

PRICES OF AUTOMOTIVE FUELS INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY

Consumer price indices – inflation – March 2021

Consumer prices in March increased by 0.2% compared with February. This development came primarily from price rise in 'transport'. The year-on-year growth of consumer prices amounted to 2.3% in March, which was 0.2 percentage points up on February.

Month-on-month comparison

Price increase in 'transport' came mainly from higher prices of automotive fuels and lubricants by 5.9%. The average price of petrol Natural 95 (CZK 30.47 per litre) and average price of diesel oil (CZK 29.14 per litre) were the highest from February 2020 and March 2020, respectively. In 'alcoholic beverages, tobacco', prices of tobacco products increased by 2.5%. In 'clothing and footwear', prices of garments were higher by 0.6% and shoes and other footwear by 1.1%. In food, mainly prices of eggs were higher by 5.1%, fruit by 0.8% and butter by 2.5%.

Decrease in the overall consumer price level in March came primarily from price drop in 'furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance', where prices of goods and services for routine household maintenance were lower by 1.8%. In 'food and non-alcoholic beverages', prices of vegetables decreased by 3.9%, of which prices of potatoes were lower by 10.3%.

Prices of goods in total went up by 0.4%, while prices of services decreased by 0.3%.

Year-on-year comparison

Consumer prices increased by 2.3% in March, i.e. 0.2 percentage points up on February. This acceleration in the year-on-year price growth came mainly from prices in 'transport', where prices of automotive fuels and lubricants turned from a decrease by 9.8% in February into rise by 1.1% in March. On the other hand, price drop occurred in 'food and non-alcoholic beverages'. Prices of vegetables decreased by 6.2% (decrease by 1.4% in February), of which prices of potatoes were lower by 29.0% (decrease by 9.4% in February). Prices of pork were lower by 11.3% (decrease by 9.5% in February).

The biggest influence on the growth of the year-on-year price level in March came from prices in 'alcoholic beverages and tobacco', where prices of tobacco products increased by 17.5%. Next in the order of influence were prices in 'transport' with year-on-year growth by 5.2%, where prices of motor cars grew up by 9.3%. In 'miscellaneous goods and services', prices of financial services were higher by 8.5%. In 'housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels', prices of actual rentals for housing increased by 1.3%, water supply by 1.9% and sewage collection by 2.3%. Prices of electricity decreased by 3.4% and natural gas by 4.7%. A reduction in the overall price level in March came from prices in 'food and non-alcoholic beverages' (decrease by 0.3%) and in 'communication' (decrease by 0.1%).

Prices of goods in total and services went up (2.1% and 2.6%, respectively). The overall consumer price index excluding imputed rentals for housing was 102.3%, year-on-year.

Inflation rate, i.e. the increase in the average consumer price index in the twelve months to March 2021 compared with the average CPI in the previous twelve months, amounted to 2.8%.

Harmonized index of consumer prices (HICP) ¹⁾

According to preliminary calculations, the HICP in Czechia in March went up by 0.2%, **month-on-month** and 2.3%, **year-on-year**. According to flash estimates of Eurostat, the MUICP (Monetary Union Index of Consumer Prices) in March 2021 amounted to 1.3% year-on-year (0.9% in February). In Slovakia, prices

¹⁾ Imputed rentals are excluded from the HICP.

were higher by 1.4% in March and in Germany by 2.0%, year-on-year. According to preliminary data of Eurostat, the **year-on-year** change in the average **harmonized index of consumer prices** (HICP) in the **EU27 member states** amounted to 1.3% **in February** (0.1 percentage point up on January). The rise in prices was the highest in Poland (3.6%) and the deepest price reduction occurred in Greece (–1.9%).

(More information on the Eurostat's web pages: [HICP](#).)

In March, in comparison with the previous month, the overall consumer price level in **households of pensioners** increased by 0.1%. This development was mainly influenced by a price rise in 'transport' by 1.8%, where prices of automotive fuels and lubricants were higher in particular. In 'alcoholic beverages, tobacco' prices increased by 0.7% due to higher prices of tobacco products. The increase in prices in 'miscellaneous goods and services' by 0.3% was mainly due to an increase in prices of financial services. The opposite effect on the change in the price level was due to a decrease in prices in 'furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance' by 0.4%. Prices of goods and services for routine household maintenance were mainly lower in this division.

In the capital city of Prague, consumer prices in total increased by 0.1% compared to the previous month (0.2% in Czechia). The biggest influence on this development had the increase in prices in 'transport' by 1.3% (1.6% in Czechia). In this division, there was a price rise in automotive fuels and lubricants. In 'housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels' prices increased by 0.3% (0.1% in Czechia). In this division, prices of actual rentals for housing were higher. In 'alcoholic beverages and tobacco' prices increased by 0.9% (0.9% also in Czechia) due to price rise of tobacco products. On the other hand, there was a decrease in consumer prices in Prague in 'furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance' by 0.8% (a decrease by 0.4% in Czechia). In this division, prices of goods and services for routine household maintenance were lower, in particular.

[Methodological note to consumer price index in March 2021 \(COVID-19\)](#)