

CONSUMER SURVEY, JANUARY 2020

In January 2020, the total consumer confidence indicator decreases by 0.5 percentage points in comparison with October 2019, which is due entirely to the decreased confidence among the urban population (Annex, Figure 1).

The opinions about the development of the general economic situation in the country over the last 12 months (Annex, Figure 2) and the expectations over the next 12 months (Annex, Figure 3) are slightly deteriorated compared to the previous survey.

In comparison with October 2019, the assessments about the change of consumer prices over the last 12 months are also more unfavourable (an increase of the balance indicator by 5.3 percentage points). The inflation expectations over the next 12 months are preserved (Annex, Figure 4).

According to the consumers living in the village the financial situation of their households over the last 12 months improves by 5.1 percentage points while the inquiry registers a decrease of 2.1 percentage points with regard to the urban consumers' opinions. The same tendency as regards the expectations for the next 12 months about household finances from both the villages and the cities is also observed (Annex, Figure 5).

As regards the unemployment in the country, the consumers are slightly more positive in their forecasts compared to October 2019 (a decrease by 2.0 percentage points) (Annex, Figure 6).

In January, the majority of the consumers continue to assess the economic situation in the country as unfavourable for saving although their relative share slightly decreases in comparison with 3 months ago. However, the last inquiry registers slightly more positive attitude of the rural population' intentions about making expenditures on major purchases of durable goods¹ and 'buying a car' over the next 12 months.

¹ When commenting the replies regarding the purchases (expenditures), one has to take into account that the questions are asked on a quarterly basis, although these purchases (expenditures) are to be made by the consumers in a longer period of time. That is why it is normal for the prevailing values of balances of opinions to be permanently situated in the negative zone of the graphs. However, for the purpose of the economic analysis is important to consider the direction of development of balances of opinions as indicators of positive or negative change.

Methodological notes

The survey is a part of the harmonized program of European Union for business and consumer surveys and it is representative for the population of 16 years and older.

The persons of 16 years and older are the object of the survey; the sample method is random, clustered, proportional to the population by regions, incl. urban/rural inhabitants (154 clusters with 8 persons per cluster). The interviewing method is face to face. The questionnaire contains standardized questions about the financial situation of households, general economic situation, inflation, unemployment, saving, intentions of making major purchases on durable goods or purchasing/building a home or buying a car. The proposed variants of answers give an opportunity to arrange them from optimistic, through neutral to pessimistic. The balance of opinions is calculated as a difference between relative shares of positive opinions and relative shares of negative opinions, as there is one specification: the strong positive opinions and the strong negative opinions are given a coefficient of 1, and the more moderate positive and negative opinions - a coefficient of 0.5.

The survey results are used to capture the direction of change of surveyed variables incl. that of the consumer confidence level, which gives an opportunity to analyze the tendencies in the development of public opinions on significant economic phenomena.

The consumer confidence indicator is an arithmetic mean of the balances of the expectations about the development over the next 12 months of the financial situation of households, general economic situation, savings and unemployment, as the last is taken with a negative sign.

Annex

Figure 1. Consumer confidence indicator

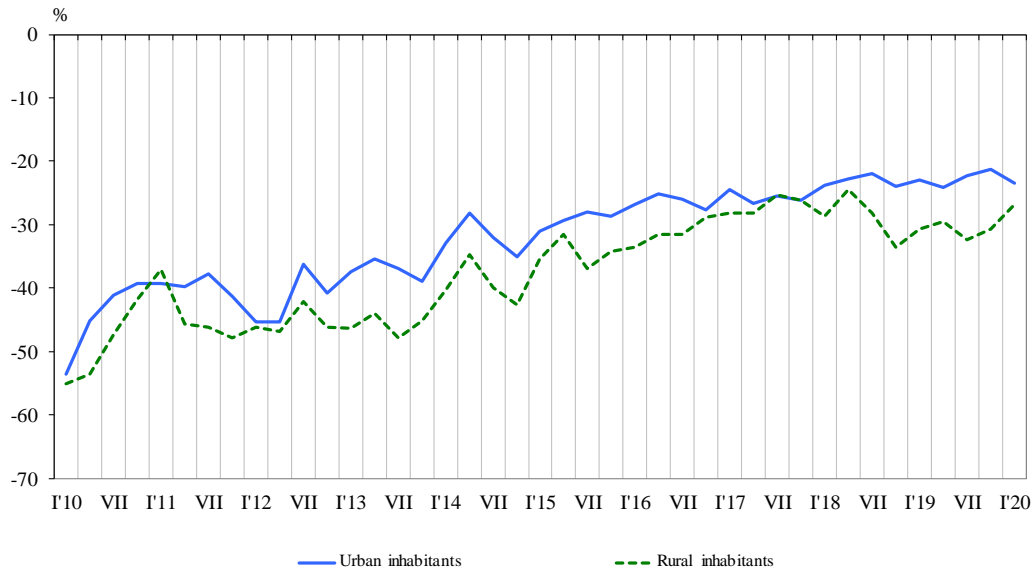


Figure 2. Assessment of the general economic situation in the country over the last 12 months

