

LEGAL BUT NOT NECESSARILY AVAILABLE: ABORTION SERVICES AT STATE HOSPITALS AT TURKEY

Kadir Has University Gender and Women's Studies Research Center



Legal But Not Necessarily Available: Abortion Services at State Hospitals in Turkey¹

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Funded by:

Kadir Has University Scientific Research Fund

Project No: No: 2016-BAP-01

October 2016

¹ These results were first published in: O'Neil, Mary Lou. "The Availability of Abortion Services at States Hospitals in Turkey: A National Study." Contraception http://www.contraceptionjournal.org/article/S0010-7824(16)30411-5/fulltext

Findings

- Out of 431 state hospitals with departments of obstetrics and gynecology 7.8% provide abortion services without restriction as to reason, 78% provide abortion care if there is a medical necessity and 11.8% do not provide the service at all.
- Of the 58 education and research hospitals with departments of obstetrics and gynecology, 17.3% provide abortion services without restriction as to reason, 71.1% if there is a medical necessity and 11.4% do not provide the service at all.
- The regions of West Marmara and the East Blacksea, with a population of 1,462,4442 of women of childbearing age (15-49) do not have a single state hospital that provides abortion care without restriction as to reason.
- 53 of 81 provinces in Turkey do not have a state hospital that provides abortion care without restriction as to reason. (Adıyaman, Afyonkarahisar, Ağrı, Amasya, Artvin, Balıkesir, Bilecik, Bingöl, Bolu, Burdur, Bursa, Çanakkale, Çankırı, Edirne, Elazığ, Erzincan, Eskişehir, Gaziantep, Giresun, Gümüşhane, Hatay, Isparta, İçel (Mersin), Kars, Kastamonu, Kırklareli, Kırşehir, Kocaeli, Kütahya, Malatya, Kahramanmaraş, Mardin, Nevşehir, Ordu, Rize, Sakarya, Siirt, Sinop, Sivas, Tekirdağ, Tokat, Trabzon, Uşak, Van, Yozgat, Zonguldak, Aksaray, Bayburt, Kırıkkale, Batman, Yalova, Kilis, Osmaniye)

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² All of the population statistics used in this report have been taken from data available from the Turkis Statistical Institute (TUİK).

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Introduction

Today in Turkey abortion is legal. The Law on Population Planning No. 2827 introduced in 1983 ended the legal prohibition on abortion that had been in place since the founding of the Republic.³ The law provides for abortion without restriction as to reason through ten weeks of pregnancy. If a woman is married spousal consent is required as is parental consent for those under age 18. If a pregnancy threatens a woman's life or there is substantial fetal abnormality, abortion is permissible and the law states no gestational time limit. However, in such a case, the doctor must notify health authorities of the women's identity, the procedure to be performed and the rationale before the procedure is performed, if possible, and in an emergency within notification must take place within twenty-four hours. For pregnancies that are the result of a crime, the Turkish criminal code allows for abortions through twenty weeks. Abortion care at state hospitals is covered by the state health insurance.

Since legalization, several generations of women have availed themselves of the right to legal abortion services in Turkey. Approximately 14% of Turkish women report having had at least one abortion in their lifetime.⁴ Yet, there have been a number of reports in recent years which have called into question the current availability of abortion services in Turkey, particularly in state hospitals.⁵ This study

³ Law on Population Planning No. 2827, 1983,

http://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.2827.pdf

⁴Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies. 2013 Turkey Demographic and Health Survey. http://www.hips.hacettepe.edu.tr/eng/TDHS 2013 main.report.pdf ⁵ Songün, S. Singles' abortion rights rejected. Hürriyet.

http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/singles-abortion-rights-rejected-11899869; The Guardian. Istanbul hospitals refuse abortions as government's attitude hardens.

http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/04/istanbul-hospitals-refuse-abortions-government-attitude;

Purple Roof Foundation. Kürtaj yapıyor musunuz? "Hayır yapmıyoruz!". (Do you perform abortions? No, we do not!). https://www.morcati.org.tr/tr/290-kurtaj-yapiyor-musunuz-hayir-yapmiyoruz; Bianet. 12 İlde Sadece 9 Kamu Hastanesi Yasaya Uygun

attempted to systematically answer the question of whether or not abortions are available in state hospitals in Turkey and under what conditions.

Methodology

We employed a mystery client telephone survey where we contacted 431 state hospitals in Turkey. Working with a list available from the Ministry of Health dated October 2015 and updated in January 2016, we created a list of hospitals for contact. At the time of the study there were 712 total state hospitals in Turkey. Specialist hospitals were removed (n=67) and then the sample was further refined to eliminate hospitals that did not have a department of obstetrics and gynecology, which is required for the provision of abortion services. The final sample consisted of 431 hospitals. Of the 431 hospitals which constituted the sample, 428 were contacted. A further 6 hospitals (1.4%) refused to provide information regarding abortion services over the phone demanding instead that someone appear in person to receive information.

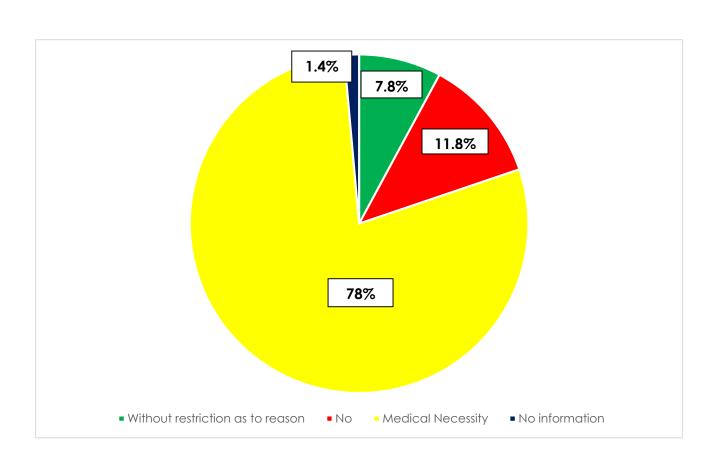
Working with a prepared script, hospitals were contacted between October 2015 and April 2015. The telephone survey used a mystery client that asked to be directed to the department of obstetrics and gynecology. At that point, we the following questions: 1. "Are abortion services provided at the hospital?"; 2. "Is the procedure available without restriction to reason?"; 3. "Is it available in the case of a medical necessity?"; 4. If the answer to the previous were no in each case we asked for confirmation of the state "so, abortion services are not available under any circumstances". To ensure standardization, the

Kürtaj Yapıyor. (Out of 12 provinces only 9 state hospitals provide abortions in line with the law). http://bianet.org/bianet/toplumsal-cinsiyet/175499-12-ilde-sadece-9-kamu-hastanesin-yasaya-uygun-kurtaj-yapiyor.

same script was employed for each hospital. Using SPSS, the data were coded so that the survey responses could be analyzed according to hospital type and region, as well as the answer regarding the provision of abortion. Each answer provided in the survey was coded and accounted for in the data set. The data set was then analyzed for frequency and cross tabulations were performed. The results follow.

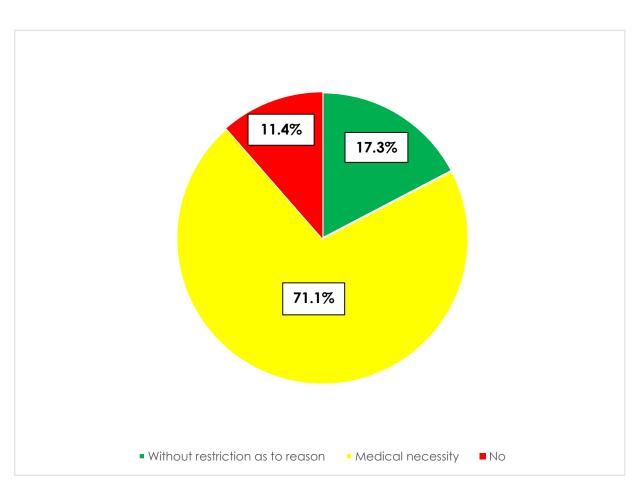
TURKEY

State Hospitals with Departments of Obstetrics/Gynecology Providing Abortion Services



TURKEY

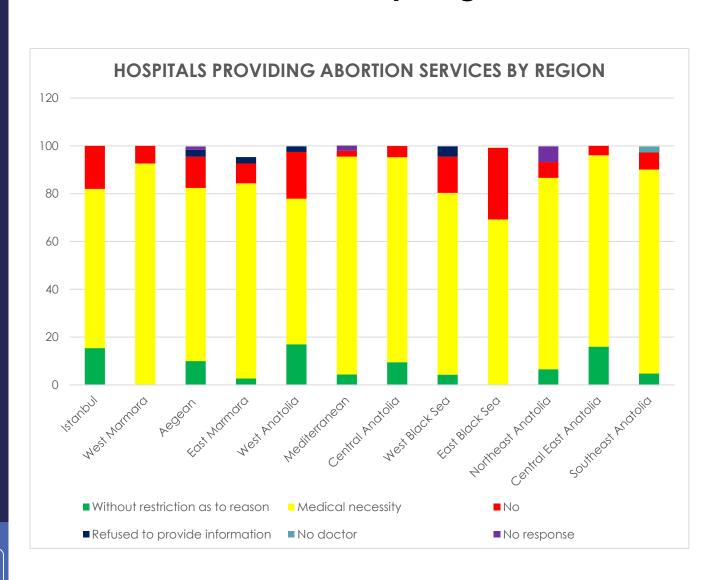
Teaching Hospitals with Departments of Obstetrics/Gynecology Providing Abortion Services



TURKEY BY REGION



Hospitals Providing Abortion Services by Region

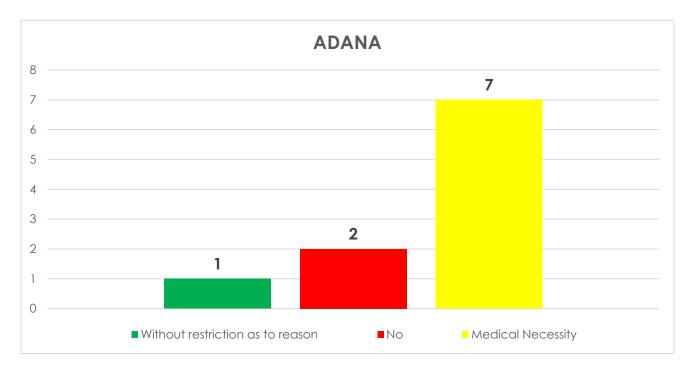


ADANA

Information

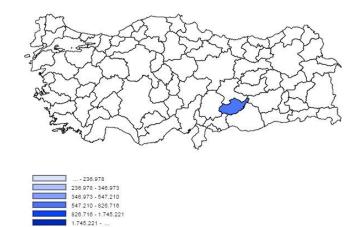


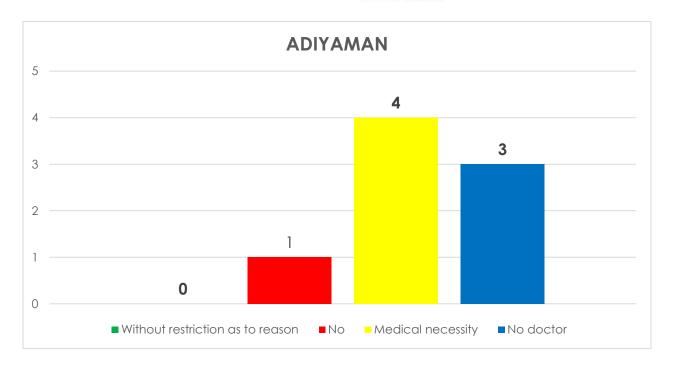




ADIYAMAN

Information



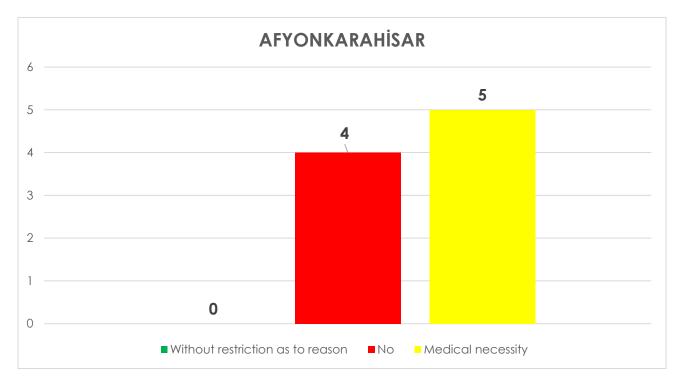


AFYONKARAHİSAR

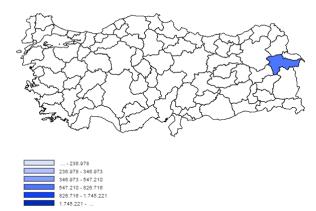
Total Hospitals	9
Education and Research Hospitals	0
Population	709,015
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	179.983







