

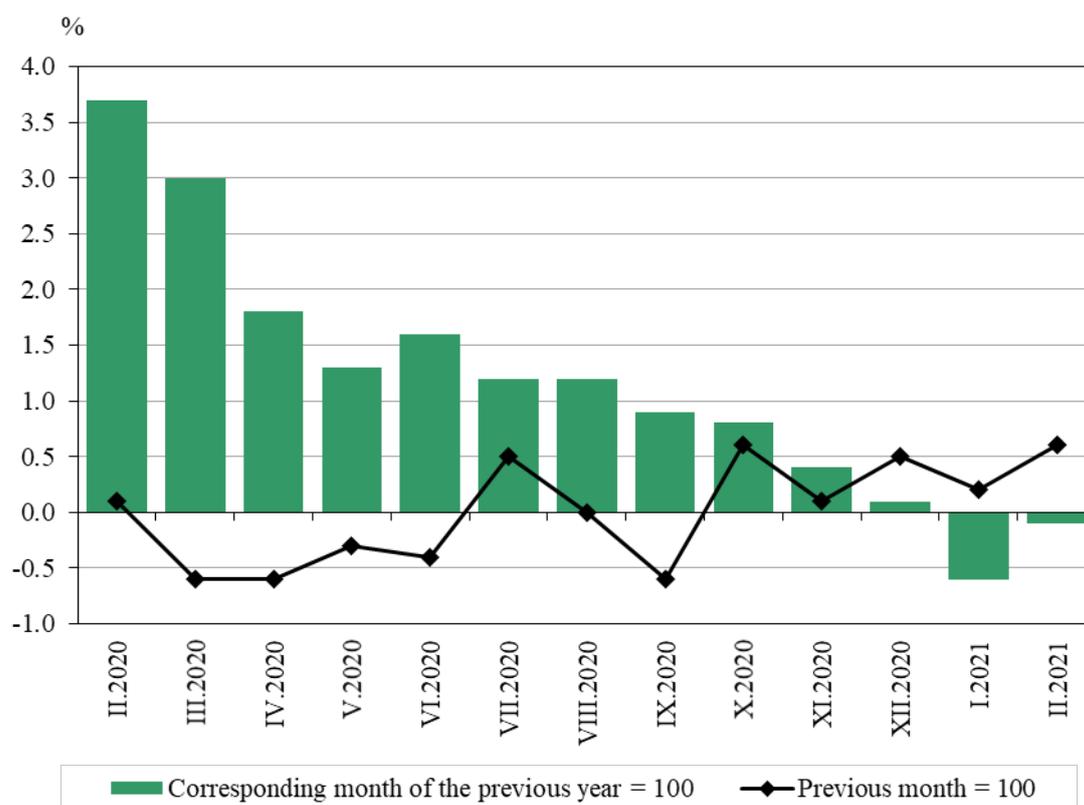
INFLATION AND CONSUMER PRICE INDICES IN FEBRUARY 2021

Consumer price index (CPI)

The **consumer price index** in February 2021 compared to January 2021 was 100.6%, i.e. the monthly inflation was 0.6%. The inflation rate since the beginning of the year (February 2021 compared to December 2020) has been 0.8% and the annual inflation in February 2021 compared to February 2020 was -0.1% (Figure 1 and Annex, Table 1).

The annual average inflation, measured by CPI, in the last 12 months (March 2020 - February 2021) compared to the previous 12 months (March 2019 - February 2020) was 1.0%.

Figure 1. Inflation measured by CPI by months



In February 2021 compared to the previous month the prices of goods and services in the main consumer groups changed as follows:

- Food and non-alcoholic beverages - an increase of 1.2%;
- Alcoholic beverages and tobacco - the prices remained at the level of the previous month;
- Clothing and footwear - a decrease of 1.7%;
- Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels - an increase of 0.2%;
- Furnishings, household equipment and routine maintenance of the house - an increase of 0.5%;

- Health - an increase of 0.1%;
- Transport - an increase of 2.0%;
- Communications - the prices remained at the level of the previous month;
- Recreation and culture - a decrease of 0.6%;
- Education - a decrease of 0.2%;
- Restaurants and hotels - an increase of 0.1%;
- Miscellaneous goods and service - an increase of 1.7%.

