ som. Therefore, based on results from survey respondents, the **minimum cost of the consumer basket in Tajikistan is 967.43 som**.

13. Dushanbe at less than 5.3% and the RRP at a total of 15.5% had the fewest respondents reporting income from farming small plots, and this is because large cities offer little opportunity for farming small plots. However, the majority of respondents in Khatlon region (68.6%), the GBAO (60.9%), and Sughd region (58.9%) did have earnings from farming small plots. Interviews with respondents in the regions above indicated that earnings from farming small plots substantially reduce spending for family consumption. Nationwide, a total of 38.3% of respondents reported earnings from farming small plots, while the majority (61.7%) reported no such earnings.

14. The great majority of respondents (90.1%) reported that they had no additional earnings.

15. Most of the families with earnings over 2,500 som per month are in Dushanbe (45.2%) and the RRP (44.6%). The bulk of families with low income, that is, under 1,000 som per month, are in the GBAO (33.4%) and Sughd region (26.4%). This means that, according to the assessment of the respondents, about half

of families in Dushanbe and the RRP have relatively high monthly earnings. Families in the GBAO and the Sughd and Khatlon regions have relatively low monthly earnings. It should be added here that prices for food and various services in Dushanbe are higher than in other regions of the country. Nationwide monthly family earnings overall are as follows: 22.1% less than 1,000 som per month, 24.4% from 1,000 to 1,500 som per month, 17.8% from 1,500 to 2,000 som per month, 12.8% from 2,000 to 2,500 som per month, and 22.9% over 2,500 som per month.

16. The most families with one person working were in Khatlon region (51.6%) and the GBAO (50.0%). Dushanbe at 52.6% and the RRP at 47.7% had the most families with two persons working. The RRP at 20.3% and Dushanbe at 15.0% also had the most families with more than two persons working. It has already been established (through Question 5) that the average family consists of 4.49 persons. Hence, in Dushanbe and the RRP two or more people in an average family work. This is consistent with the fact that family earnings in Dushanbe and the RRP are greater than the monthly family earnings in Tajikistan's other regions.

17. Food prices increased every two to three months mainly in the RRP (85.9%), Dushanbe (77.6%), GBAO (70.5%), and Sughd region (68.2%). Across the country as a whole, prices increased every two to three months for 64.0% of respondents. There has in fact been a persistent decline in the value of Tajikistan's currency against the US dollar over the past seven to eight years. Inasmuch as the bulk of food items (grain, flour, sugar, vegetable oil and so on) are imported from abroad and so valued in US dollar terms, there are chronic price increases for food and services.

18. A majority of respondents (79.5% in Dushanbe, 69.5% in Khatlon region, 56.2% in Sughd regions, and 68.2% in the GBAO) experienced price increases of 5% to 10%, although in the RRP only 34.7% reported increases in that range. A substantial number of respondents registered price increases from 30% to 50% in Sughd region (33.8%) and the RRP (24.0%). Particularly over the past four to five months, there has been drastic price fluctuation for goods and services in Tajikistan. The underlying cause is that most merchandise (over 60%) is imported and usually valued in terms of US dollars. The US dollar exchange rate has been exceptionally variable from 25 February through 10 June. Prior to 24 February one US dollar was worth 11 som. Between 25 February and 5 May 2022, the value of a US dollar rose to 13 som (an increase of 18.1%), and the price of goods and services underwent a corresponding increase. After 6 May the value of a US dollar in som began gradually declining and by 10 June 2022 had reached 11.3 som per US dollar (which means the som had increased in value by 13%). Despite the more favourable exchange rate for the som into US dollars, the elevated prices for goods and services have remained high, that is, they have stayed where they were. Consequently, people have had to curtail their monthly expenditures for goods and services.

19. Concerning why prices for goods and services have changed, the responses were 78.1% that prices changed because of inflation in Tajikistan (and over the past ten years the average annual inflation has been about 12.5%). Annex 22 breaks out the responses about the cause of price changes by Tajikistan's regions.

20. The total minimum monthly expenditures for a family in Tajikistan are 4,343.77 som. With that figure equal to 100%, the average minimum monthly expenditures for a family fall into the following types of expenditures:

- A. Minimum (monthly) cost of housing – 255.24 som – 5.87% of the monthly total.
- B. Minimum (monthly) cost of food – 1,528.92 som – 35.19% of the monthly total.
- C. Minimum (monthly) cost of transportation – 481.24 som – 11.07% of the monthly total.
- D. Minimum (monthly) cost of healthcare and other caring services – 237.18 som – 5.46% of the monthly total.
- E. Minimum (monthly) cost of educating children – 784.46 – 18.05% of the monthly total.
- F. Minimum (monthly) cost of clothing and footwear – 668.81 som – 15.39% of the monthly total.