AĞRI



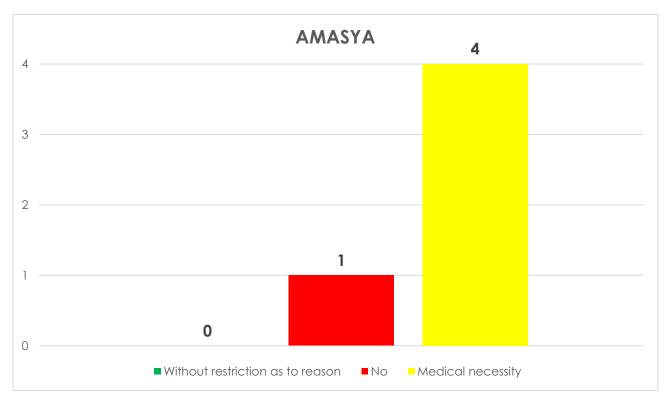


AMASYA

Total No. Hospitals	5
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	322,167
Women of Childbearina Age (15-49)	128.388

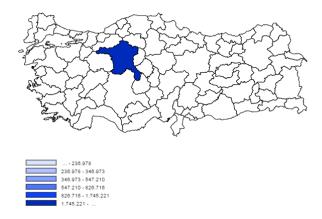


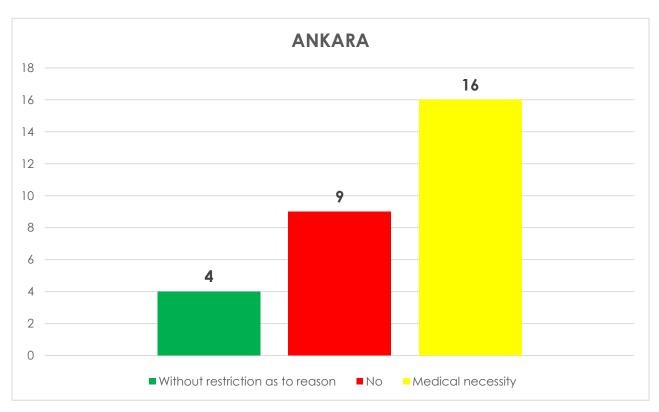




ANKARA

Total Hospitals	29
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population5,27	0,575
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).1,45	6,477



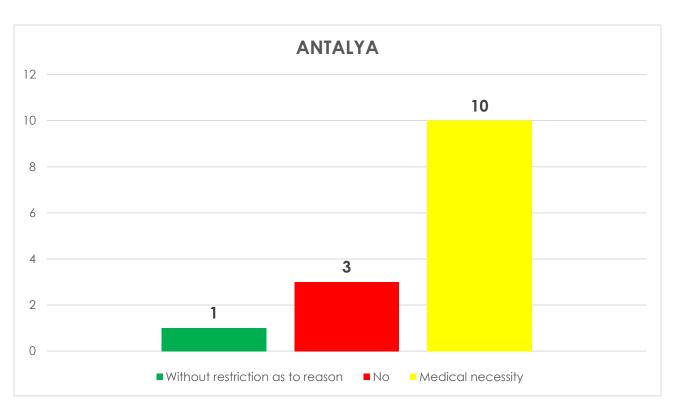


ANTALYA

Total Hospitals	14
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population2,2	288,456
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)6	19,937





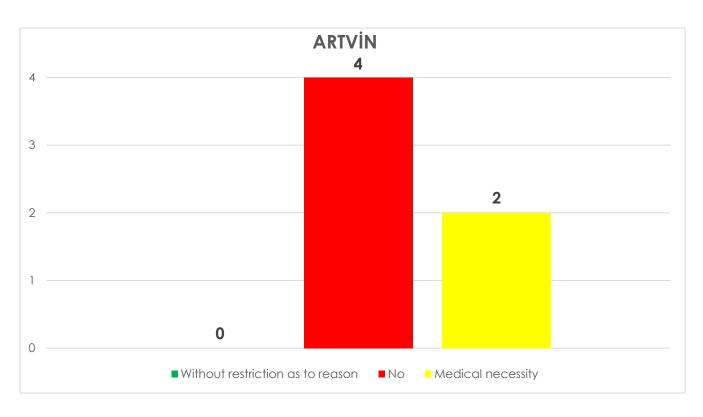


ARTVIN

Total Hospitals	6
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49))39,162

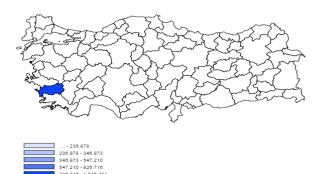


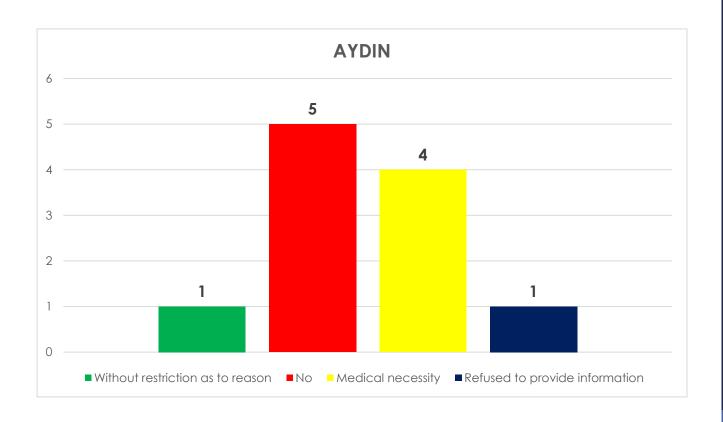




AYDIN

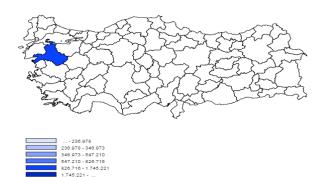
Total Hospitals	11
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	1,053,506
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	260,656

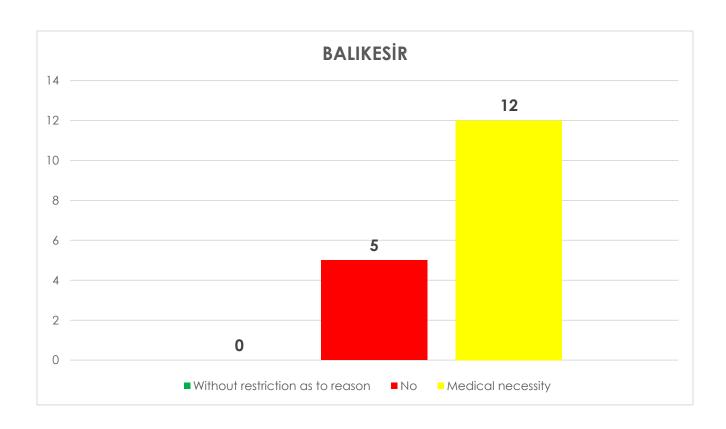




BALIKESİR

Total Hospitals	17
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population1	
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	.283,579



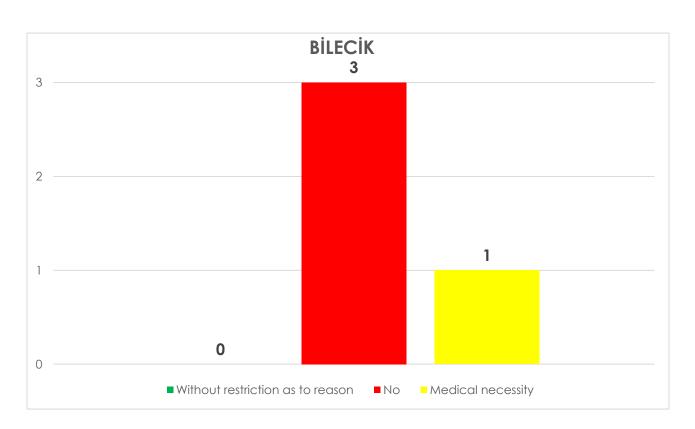


BİLECİK

Total Hospitals	4
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	212,361
Women of Childbearina Age (15-49	152.706





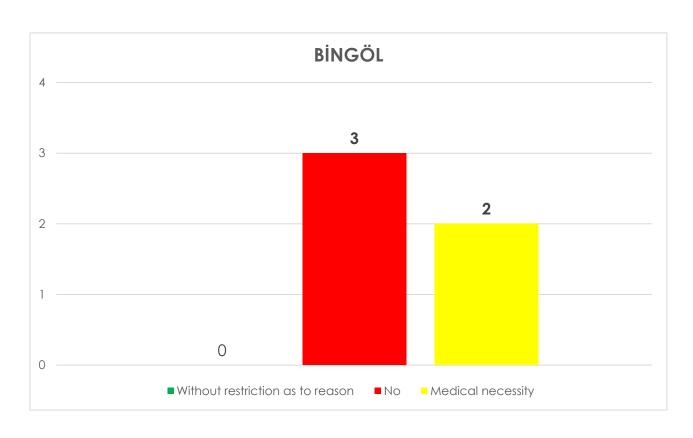


BİNGÖL

Total Hospitals	7
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	267,184
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49	7)70.953

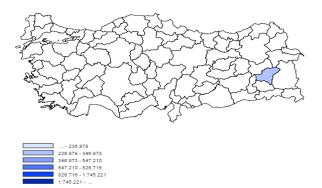






BİTLİS

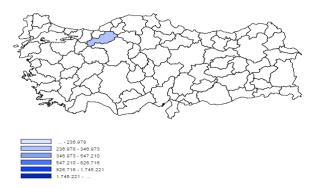
Total Hospitals	7
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	83,017

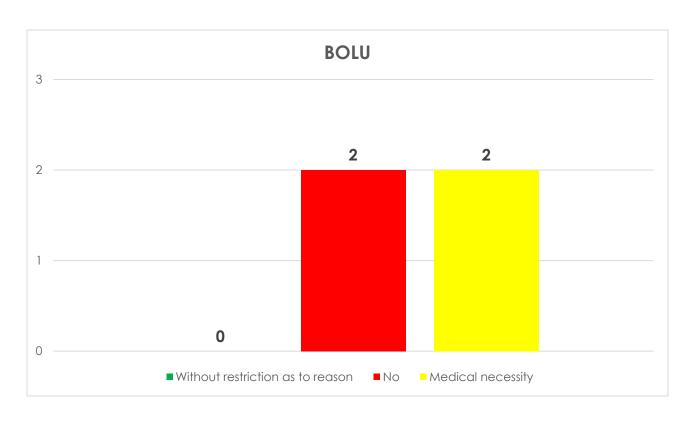




BOLU

Total Hospitals	4
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population291,095	5
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)74,032)



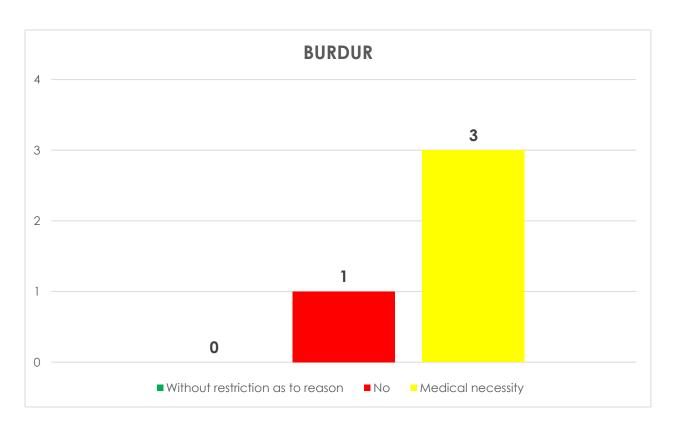


BURDUR

Total Hospitals	4
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	62,258

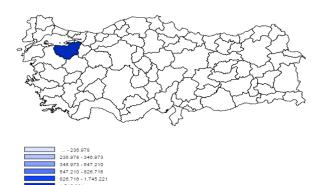


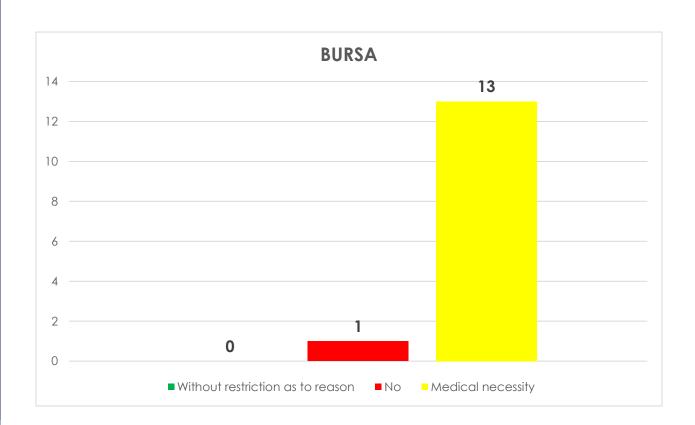




BURSA

Total Hospitals	14
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	2,842,547
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	756.489