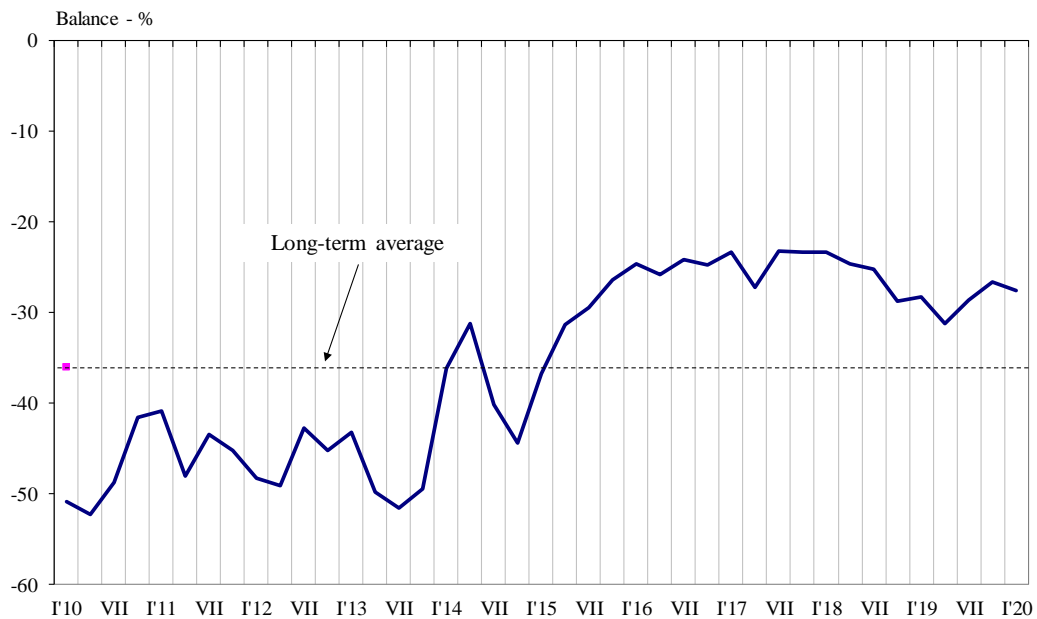


Figure 3. Expectations about the general economic situation in the country over the next 12 months