G. Minimum (monthly) cost of other goods and services – 230.71 som – 5.31% of the monthly total.

H. Minimum (monthly) cost of communications and internet – 157.21 som – 3.62% of the monthly total.

These figures indicate that the bulk of the minimum monthly expenditures (53.24%) for a family in Tajikistan are for food (35.19%) and educating children (18.05%). Several more conclusions may be drawn here:

First, the earnings of the population are not sufficient to completely satisfy the needs of individuals or of the members of their family.

Second, Tajikistan's population is committed to educating and training children so that they will have a particular occupation and specialization in order to be employed in the future and be adequately paid.

There were focus groups and conversations with officials from the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment, with employers, wage earners, and the population at large in both the country's cities and regions, all of which occurred in the course of conducting the survey to assess the content and structure of the basket of consumer items and its affordability for various social groups in the Republic of Tajikistan. Among the interlocutors there were people of working age, youth, people beyond working age, pensioners, people officially employed and those in the informal sector, along with returnees from external labour migration, the unemployed and others.

Deputy Minister of Labour, Migration and Employment Nurullo Makhmadullozoda has commented:

According to the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On the subsistence minimum", the consumer basket is the fundamental basis for determining the minimum wage, establishing wage rates, and the amounts of pensions and social benefits for Tajikistan's citizens. Therefore, an increase in the consumer basket should guide the state as it adjusts incomes to meet inflation (in recent years Tajikistan has experienced inflation of about 12.5%). Furthermore, the price of the consumer basket has a large role in the development of the state's social policy, for example, in making socio-economic forecasts and in developing short-term programmes, medium-term strategies, and a long-range concept for the country's social advancement. The results from the survey to assess the content and structure of the basket of consumer items and its affordability for various social groups in the Republic of Tajikistan will identify the expenditures that the populace makes for services and nutritious food. These research results will also be used to determine the country's human development index. Proper diet and the population's expenditures for nutritious food have a direct impact on the health of the country's inhabitants. This means that the course of state policy for monitoring and ensuring the health of the nation depends upon these standards.⁵³

During these interviews, people also expressed various opinions about the importance of determining the content and structure of the consumer basket, the need to ascertain the prices for the consumer basket, and also the impact of the consumer basket on the standard of living of Tajikistan's population. For example, during focus groups among local residents in Sughd region, Khatlon region, and Dushanbe including middle-aged people, pensioners, women and men, the following was stated:

1. Ascertaining the content, structure and cost of the consumer basket is especially important because its cost will be used as a basis for determining Tajikistan's minimum wage.⁵⁴

⁵³ Nurullo Rakhmatulloevich Makhmadullozoda, Deputy Minister of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Republic of Tajikistan. Dushanbe, 17 May 2022.

⁵⁴ An employer in the public catering sector. Khujand, May 2022.

2. The content and structure of the consumer basket is important because it will be the basis for arriving at standards for food and services for various segments of the country's population.⁵⁵
3. State structures must employ this survey assessing the content and structure of the basket of consumer items and its affordability for various social groups in the Republic of Tajikistan in order to make the necessary forecasts for the country's social and economic development. For example, the content and structure of the consumer basket is extremely important in ascertaining how well the population is provided with essential services and nutritious food.⁵⁶

All of the above confirms that conducting the survey assessing the content and structure of the basket of consumer items and its affordability for various social groups in the Republic of Tajikistan has been quite significant. Research results will be used by the state bodies charged with developing state programmes and strategies for social and economic advancement. Also, the cost ascertained for the consumer basket will be a basis for adjusting the minimum wage, and the results from this research may determine income levels for various segments of the population in general and in separate regions.

55 Employee at a primary occupational training centre in Kulob, April 2022.

56 Ayombek Akramov, Chair of the Employers' Association in the Republic of Tajikistan, Dushanbe, 5 May 2022.

► 11. Recommendations

Scenarios for increasing incomes and ensuring social protection of Tajikistan's population are offered as follows:

First, it is necessary that the structure of the consumer basket is coordinated through social dialogue.

Second, social benefits and indexation should be interrelated with the dynamics of prices for the consumer basket.