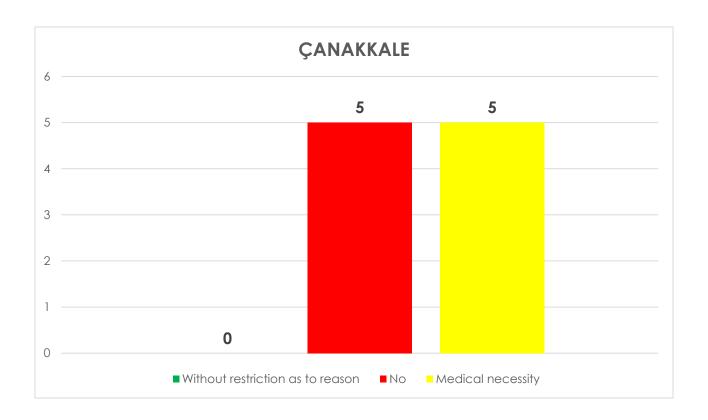


ÇANAKKALE

Total Hospitals	10
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	513,341
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	124,060



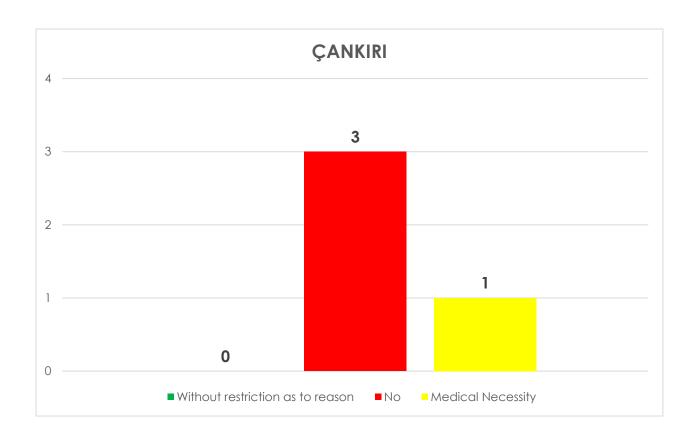




ÇANKIRI

Total Hospitals	4
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	.180,945
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	41,524

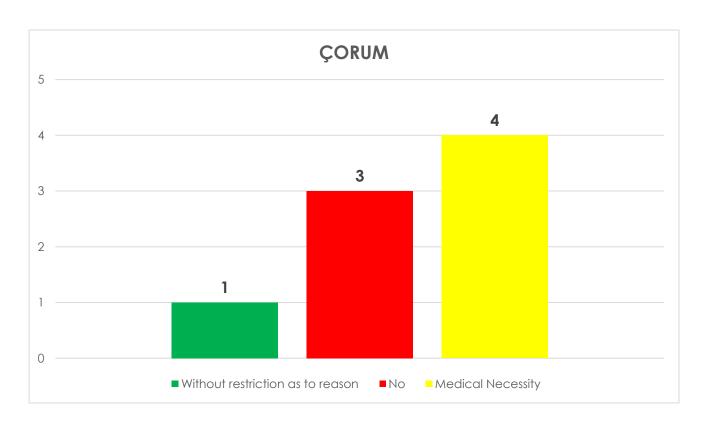




ÇORUM

Total Hospitals	88
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	525,180
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	125,008

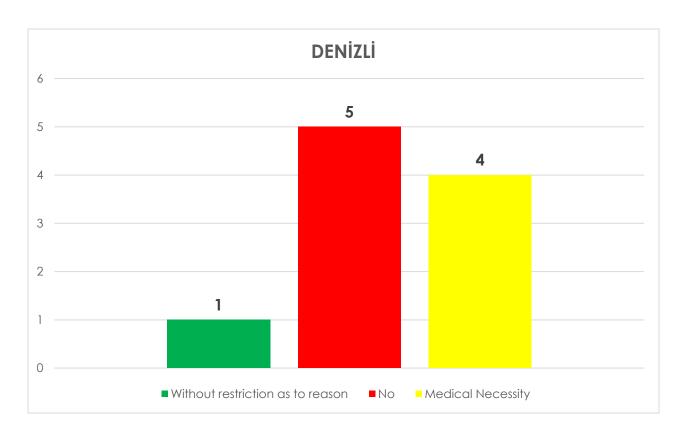




DENIZLI

Total Hospitals	10
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	993,442
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	260,063

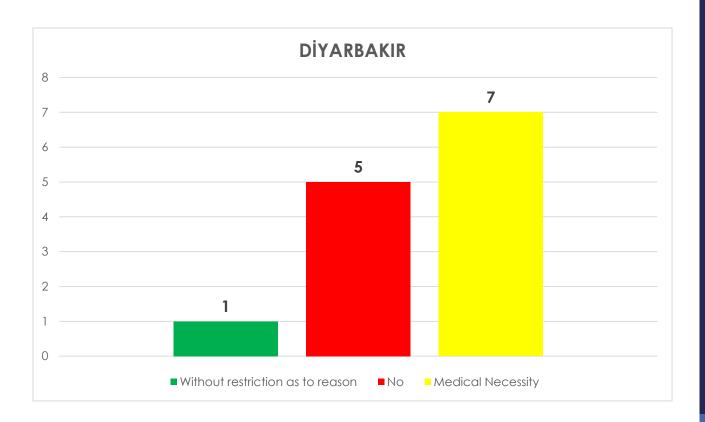




DİYARBAKIR

Total Hospitals	8
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	1,654,196
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	430,838

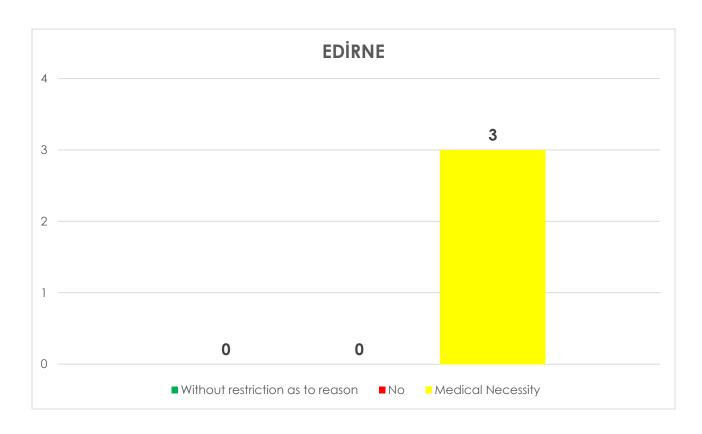




EDIRNE

Total Hospitals	3
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	402,537
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	98.023



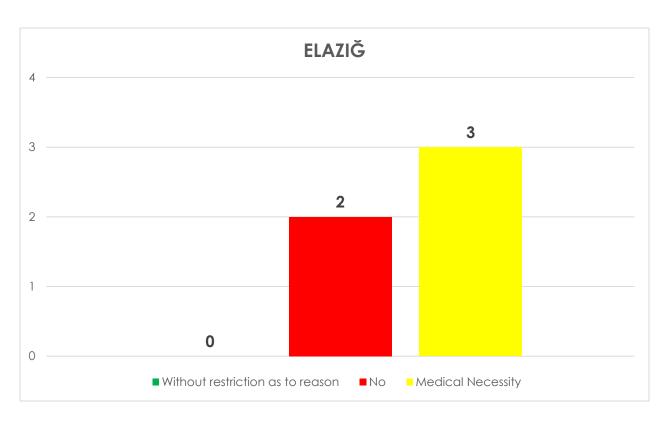


ELAZIĞ

Total Hospitals	5
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	574,304
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	152.743





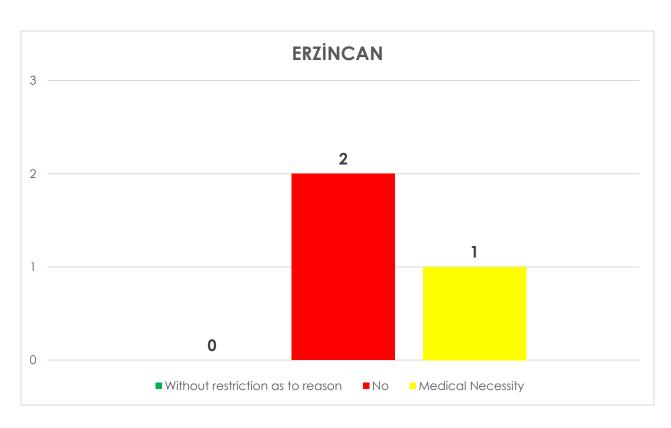


ERZİNCAN

Total Hospitals	3
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	222,918
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	





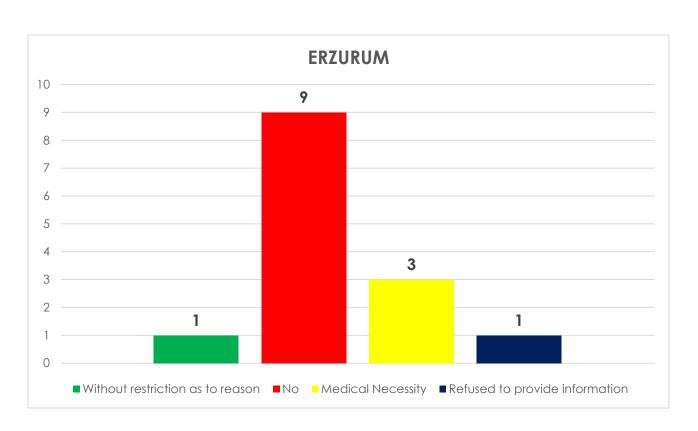


ERZURUM

Total Hospitals	14
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population76	52,321
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)19	7.725

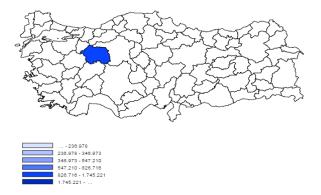


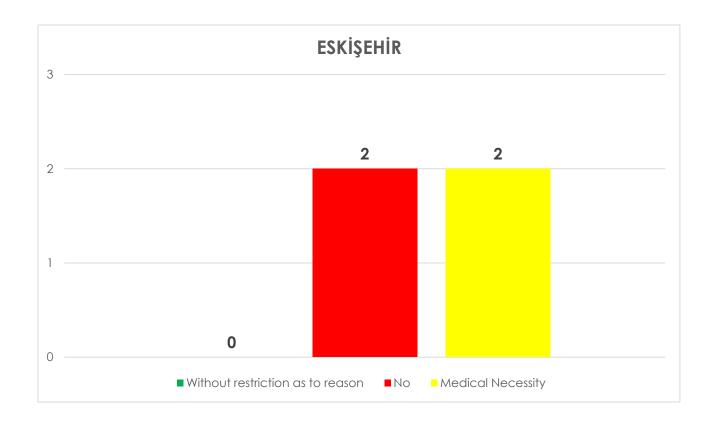




ESKİŞEHİR

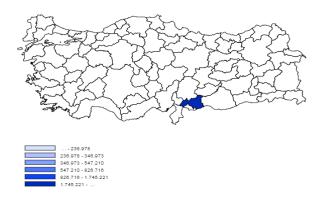
Total Hospitals	4
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	826,716
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	219,361

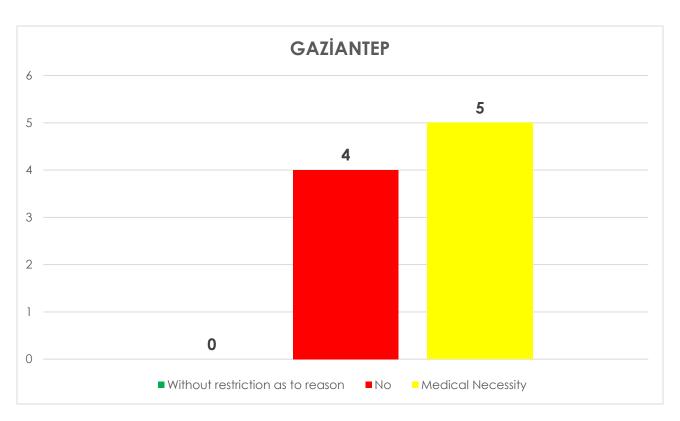




GAZIANTEP

Total Hospitals	9
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	1,931,836
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	490.827