According to the final data of the NSI, the consumer price index in January 2021 compared to December 2020 was 100.2%, i.e. the monthly inflation was 0.2% (Annex, Table 4).

Harmonized index of consumer prices (HICP)

The **harmonized index of consumer prices** in February 2021 compared to January 2021 was 100.5%, i.e. the monthly inflation was 0.5%. The inflation rate since the beginning of the year (February 2021 compared to December 2020) has been 0.7% and the annual inflation in February 2021 compared to February 2020 was 0.2% (Annex, Table 2).

The annual average inflation, measured by HICP, in the last 12 months (March 2020 - February 2021) compared to the previous 12 months (March 2019 - February 2020) was 0.7%.

In terms of HICP, in February 2021 compared to the previous month the prices of goods and services in the main consumer groups changed as follows:

- Food and non-alcoholic beverages - an increase of 0.9%;
- Alcoholic beverages and tobacco - the prices remained at the level of the previous month;
- Clothing and footwear - a decrease of 1.5%;
- Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels - an increase of 0.2%;
- Furnishings, household equipment and routine maintenance of the house - an increase of 0.5%;
- Health - an increase of 0.1%;
- Transport - an increase of 1.2%;
- Communications - the prices remained at the level of the previous month;
- Recreation and culture - an increase of 0.2%;
- Education - a decrease of 0.2%;
- Restaurants and hotels - an increase of 0.1%;
- Miscellaneous goods and service - an increase of 2.1%.

According to the final data of the NSI, the harmonized index of consumer prices in January 2021 compared to December 2020 was 100.2%, i.e. the monthly inflation was 0.2% (Annex, Table 5).

Price index of a small basket (PISB)

The **price index of a small basket** in February 2021 compared to January 2021 was 100.5% and the overall increase since the beginning of the year (February 2021 compared to December 2020) has been 100.8% (Annex, Table 3).

In February 2021 compared to the previous month the prices of goods and services in the small basket for the 20% households with the lowest income changed as follows:

- Food products - an increase of 1.0%;
- Non-food products - the prices remained at the level of the previous month;
- Services - the prices remained at the level of the previous month.

According to the final data of the NSI, the price index of a small basket in January 2021 compared to December 2020 was 100.3% (Annex, Table 6).

Methodological notes

The **consumer price index (CPI)** is the official measure of inflation in the Republic of Bulgaria. It measures the total relative price change of goods and services used by households for private (non-production) consumption and is calculated by applying the structure of the final monetary consumption expenditures of Bulgarian households. The main source of information for the expenditures is the household budget survey in the country. CPI in year t is calculated with the expenditures structure of year $t-1$.

The **Harmonized Index of Consumer Prices (HICP)** is the comparable measure of inflation across EU Member states. It is one of the criteria of price stability and readiness of Bulgaria to join the euro-zone. HICP, as well as CPI, measure the total relative price change of goods and services. Both indices are calculated using the same basket of goods and services, but differ with respect to the weights used. HICP is calculated through the use of weights, which reflect the individual and the collective consumption of all households (incl. institutional and foreign households) on the economic territory of the country. The main source of information for HICP weights is the national accounts (NA) data. For calculation of the HICP in 2021, NA data for households' final monetary consumption expenditures (HFMCE) - domestic concept in 2019 is used. NA 2019 data are reviewed and updated to make them representative of year 2020 following Eurostat's methodological guidance on the compilation of HICP weights in case of large changes in consumer expenditures¹.

In compliance with Regulation (EC) No 2015/2010 since January 2016 the base year for HICP has been changed and the all indices have been calculated and published at 2015 as a base year. The time series have been recalculated according to the new base year and have been posted on the NSI website (www.nsi.bg).

The **Price Index of a Small Basket (PISB)** is a measurement of the relative average price changes of 100 socially useful and vital for living goods and services. The weights of this index reflect the expenditures of the 20% lowest household's incomes. The source of weights information is the Households Budget Survey in the country. This index in year t is calculated with the weights of year $t-1$.

The **chain** consumer price indices measure the price change in the current month compared to the previous month. The chain consumer price indices are used as a measure of **monthly inflation**.

The **12-month** consumer price indices measure the price changes occurring between the current month and the same month of the previous year. The 12-months consumer price indices are used as a measure of **annual inflation**.