Third would be education and training of competitive personnel for the national labour market so that they will provide what is now needed for the social, economic, and technical and technological development of society. A capable and competitive workforce will be able to make rational use of available productive resources (in industry, labour, finance, energy and more).

Fourth would come rational use of productive resources, which will markedly increase labour productivity and the efficiency of workers in performing their jobs, and this will apply to nearly all of Tajikistan's economic sectors.

Fifth would be increased labour productivity that will in turn enable increased incomes and retained earnings for organisations or enterprises. This will also result in higher wages for workers. When it comes to private entrepreneurs, higher labour productivity and efficient use of available resources will bring them higher earnings.

Sixth, higher income for the populace (employed in any economic sector) would permit a higher standard of living. The majority of the population would have the opportunity to enjoy a decent standard of living, that is, a standard above the subsistence minimum. Those emerging opportunities will then provide a way to meet a person's needs and the needs of their family members and result in a steadily increasing standard of living for Tajikistan's populace.

The ultimate scenario proposed would include higher incomes and provision of social protection for Tajikistan's population based upon productive employment and paying workers a living wage, which will enable them to satisfy their own needs and the needs of their families.

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▶ 13. Annex

Questionnaire

Purpose of the survey

Dear respondent, the basic purpose of this survey is to evaluate the content and structure of the minimum consumer basket for meeting the needs of various social groups in the population of the Republic of Tajikistan.

1. City, region or rural area _____ (indicate an age group)

2. Gender:

- A. Male
- B. Female

3. Age _____ (indicate an age group)

- A. Under secondary school age
- B. Secondary school age
- C. Working age
- D. Retirement age

4. Employment status:

- A. Officially employed
- B. Informally employed
- C. Unemployed
- D. External labour migrant
- E. Other _____ (describe)

5. Family situation

- A. Married
- B. Never married
- C. Divorced
- D. Widow
- E. Widower
- F. Living alone
- G. Spouse has emigrated

6. Number of members in the family _____ (indicate a number)

Age and gender of other family members (please indicate)

- A. _____
 B. _____
 C. _____
 D. _____
 E. _____

7. Indicate the price of the food items (in your place of residence, city or region) which you consume frequently (please answer as specifically as possible):

Price of flour (50 kilos) _____ (Tajiks usually buy a 50-kilo sack of flour)

Price of milk (1 litre) _____

Price of flatbread (bread) (500 grams) _____

Price of rice (1 kilo) _____

Price of sugar (1 kilo) _____

Price of eggs (30-egg pack) _____ (Tajiks usually buy packs of 30 eggs)

Price of beef (1 kilo) _____

Price of mutton (1 kilo) _____

Price of poultry (1 kilo) _____

Price of oil (vegetable or cottonseed) (1 litre) _____

Price of apples (1 kilo) _____

Price of grapes (1 kilo) _____

Price of pomegranates (1 kilo) _____

Price of tangerines (1 kilo) _____

Price of potatoes (1 kilo) _____

Price of onions (1 kilo) _____

Price of tomatoes (1 kilo) _____

Price of cucumbers (1 kilo) _____

Price of carrots (1 kilo) _____

Price of peas (1 kilo) _____

Price of beans (1 kilo) _____

Price of tea (green or black) (1 kilo) _____

Price of salt (1 kilo) _____

8. Your transport costs (per month):

- A. Daily transportation costs (public transit) _____ (indicate)
- B. How many in your family use public transit? _____ (indicate)
- C. Approximate monthly cost of public transit for one family member _____ (indicate)
- D. If you own an automobile, how many litres of gasoline do you use per month? _____ (indicate)
- E. How much does a litre of gasoline cost in your city or region? _____ (indicate)
- F. Cost of insurance, routine maintenance for the automobile _____ (indicate)
- G. If you have a person with special needs in your family, how much does their transport cost per month? _____ (indicate)

9. Housing costs (per month)

- A. What are the housing costs per month? (homeowner) _____ (indicate)
- B. What are the housing costs per month? (tenant) _____ (indicate)
- C. Cost of electricity (per month) (in winter) _____ (indicate)
- D. Cost of electricity (per month) (in summer) _____ (indicate)
- E. Cost of trash collection (per month) _____ (indicate)
- F. Common area services (per month) _____ (indicate)
- G. Cost of potable water _____ (indicate)
- H. Cost of hot water (if available) _____ (indicate)
- I. Sewerage _____ (indicate)
- J. Heating _____ (indicate)
- K. Other costs (if any) _____ (indicate)