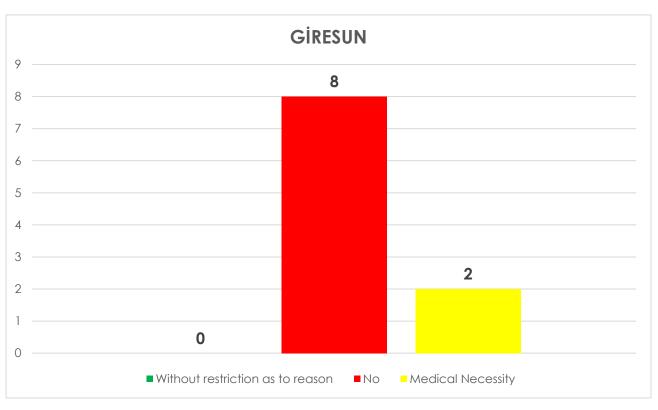




GIRESUN

Total Hospitals	10
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	426,686
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	99,878



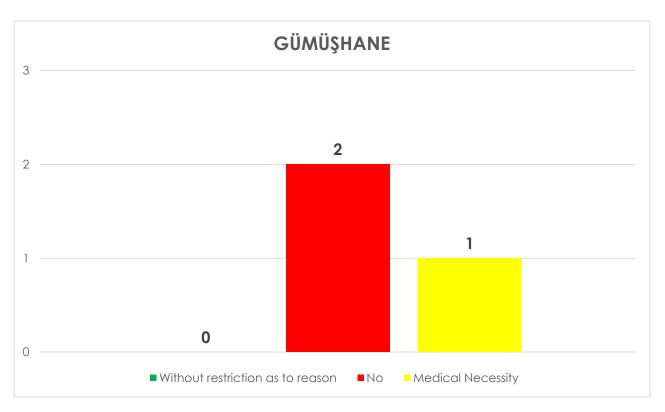


GÜMÜŞHANE

Total Hospitals	3
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	151,449
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	39.023





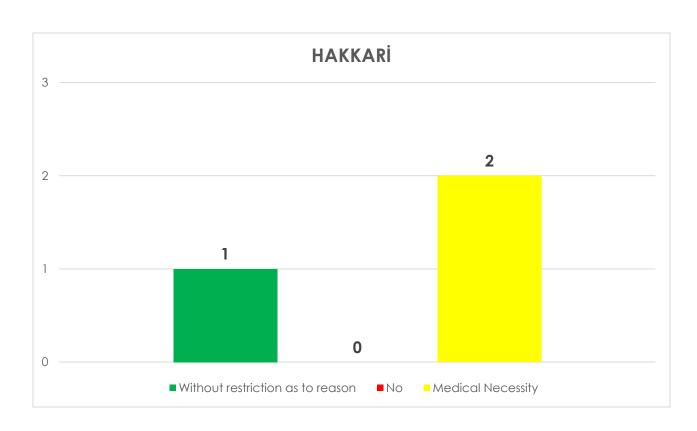


HAKKARİ

Total Hospitals	3
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	278,775
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	69.433





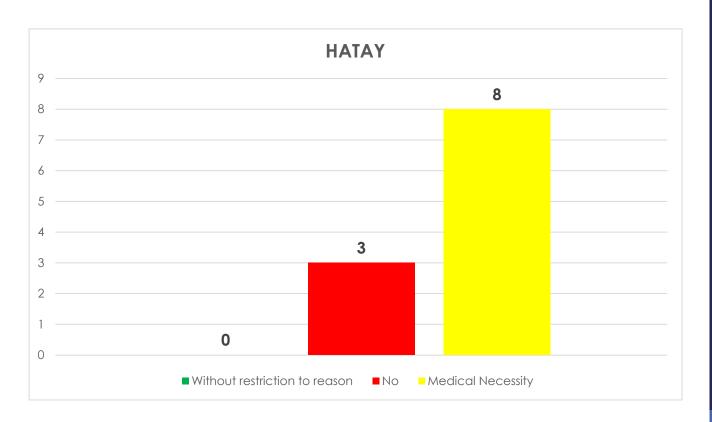


HATAY

Total Hospitals	11
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population1,5	
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)39	90,188

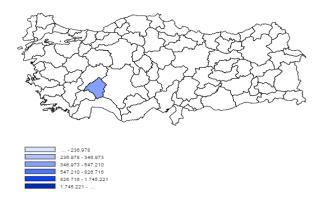


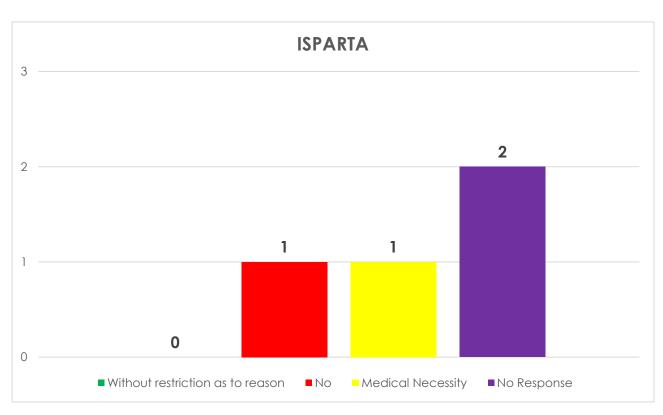




ISPARTA

Total Hospitals	4
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	421,766
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	106.537



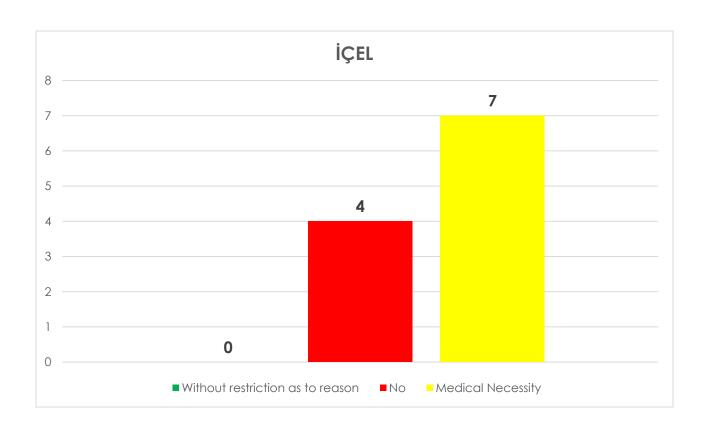


iÇEL (MERSİN)

Total Hospitals	11
Education and Research Hospitals	0
Population	1,745,221
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	455,076





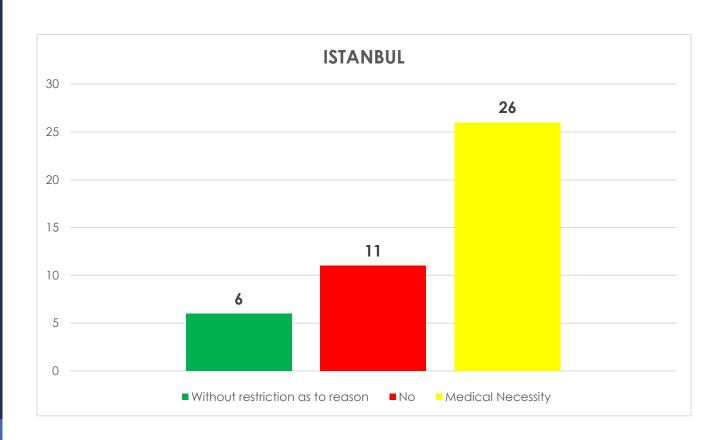


ISTANBUL

Total Hospitals	43
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	14,657,434
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	4.168.828





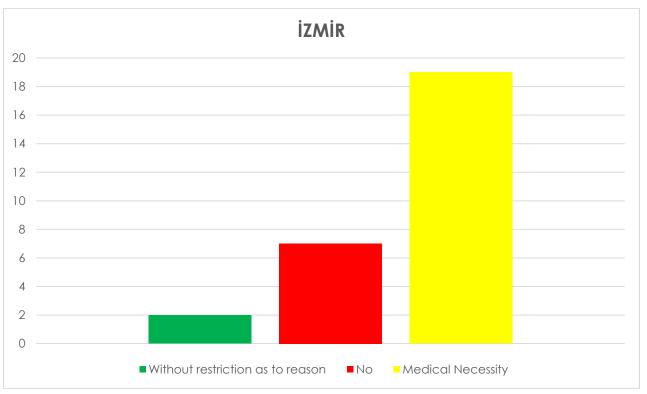


IZMIR

Total Hospitals	28
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population4,168,4	415
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)1,100,8	354

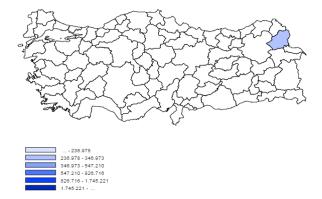


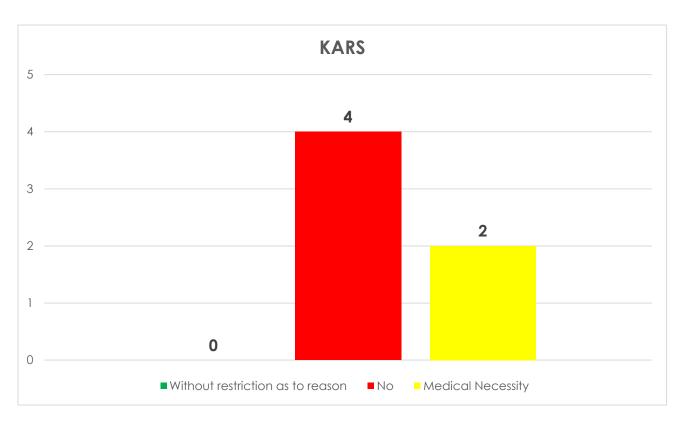




KARS

Total Hospitals	6
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	292,660
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	70.954

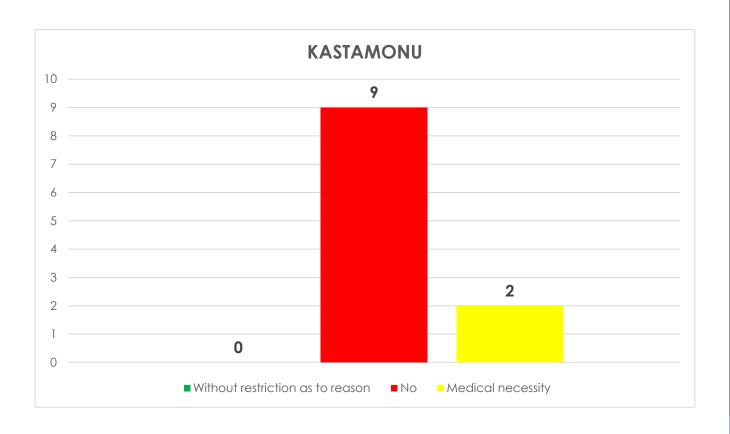




KASTAMONU

Total Hospitals	11
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	372,633
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49	185.210

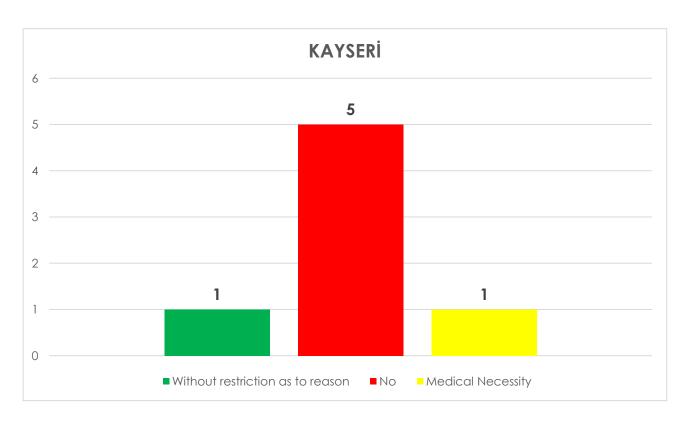




KAYSERİ

Total Hospitals	7
Education and Research Hospitals	1
Population	1,341,056
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	350, 237