Consumer price indices **over December of the previous year** measure the accumulated changes in prices of the current month with respect to December of the previous year. Consumer price indices over December of the previous year are used as measures of the **inflation since the beginning of the year**. In December of each year, the 12-months index is equal to the index over December of the previous year.

¹ Guidance on the compilation of HICP weights in case of large changes in consumer expenditures, Eurostat, Directorate C, Macro-economic statistics, 03.02.2020
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/10186/10693286/Guidance-on-the-Compilation-of-HICP-weights-in-case-of-large-changes-in-consumer-expenditures.pdf>

The **annual average** consumer price indices measure the average price change during the 12 months of the current year compared to the average price change during the 12 months of the previous year. The annual average consumer price indices are used as a measure of the **annual average inflation**.

January 2021 price indices were released as preliminary since they were calculated with the household budget data for the period October 2019 - September 2020. **The final January 2021 consumer price indices**, calculated with the annual 2020 household budget data for the weights, are released along with the February 2021 data.

Consumer price indices in the context of the COVID-19 crisis

The National CPI, HICP and the PISB for February 2021 have been produced according to Eurostat's methodological guidance on the compilation of the HICP in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, applying the following principles:

- fixed statistical weights used in the calculation of the indices;
- production of all indices according to the ECOICOP classification (European Classification Of Individual Consumption by Purpose);
- minimizing the number of imputed prices and sub-indices where possible;
- estimation of missing price observations by applying imputation methods.

The percentage of missing price observations for February 2021 was 5%, distributed according to ECOICOP main headings as follows:

(Per cent)	
Commodity groups	Missing price observations
00 Total CPI	5
01 Food and non-alcoholic beverages	1
02 Alcoholic beverages and tobacco	1
03 Clothing and footwear	2
04 Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels	0
05 Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance	3
06 Health	1
07 Transport	2
08 Communication	1
09 Recreation and culture	5
10 Education	9
11 Restaurants and hotels	43
12 Miscellaneous goods and service	1

The missing price observation's estimation has been carried out by using the imputation methods recommended by Eurostat and agreed with the Member States:

- with the nearest aggregate index (sub-index) in the hierarchical structure of the index (at a product level based on available prices for the same product) - for missing price observations of products that were available on the market;
- adjusting the price from the previous month with a seasonal factor (carry forward with a seasonal correction factor) - for seasonal products that were not available on the market (passenger air transport);
- carry forward the last observed prices - for some products (e.g. cultural services), where there were reasons to expect that their prices would be the same once the situation would revert back to normal.

Annex

Table 1

Consumer price indices in February 2021

(Per cent)

Commodity groups	Weights	February 2021		
		Previous month = 100	December 2020 = 100	Corresponding month of the previous year = 100
00 Total CPI	100.000	100.6	100.8	99.9
01 Food and non-alcoholic beverages	32.087	101.2	101.5	100.2
02 Alcoholic beverages and tobacco	5.159	100.0	100.4	100.7
03 Clothing and footwear	3.673	98.3	94.7	96.2
04 Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels	17.410	100.2	100.2	100.4
05 Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance	5.100	100.5	100.6	101.0
06 Health	8.186	100.1	100.2	101.3
07 Transport	8.966	102.0	103.3	94.0
08 Communication	5.586	100.0	100.2	100.1
09 Recreation and culture	4.306	99.4	100.6	101.6
10 Education	0.588	99.8	100.3	104.3
11 Restaurants and hotels	4.125	100.1	100.3	102.2
12 Miscellaneous goods and service	4.814	101.7	101.4	101.6
Foods	33.455	101.1	101.5	100.3
Non-foods	35.084	100.5	100.6	98.0
Catering	3.908	100.1	100.3	102.7
Services	27.553	100.2	100.2	101.3

