

Austria

A: Identification

Title of the CPI: Consumer Price Index

Organisation responsible: Statistik Austria

Periodicity: Monthly

Index reference period: 2010 = 100

Weights reference period: 2009/2010 Household Budget Survey.

Main uses of CPI: Indexation of wages, pensions and/or social security payment, indexation of rents, contracts and/or other payments, main inflation indicator used for monetary policy, deflate household expenditures in national accounts, macroeconomic modelling and other analytic uses.

B: CPI Coverage

Geographical Coverage

Weights: Nation-wide

Price collection: Nation-wide

Population coverage: Resident households of nationals, temporary visitors and institutional households.

Consumption expenditure includes:

- Housing maintenance, minor repairs;
- Major repairs, conversions and extensions to owner occupied housing;
- Financial services (including fees for financial advice, brokerage fees);
- Gambling expenditure, gross of winnings

Consumption expenditure excludes:

- Purchase of owner-occupied housing

C: Concepts, definitions, classifications and weights

Definition of the CPI and its objectives: The CPI is an average measure of change in prices and services bought in Austria for the purpose of consumption by all Austrian households, foreign visitors and residents in institutional households.

Classification: COICOP (Classification of individual consumption by purpose) with 12 COICOP divisions, 40 groups and 86 classes.

Weights include value of consumption from own production: No

Sources of weights: Household expenditure surveys and national accounts.

Frequency of weight updates: Annual

Price updating of weight reference period to the index reference period: The weights are price dated from the weight reference period to the index reference period.

D: Sample design

Sampling methods:

Outlets: Judgmental sampling

Products: Judgmental sampling

Criteria used for determining the optimal sample sizes and the coverage of localities, outlets, items and variety samples: Outlet selection: Prices of commodities are collected in some 3,990 outlets in the 20 largest Austrian cities, so that all trading is represented. If an outlet closes or becomes irrelevant an important replacement outlet (with respect to turnover) is selected. Outlet weights are not used.

Item selection: Purposive sampling of representative items is used for the initial sample, and the update follows the representativity principle. The number of items and price observations depend on the weight and the variability of price movements within the corresponding segment. Items have to be selected for the basket of goods, if the turnover is greater than 0,1% of the total expenditures.

Sample sizes: some 40,492 sample prices for 791 products are collected monthly.

Criteria used for selecting an item variety in the outlet in case of loose specifications provided by the central office: Relatively broad definition of the products, no specification of trademarks. Price collectors select current volume sellers within the range of available product offers and report the detailed product specification for central quality adjustment.

E: Data Collection

Approximate number of localities, outlets and price observations: Localities: 20, Outlets: 3,990, Price observations: 40,492

Frequency with which prices are collected: Price data for food items and other goods and services is collected monthly. Rents data is collected quarterly.

Reference period for data collection: Data are collected in the week that contains the Wednesday which is between the 6th and 12th of each month (Monthly). For fruits,

vegetables and energy products prices are collected in a second week which contains the Wednesday which is between the 20th and 26th of each month. Exceptions are prices for rents, for which a quarterly average is calculated. They are collected on a quarterly basis in a separate survey (Mikrozensus).

Methods of Price Collection

- Personal data collection
- Mailed questionnaires
- Telephone interviews
- Internet

Treatment of:

Discounts and sales prices: Individual discounts are not reflected in the CPI.

Missing or faulty prices: Prices are adjusted by the rate of change of the other price observations of the same product for missing prices.

Period for allowing imputed missing prices: Up to 3 months.

Disappearance of a given type or quality from the market: If a product offer is not available any more a new product offer is selected as replacement immediately after three months at latest.