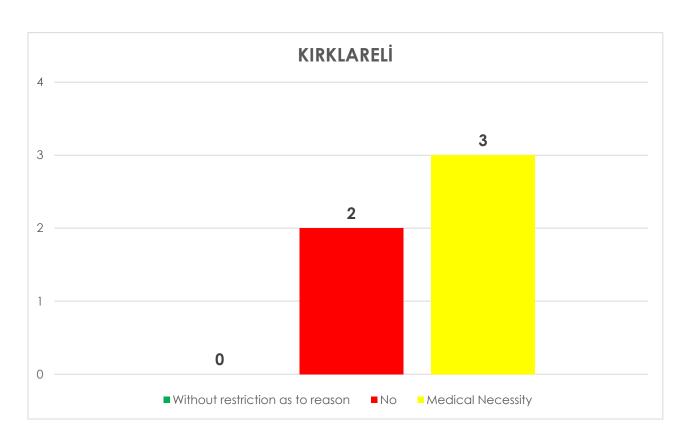


KIRKLARELİ

Total Hospitals	5
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	346,973
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	84.808

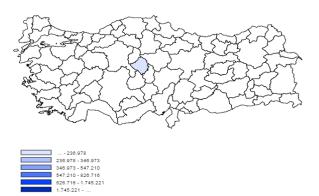


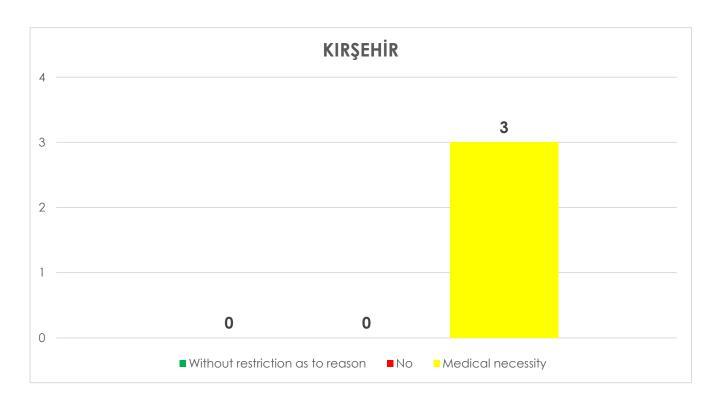




KIRŞEHİR

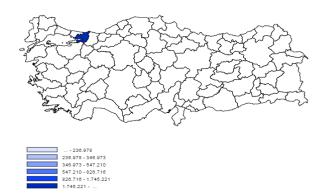
Total Hospitals	3
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	225,562
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49	156,786

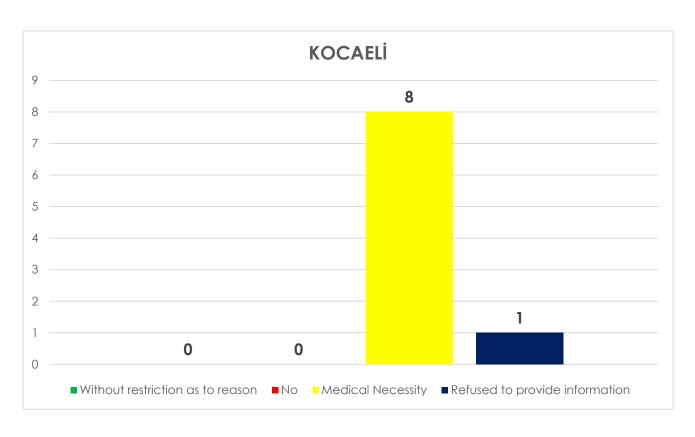




KOCAELİ

Information



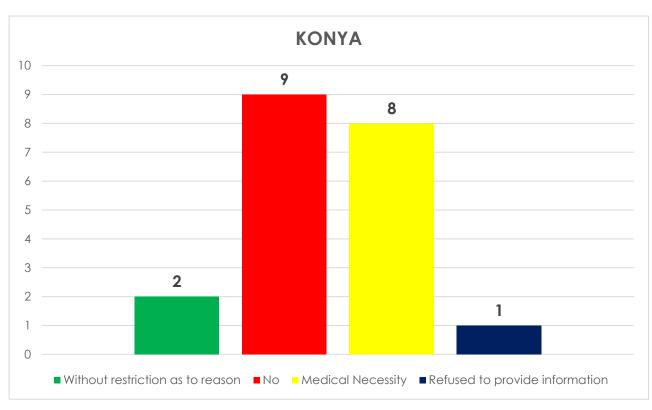


KONYA

Total Hospitals	20
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	2,130,544
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	556.246



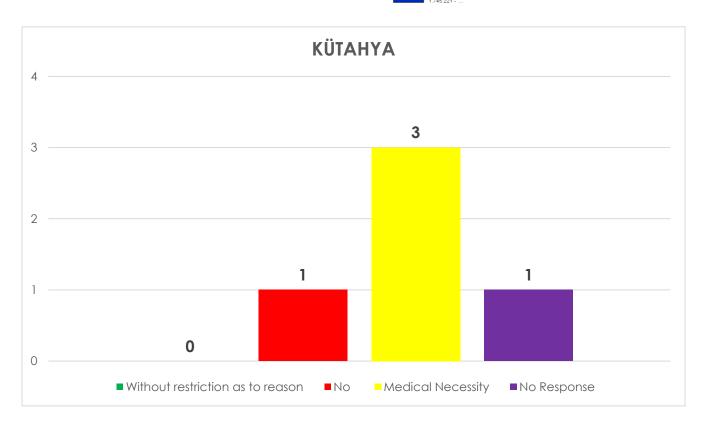




KÜTAHYA

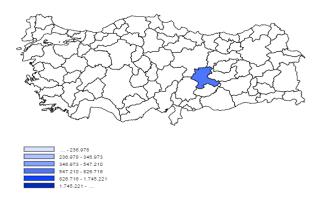
Total Hospitals	5
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	.571,463
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	147, 057

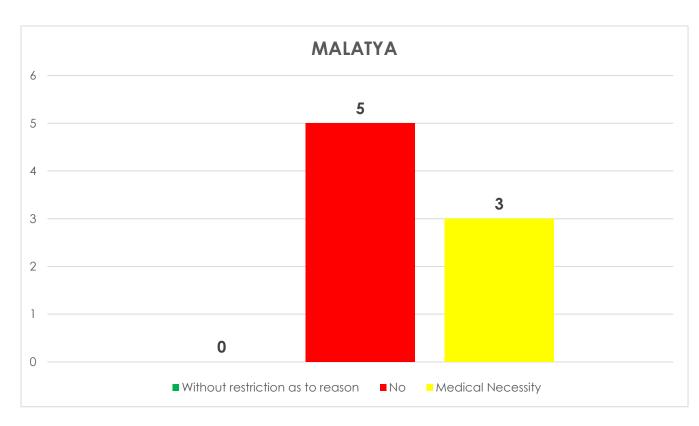




MALATYA

Total Hospitals	88
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	.772,904
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	.200.465



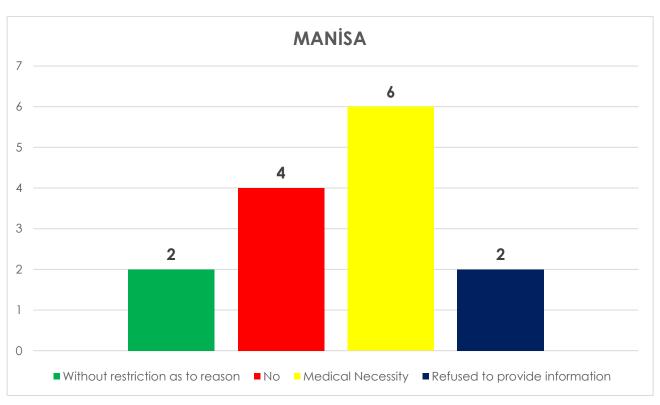


MANISA

Total Hospitals	14
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	.1,380,366
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	348,407

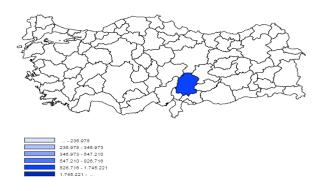


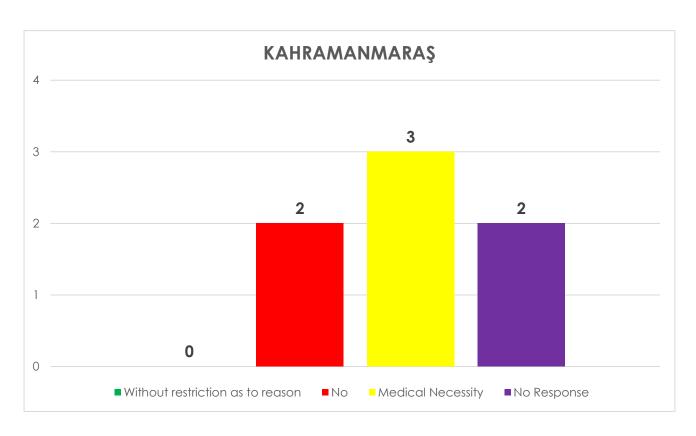




KAHRAMANMARAŞ

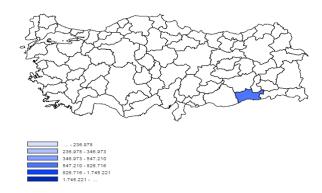
Total Hospitals	7
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)348.407

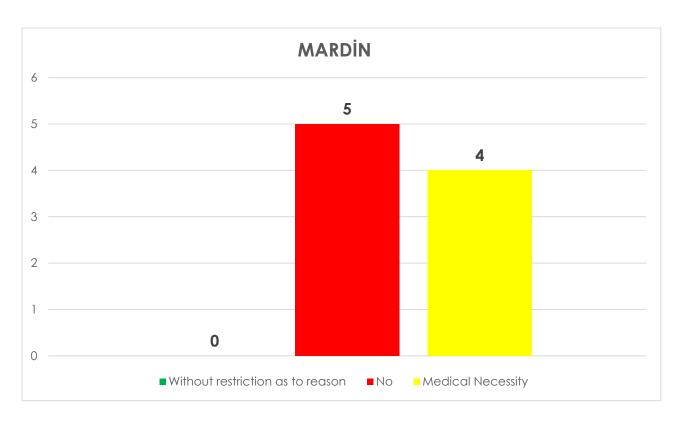




MARDIN

Total Hospitals	9
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	796,591
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	202.452



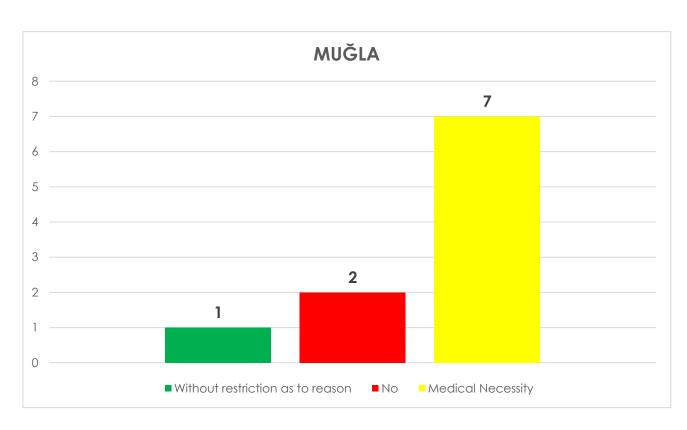


MUĞLA

Total Hospitals	10
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	908,877
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	228,010



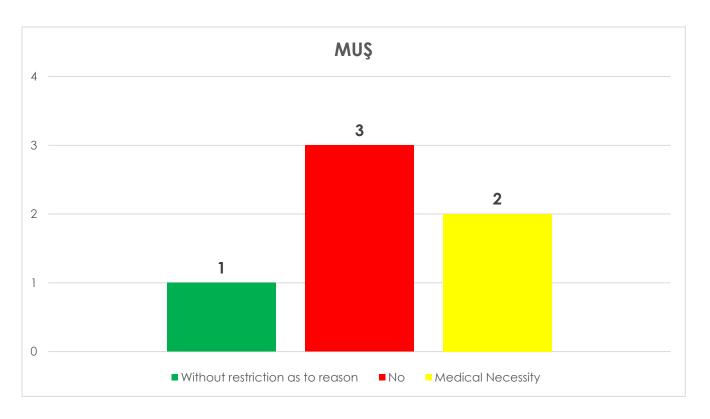




MUŞ

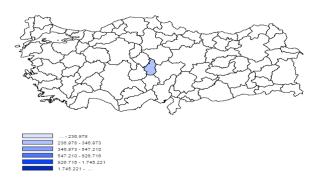
Total Hospitals	.6
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)99.59	