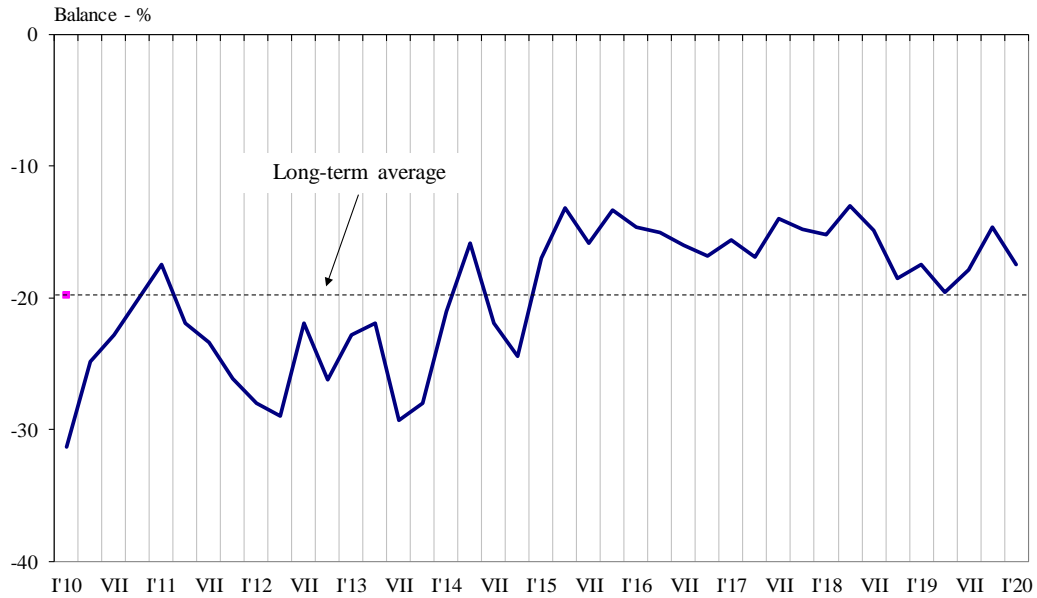


Figure 4. Expectations about inflation over the next 12 months

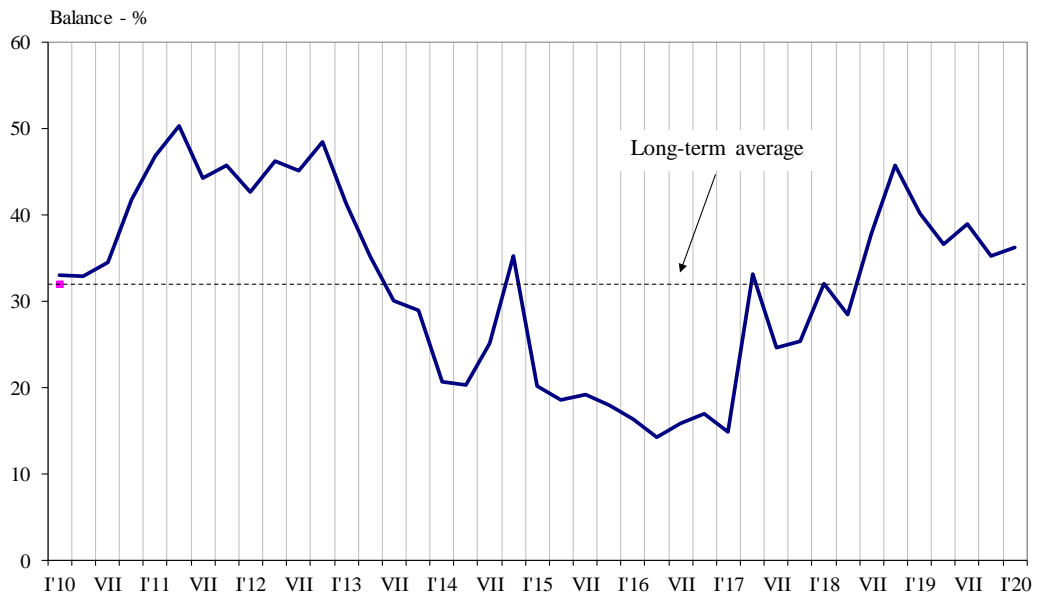


Figure 5. Expectations about the financial situation of households over the next 12 months

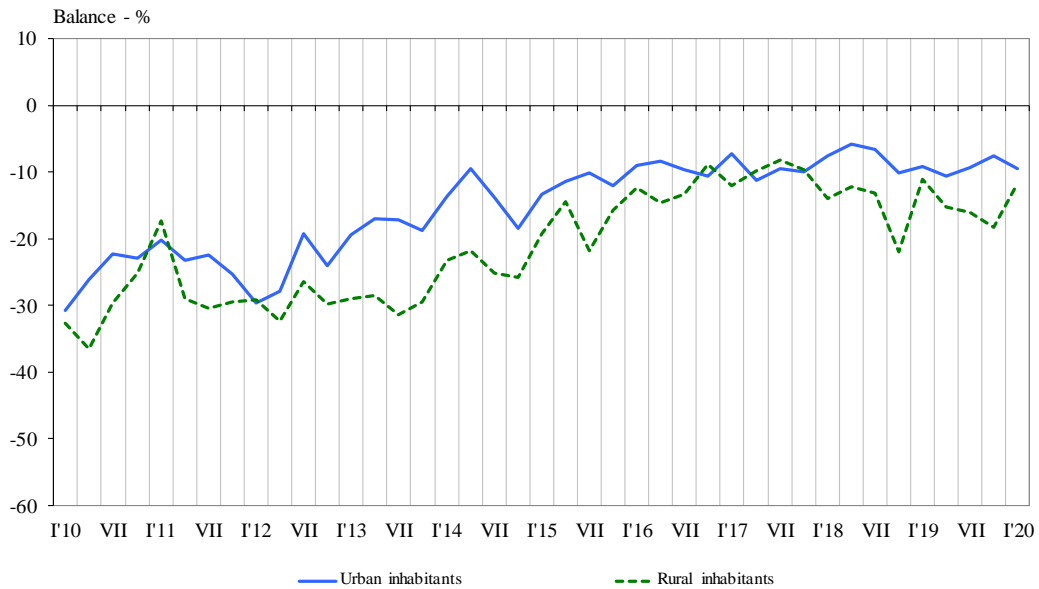


Figure 6. Unemployment expectations over the next 12 months