Quality differences: Quality adjustment for food, Expert Judgment adjustment method e.g. for clothing, Option pricing method for durables and cars, Hedonic method for books and memory cards/sticks. Main quality adjustment methods (in 2011 CPI) are; a) Food and non-alcoholic beverages: linear package size adjustment, supported judgement for brand/no-brand; b) Alcoholic beverages, tobacco: linear package size adjustment; c) Clothing and footwear: supported judgement for brand/no-brand and for important features, in addition linear package size adjustment for underwear etc.; d) Housing, water, energy: very few adjustments in practice; e) Furnishings, household equipment and routine maintenance of the house: option prices and supported judgement for consumer durables; f) Health: linear package size adjustment for drugs, no adjustment otherwise; g) Transport: option price (50%) and fuel consumption adjustment for cars; h) Communication: option prices and supported judgement for durables, no quality adjustment for services; i) Recreation and culture: option prices, hedonics and supported judgement; j) Education: very few adjustments in practice; k) Restaurants and hotels: very few adjustments in practice; l) Miscellaneous goods and services: linear package size adjustment, supported judgement for brand/no-brand, option prices and supported judgement for services.

Appearance of new items: New products are selected with respect to demand (turnover) and availability and are introduced every December. New models and varieties are implemented by replacement as soon as they become relevant.

Treatment of seasonal items and seasonality

Items that have a seasonal character and their treatment: For seasonal items a fixed weights approach is used and two estimation procedures are in place: all seasonal and counter seasonal adjustment. For the counter seasonal adjustment two variants of the same product are used (e.g. a winter and a summer basket for cloths) and the price development is estimated by the available price observations. The all seasonal procedure is used for goods where no counterpart for the off-season is available. For these products (e.g. some fruits) the average price of the previous season is inserted in the first month and the price development of all other products in the same COICOP class are used to estimate the index in the off season months.

Seasonal food items: Seasonal food items are included in the CPI using fixed weights approach: the weights are kept constant over the year, while prices of out-of season products are estimated or imputed.

Seasonal Clothing: Seasonal clothing items are included in the CPI using fixed weights approach: the weights are kept constant over the year, while prices of out-of season products are estimated or imputed.

Method to impute the price of seasonal items: Prices are imputed by using price development of in-season products.

Treatment of housing

Treatment of owner-occupied housing: Regular payments for owner occupied flats are included (initial payments are excluded). House construction goods and services and major repairs are included. Purchase of a house is not included.

F: Computation

Formula used for calculation of elementary indices: The ratio of geometric mean prices (Jevons index) (Chained form)

Formula to aggregate elementary indices to higher level indices: Aggregation is by Laspeyres Chain index.

G: Editing and validation procedures

Control procedures used to ensure the quality of data collected: Regional price data is checked by the statistical offices of the cities when it is provided by the price collectors. Automatic plausibility controls are followed up centrally in Statistik Austria at micro and macro level. The plausibility checks follow two main directions: bottom up from the single price observation to the aggregate, and top down from the aggregate to the single price observations. If necessary the price collectors are requested to check the observation in the next month and the correction is then put in.

Control procedures used to ensure the quality of data processed: During processing, some automatic validation is done when the data are entered into the database. The aggregates are analyzed to detect price movements and single price observations which are

out of range. The procedure also looks at single price observations and quality adjustment and estimates the influence on the index.

H: Documentation and dissemination

Timeliness of dissemination of the CPI data: The CPI data is disseminated 2 weeks after the end of the reference month.

Level of detailed CPI published

Paper publication: All items CPI, Division-level (12 Divisions)

Online: All items CPI, Division-level (12 Divisions)

Documentation

Publications and websites where indices can be found: Press release Statistik Austria in German only Monthly: “Statistische Nachrichten” published by STATISTIK AUSTRIA; Monthly rapid report, “Verbraucherpreisindex” available in German only; Sub-aggregates and special aggregates are published in Statistische Nachrichten and in Rapid Reports (Schnellberichte). Quarterly: The quarterly Statistische Übersichten which is a supplement to the monthly statistical bulletin of STATISTIK AUSTRIA; Statistische Nachrichten. Internet website: www.statistik.at and <http://www.statistik.at>

Publications and websites where methodological information can be found: Information concerning the methodology and revisions in the methodology for compiling the consumer price index is published in “Der neue Verbraucherpreisindex 2000, Nationaler und Harmonisierter Verbraucherpreisindex, Verlag Österreich, Wien 2001”, available in German only and in various articles. Website: <http://www.statistik.at>

I: Other Information

Completed by ILO in 2013.