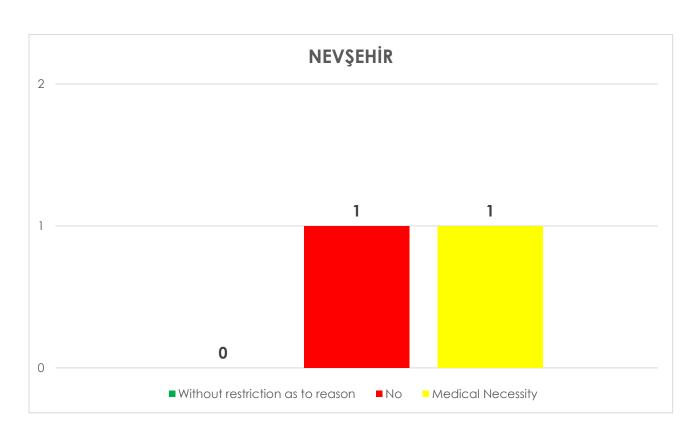




NEVŞEHİR

Total Hospitals	2
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	286,767
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	72.404

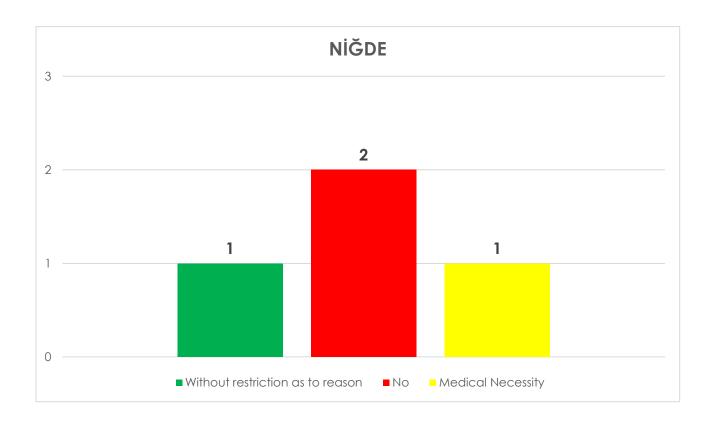




NİĞDE

Total Hospitals	4
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	346,114
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	88.205

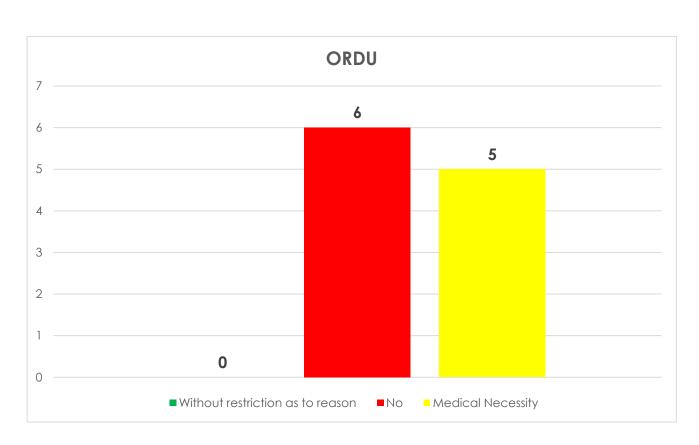




ORDU

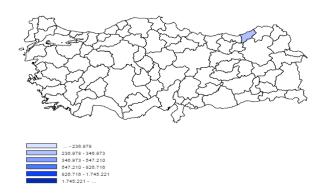
Total Hospitals	11
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	28,949
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)1	73,169

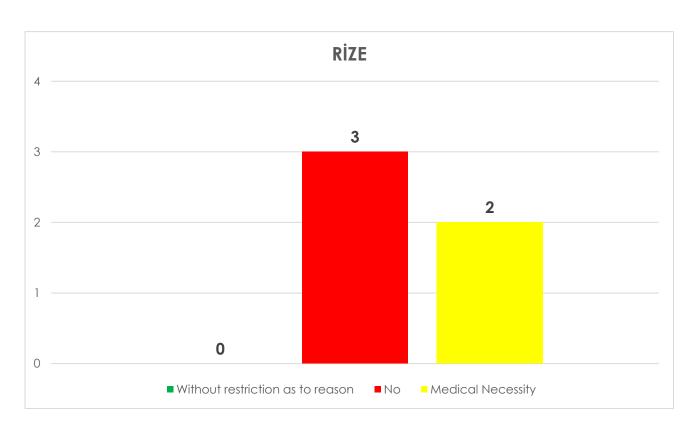




RİZE

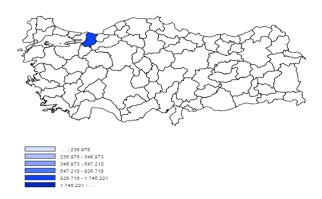
Total Hospitals	5
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	328,979
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	82,568

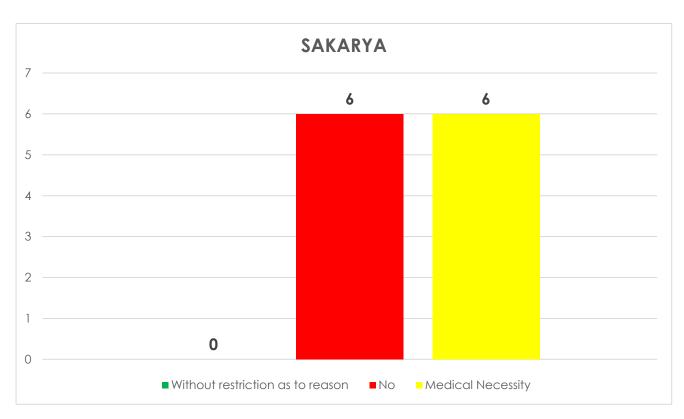




SAKARYA

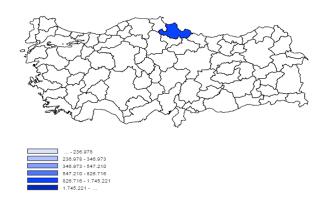
Total Hospitals	12
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	953,181
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	

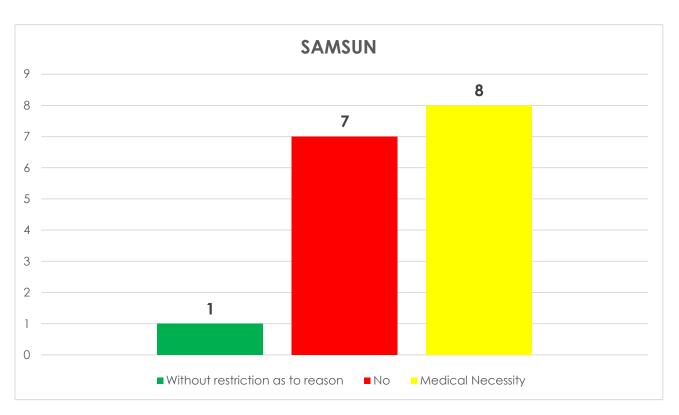




SAMSUN

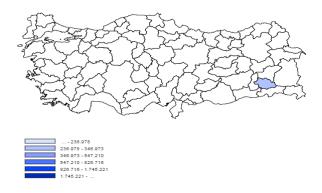
Total Hospitals	16
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population1	,279,884
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	.327.081

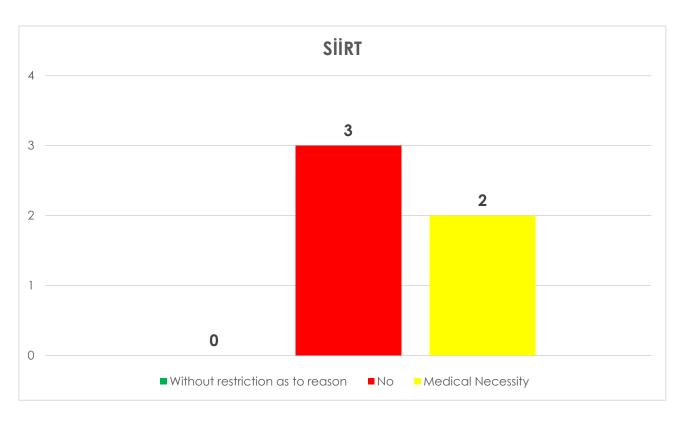




SIIRT

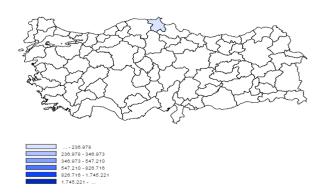
Total Hospitals	5
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	320,351
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	177,367

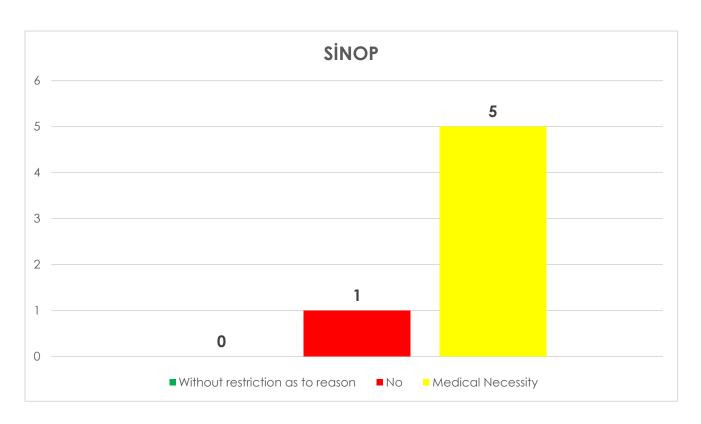




SINOP

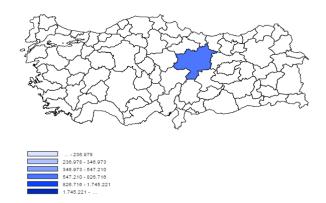
Total Hospitals	6
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	204,133
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	44.602

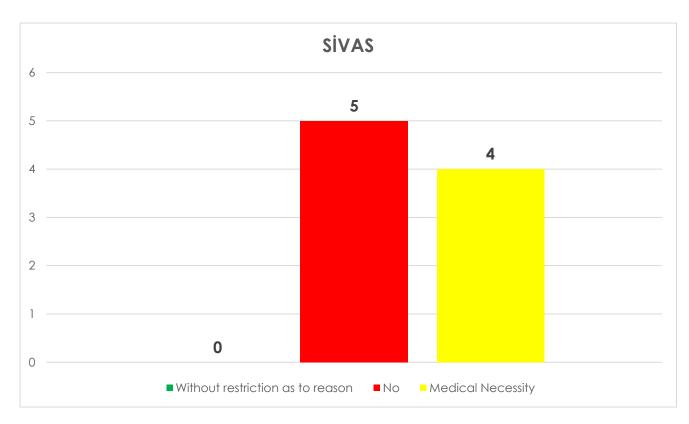




SIVAS

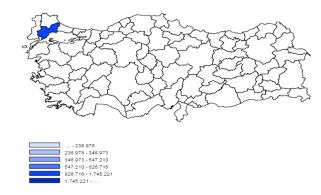
Total Hospitals	9
Education and Research Hospitals	0
Population	618,617
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	155,657

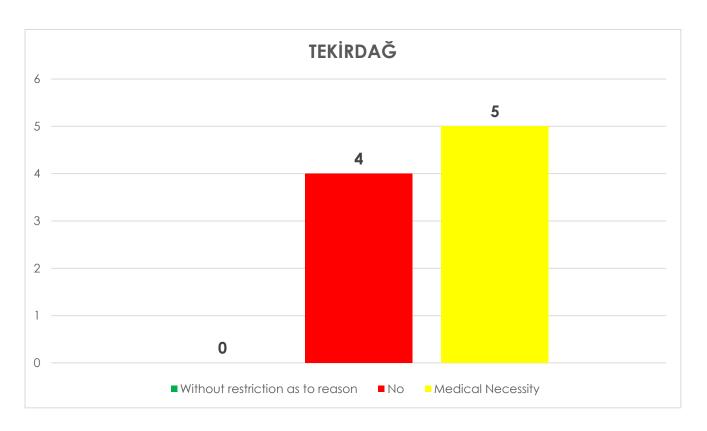




TEKİRDAĞ

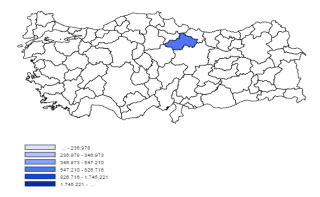
Total Hospitals	9
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	937,910
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	