Table 2

Harmonized indices of consumer prices in February 2021

Commodity groups	Weights	February 2021			
		2015 = 100	Previous month = 100	December 2020 = 100	Corresponding month of the previous year = 100
	%	%			
00 Total HICP	1000.000	107.16	100.5	100.7	100.2
01 Food and non-alcoholic beverages	239.522	117.05	100.9	101.2	100.4
02 Alcoholic beverages and tobacco	70.808	110.99	100.0	100.4	101.0
03 Clothing and footwear	37.545	91.62	98.5	95.1	96.6
04 Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels	123.157	112.27	100.2	100.3	100.7
05 Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance	66.656	101.99	100.5	100.8	101.0
06 Health	82.261	104.84	100.1	100.1	101.3
07 Transport	125.676	93.80	101.2	101.8	97.1
08 Communication	61.112	91.38	100.0	100.2	100.1
09 Recreation and culture	56.863	106.70	100.2	100.9	100.9
10 Education	16.802	120.55	99.8	100.2	104.4
11 Restaurants and hotels	57.146	118.25	100.1	100.7	100.2
12 Miscellaneous goods and service	62.454	115.09	102.1	102.0	104.4

Table 3

Price indices of 100 socially useful and vital for the living goods and services in the small basket for the 20% lowest income households in February 2021

(Per cent)

Commodity groups	Weights	February 2021
		Previous month = 100
Total PISB	100.000	100.5
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	50.368	101.0
Clothing and footwear	3.343	98.1
Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels	26.057	100.1
Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance	2.362	101.1
Health	11.318	99.8
Transport	1.324	100.0
Communication	0.236	100.0
Recreation and culture	0.549	99.9
Miscellaneous goods and service	4.443	100.7
Foods	50.368	101.0
Non-foods	26.954	100.0
Services	22.678	100.0

Table 4

Consumer price indices in January 2021 (final data)

(Per cent)

Commodity groups	Weights	January 2021		
		Previous month = 100	December 2020 = 100	Corresponding month of the previous year = 100
00 Total CPI	100.000	100.2	100.2	99.4
01 Food and non-alcoholic beverages	32.087	100.3	100.3	99.6
02 Alcoholic beverages and tobacco	5.159	100.4	100.4	100.7
03 Clothing and footwear	3.673	96.4	96.4	95.9
04 Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels	17.410	100.0	100.0	100.3
05 Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance	5.100	100.2	100.2	100.6
06 Health	8.186	100.1	100.1	101.5
07 Transport	8.966	101.3	101.3	91.8
08 Communication	5.586	100.2	100.2	100.0
09 Recreation and culture	4.306	101.2	101.2	101.4
10 Education	0.588	100.4	100.4	105.1
11 Restaurants and hotels	4.125	100.2	100.2	102.8
12 Miscellaneous goods and service	4.814	99.7	99.7	99.6
Foods	33.455	100.4	100.4	99.7
Non-foods	35.084	100.1	100.1	97.3
Catering	3.908	100.1	100.1	103.5
Services	27.553	100.0	100.0	100.8

Table 5

Harmonized indices of consumer prices in January 2021 (final data)

Commodity groups	Weights	January 2021			
		2015 = 100	Previous month = 100	December 2020 = 100	Corresponding month of the previous year = 100
		%			
00 Total HICP	1000.000	106.59	100.2	100.2	99.7
01 Food and non-alcoholic beverages	239.522	115.97	100.3	100.3	99.9
02 Alcoholic beverages and tobacco	70.808	110.95	100.4	100.4	100.9
03 Clothing and footwear	37.545	92.98	96.6	96.6	96.5
04 Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels	123.157	112.02	100.0	100.0	100.6
05 Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance	66.656	101.44	100.3	100.3	100.7
06 Health	82.261	104.75	100.1	100.1	101.5
07 Transport	125.676	92.71	100.6	100.6	95.1
08 Communication	61.112	91.38	100.2	100.2	100.0
09 Recreation and culture	56.863	106.50	100.7	100.7	100.7
10 Education	16.802	120.75	100.4	100.4	105.0
11 Restaurants and hotels	57.146	118.15	100.6	100.6	100.5
12 Miscellaneous goods and service	62.454	112.68	99.9	99.9	102.3

Table 6

Price indices of 100 socially useful and vital for the living goods and services in the small basket for the 20% lowest income households in January 2021 (final data)

(Per cent)

Commodity groups	Weights	January 2021
		Previous month = 100
Total PISB	100.000	100.3
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	50.368	100.7
Clothing and footwear	3.343	97.2
Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels	26.057	100.0
Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance	2.362	101.8
Health	11.318	100.0
Transport	1.324	100.1
Communication	0.236	100.0
Recreation and culture	0.549	100.3
Miscellaneous goods and service	4.443	99.7
Foods	50.368	100.7
Non-foods	26.954	99.9
Services	22.678	99.9