10. Cost of nutritious food (per month)

- A. Cost of food (for an adult family member of working age) _____
- B. Cost of food (for an adult family member above working age) _____
- C. Cost of food (for a family member of preschool age) _____
- D. Cost of food (for a family member of school age) _____
- E. Cost of food (for a family member with special needs, if any) _____
- F. Cost of cookware _____

11. Cost of clothing and footwear (per month)

- A. Cost of clothing and footwear (for an adult family member of working age) _____
- B. Cost of clothing and footwear (for an adult family member above working age) _____
- C. Cost of clothing and footwear (for a family member of preschool age) _____
- D. Cost of clothing and footwear (for a family member of school age) _____
- E. Cost of clothing and footwear (for a family member with special needs, if any) _____

12. Your expenses for treatment and healthcare (per month)

- A. Purchase of medication _____ (indicate)
- B. Personal hygiene (cost of toilet items, soap, shampoo, toothpaste, brush, etc.) _____
- C. Cost of laundry detergent _____
- D. Cost of cleansers for dishes and housekeeping _____
- E. Cost of medical attention (treatment, consultation) _____ (indicate)
- F. Cost of preventive medicine _____ (indicate)
- G. Cost of treating accidental injury _____ (indicate)
- H. Cost of treating chronic illness _____ (indicate)
- I. Expenses associated with special needs _____ (indicate)
- J. Expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as masks, antiseptics, medication, and other items _____ (indicate)
- K. Other costs _____ (indicate)

13. Your expenses for educating children (primary and secondary school, college or university) (monthly expenses).

- A. Tuition (for one child for one month of the year) (number of children in your family attending school, if any) _____ (indicate)
- B. Cost of school supplies _____ (indicate)
- C. Cost of school uniform _____ (indicate)
- D. Cost of transportation to and from school _____ (indicate)
- E. Pocket money at school _____ (indicate)
- F. Cost of extracurricular activities _____ (indicate)
- G. Other costs _____ (indicate)

14. Cost of communications

- A. Purchase of a computer or mobile phone _____
- B. SIM cards _____
- C. Internet per minute for conversation _____

15. Estimate the minimum monthly expenses for your family (the statistically average family has five members – two adults and three children) (please be as specific as possible)

- A. Minimum cost of housing _____ (indicate)
- B. Minimum cost of food _____ (indicate)
- C. Minimum cost of transport _____ (indicate)
- D. Minimum cost of treatment and healthcare _____ (indicate)
- E. Minimum cost of educating children _____ (indicate)
- F. Minimum cost of clothing and footwear _____ (indicate)

G. Minimum cost of other goods and services _____ (indicate)

H. Minimum costs of communications and internet _____ (indicate)

I. Other costs _____ (indicate)

16. Indicate your monthly earnings:

A. Under 1,000 som _____

B. From 1,000 to 1,500 som _____

C. From 1,500 to 2,000 som _____

D. From 2,000 to 2,500 som _____

E. Over 2,500 som _____

F. If there are labour migrants in your family, how much do they send and how often? _____

17. How many persons in your family work and receive earnings?

A. One

B. Two

C. More than two _____ (indicate how many)

18. If you have additional (monthly) earnings, (if there are, please indicate the source of those earnings) _____ (and amount of earnings)

A. Under 1,000 som

B. From 1,000 to 1,500 som

C. From 1,500 to 2,000 som

D. From 2,000 to 2,500 som

E. Over 2,500 som

19. Do you have earnings from farming a small plot (if any) (garden, orchard, vineyard, gourds, poultry, sheep, goats or other)?

A. Yes, I have such earnings

B. No, I don't have such earnings

20. Please indicate the family's total monthly earnings

A. Under 1,000 som

B. From 1,000 to 1,500 som

C. From 1,500 to 2,000 som

D. From 2,000 to 2,500 som

E. Over 2,500 som

21. How often do prices for the food items listed above change in your (city or region)?

A. Once each year

B. Every six months

C. Every three to four months

22. How much (as a percentage) do prices on the food items listed above change in your (city or region)?

- A. From 5 to 10 percent
- B. From 30 to 50 percent
- C. Approximately double
- D. Other_____ (indicate)

23. What would you say is the reason (in your city or region) for the price change (increase) on the food items listed above?

- A. Inflation
- B. Lack of prompt deliveries
- C. Lack of competition among merchants
- D. Seasonal variations
- E. Inadequate roads
- F. Other_____ (indicate)

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