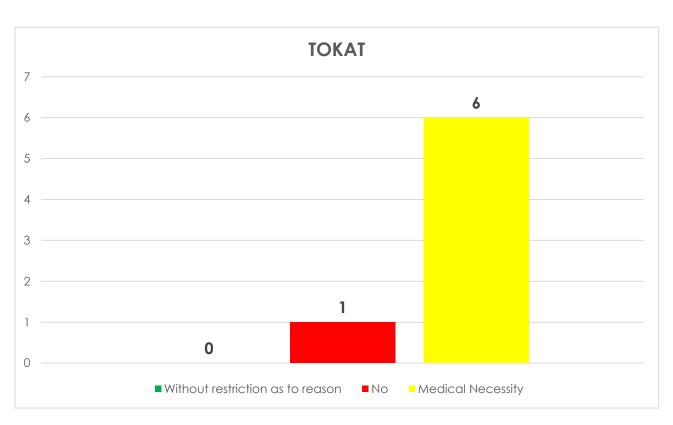




TOKAT

Total Hospitals	7
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	593,990
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	145,151

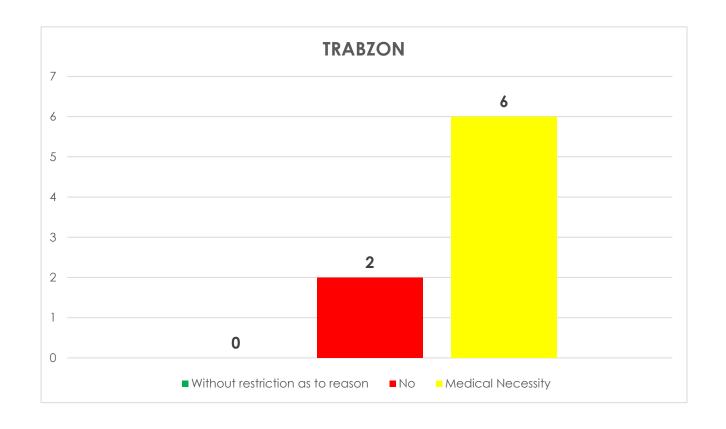




TRABZON

Total Hospitals	8
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	768,417
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	192.727

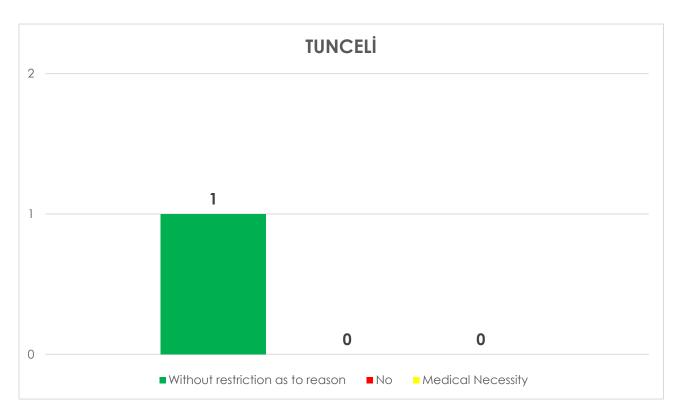




TUNCELİ

Total Hospitals	1
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	86,076
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	19.492

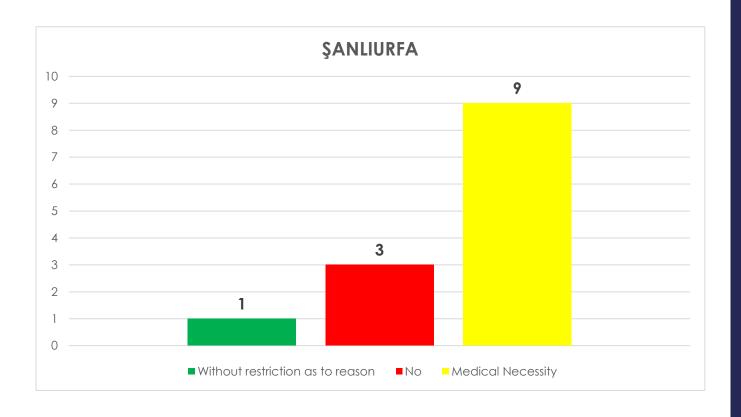




ŞANLIURFA

Total Hospitals	13
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	1,892,320
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	456.855

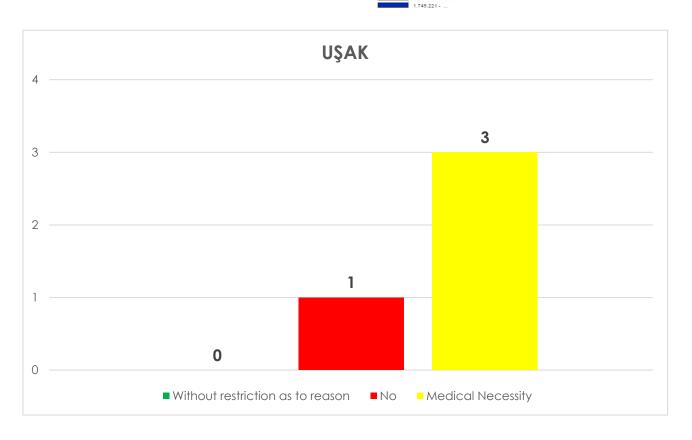




UŞAK

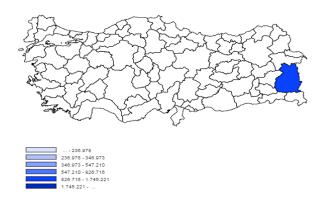
Total Hospitals	4
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	353,048
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	90,077

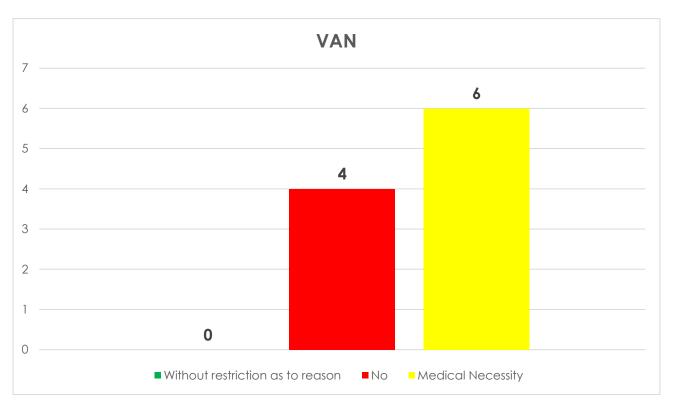




VAN

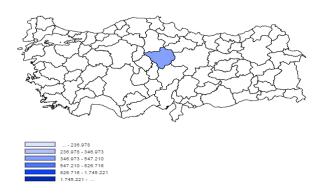
Total Hospitals	10
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	1,096,397
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)275,051

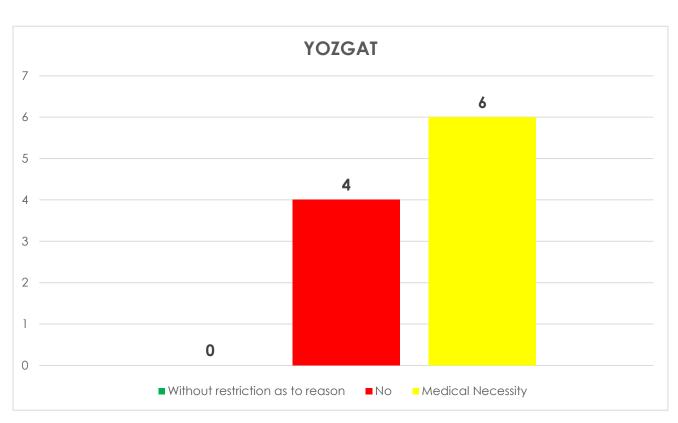




YOZGAT

Total Hospitals	10
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	419,440
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	100,919

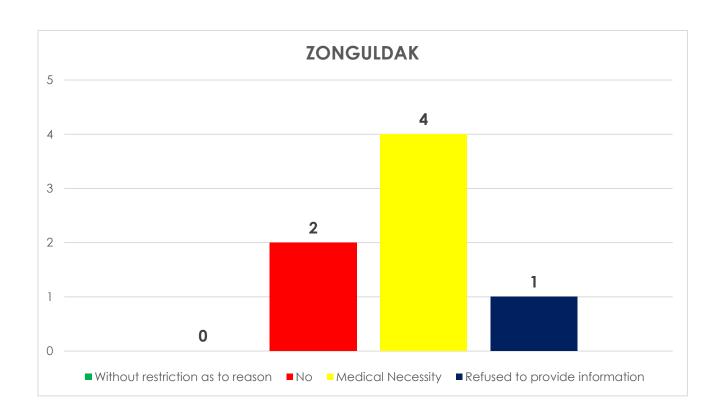




ZONGULDAK

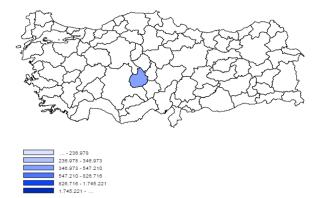
Total Hospitals	7
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	595,907
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	150.656

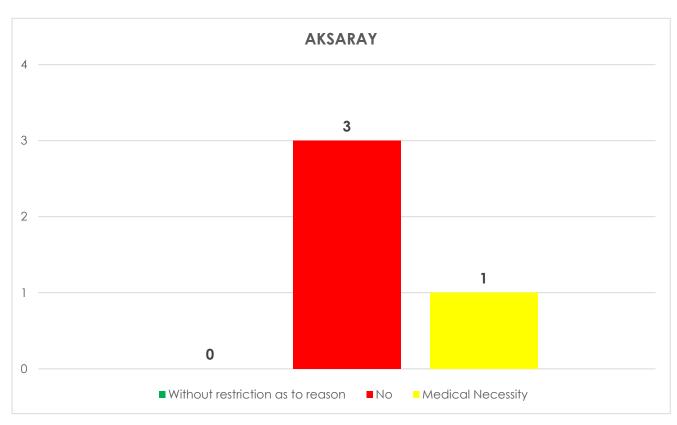




AKSARAY

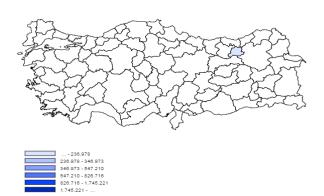
Total Hospitals	4
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	.386,514
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	98.897

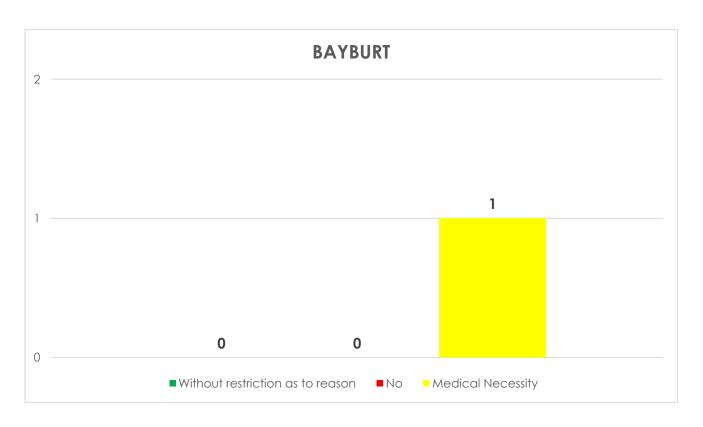




BAYBURT

Information

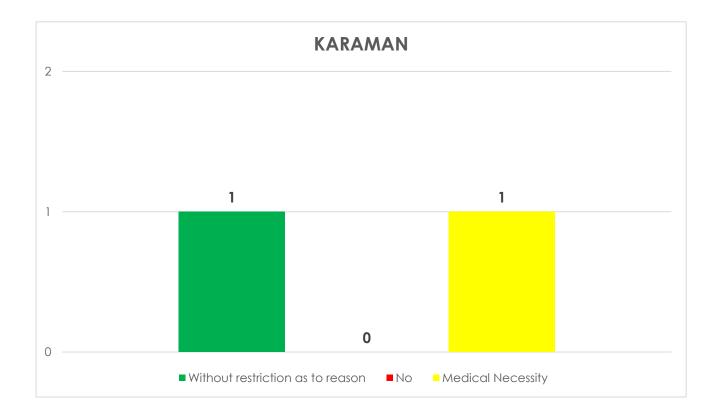




KARAMAN

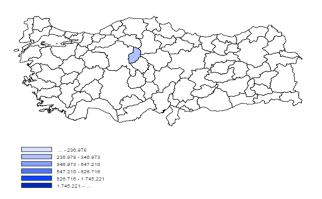
Total Hospitals	2
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	242,196
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49	162,422

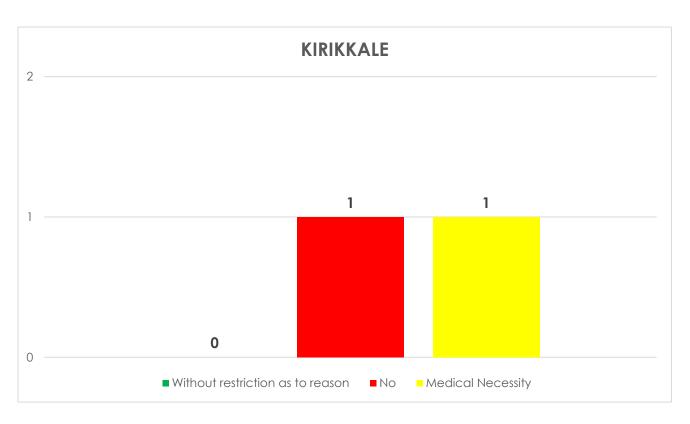




KIRIKKALE

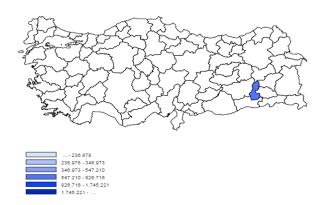
Total Hospitals	2
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	270,271
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	68.450

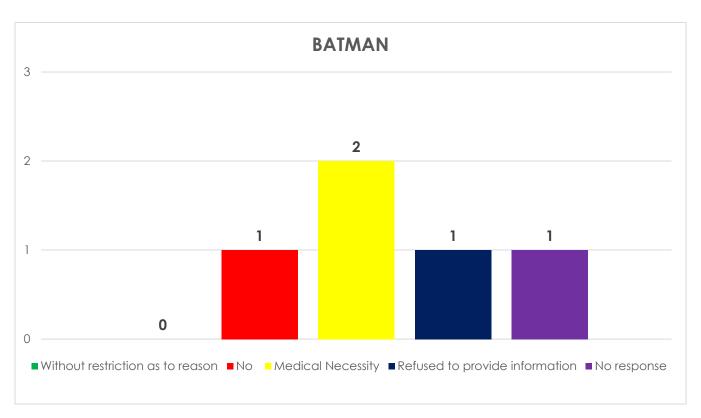




BATMAN

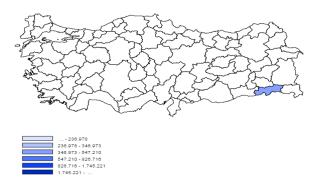
Total Hospitals	5
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	566,633
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	146.068

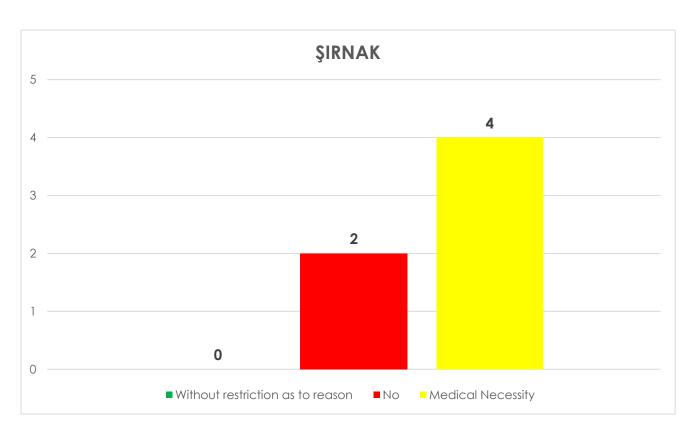




ŞIRNAK

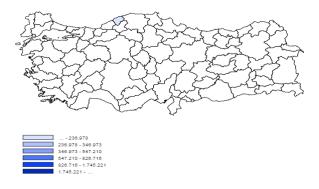
Total Hospitals	6
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	

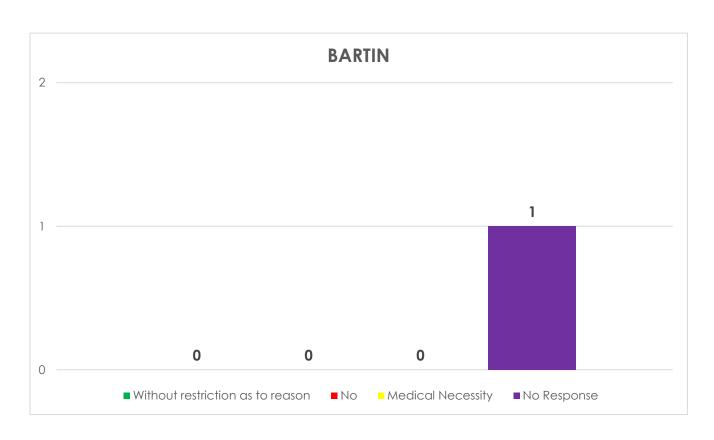




BARTIN

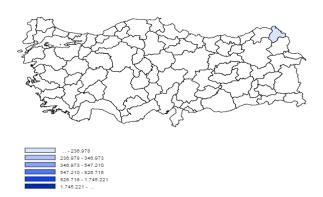
Total Hospitals	1
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	190,708
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	47, 402

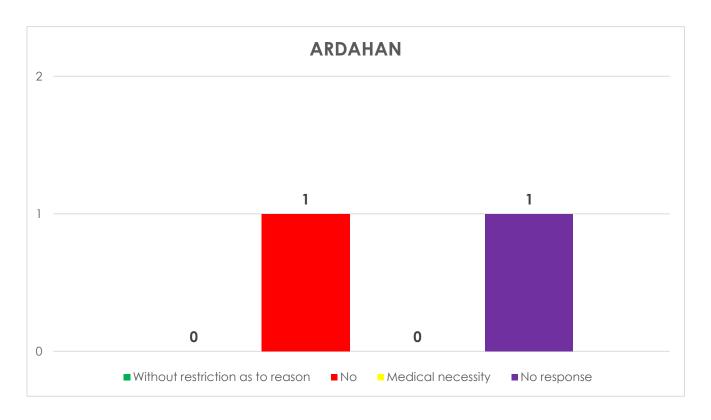




ARDAHAN

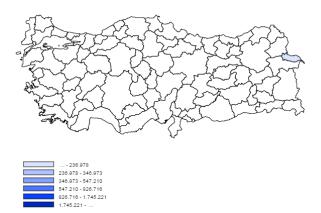
Total Hospitals	2
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	99,265
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	23,210

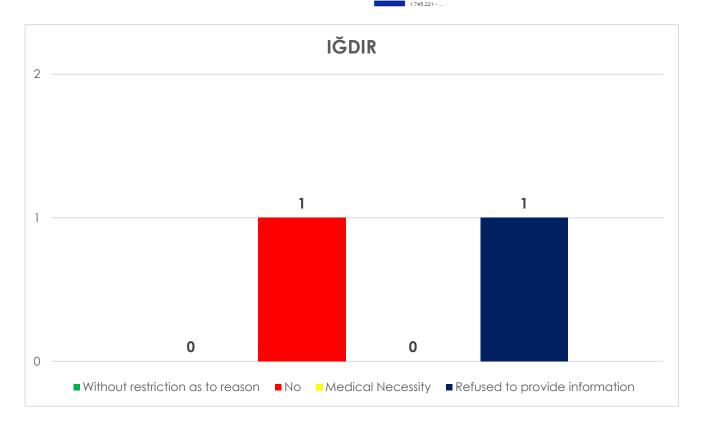




IĞDIR

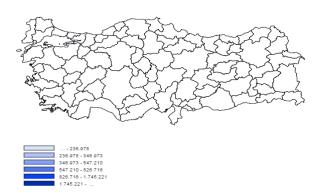
Total Hospitals	2
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	92,435
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)4	17.022

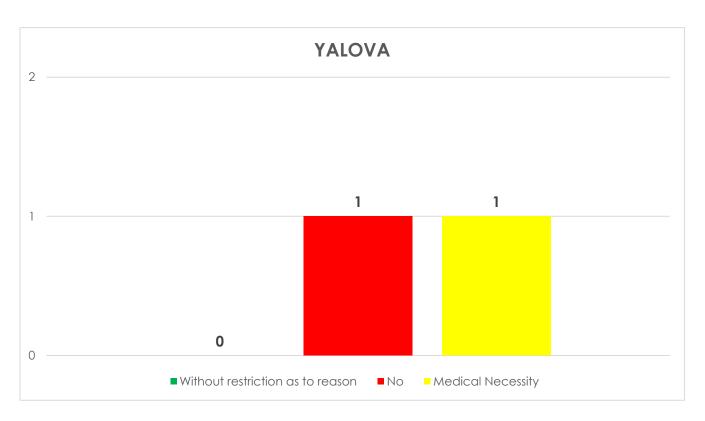




YALOVA

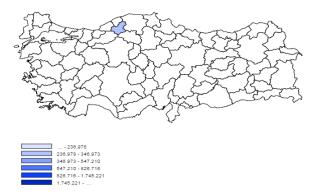
Total Hospitals	2
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	.233,009
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	59,221

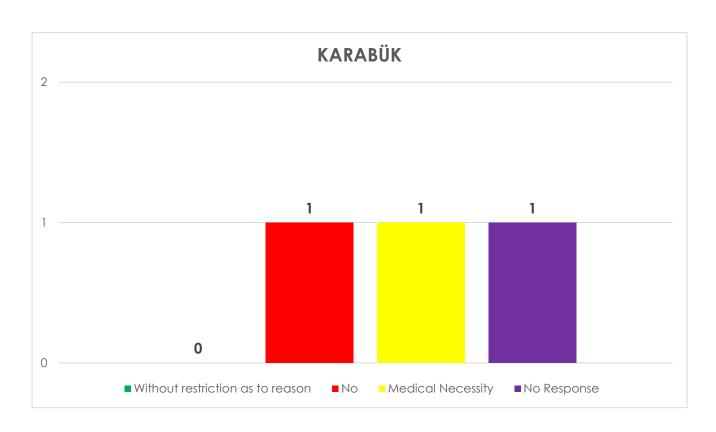




KARABÜK

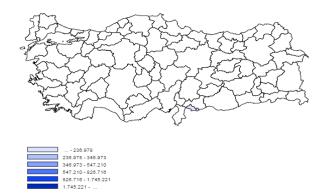
Total Hospitals	3
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	236,978
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	60.482

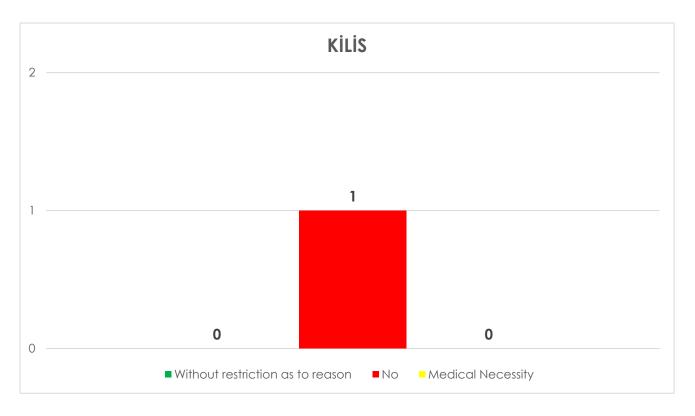




KİLİS

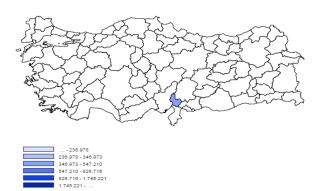
Total Hospitals	1
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	130,655
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	.32,952

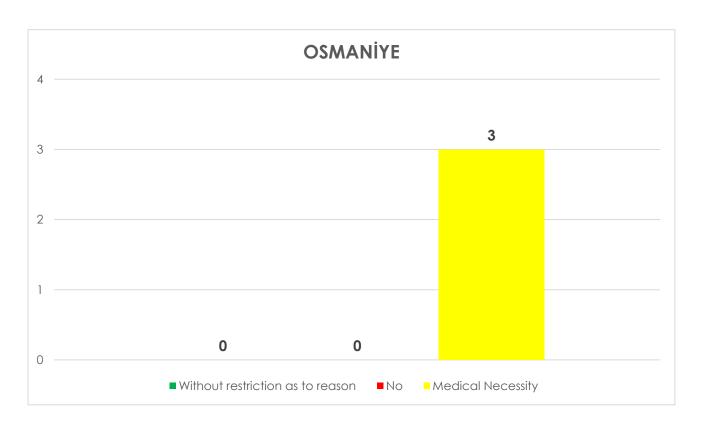




OSMANİYE

Total Hospitals	3
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49).	128,204





DÜZCE

Total Hospitals	2
Education and Research Hospitals	
Population	360,388
Women of Childbearing Age (15-49)	92,642



