

# Prices of automotive fuel continued to grow

## Consumer price indices – March 2010

**The total consumer price level in March increased compared with February by 0.3 %. This development came primarily from a price rise in 'food and non-alcoholic beverages' and 'transport'. In March the growth of consumer prices accelerated moderately to 0.7 %, y-o-y, (from 0.6 % in February).**

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The **month-on-month** consumer price growth was influenced by a price rise in 'food and non-alcoholic beverages' due mainly to an increase in prices of vegetables incl. potatoes and fruit (10.4 % and 2.3 %, respectively). In 'transport', prices of automotive fuel went up by 2.5 %. In March, prices of petrol Natural 95 were the highest since August 2008, prices of diesel oil since October 2008. Prices of clothing rose by 0.6 % and footwear by 1.2 % due to new spring models on the market.

A downward effect on the price level came from a price drop in 'recreation and culture', in which prices of package holidays went down by 3.3 % due to the end of winter season. Lower than in the previous month were also prices of some food. Prices of yoghurts decreased by 1.5 %, butter by 2.0 %, sugar by 2.7 % and coffee by 1.0 %.

Prices of goods in total increased by 0.4 % and prices of services dropped by 0.2 %.

In terms of the **year-on-year** comparison, in March 2010, the increase in consumer prices was 0.7 % (0.6 % in February). A moderate acceleration of the price growth came particularly from price development in 'food and non-alcoholic beverages' due to a slowdown in their y-o-y drop. The price growth of alcoholic beverages decelerated to 4.5 % (from 5.4 % in February) and tobacco products to 1.7 % (from 2.7 % in February).

A dominant upward effect on the price level came from prices of automotive fuel, which were higher by 21.7 %. In 'housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels', the net actual rentals went up by 10.7 %, of which for dwellings with regulated rentals by 18.4 % and for dwellings with market rentals by 1.3 %. Prices of water supply were higher by 4.1 % and sewerage collection by 4.6 %. Prices in 'restaurants and hotels' rose (2.6 % and 1.9 %, respectively).

The reduction of price level came, as before, (yet with smaller intensity) from 'food and non-alcoholic beverages', in which prices of bread were lower by 9.6 %, rolls and baguettes by 22.6 %, flour by 16.0 %, edible oils by 10.0 %, fruit by 4.8 % and sugar by 10.4 %. In 'clothing and footwear', prices of clothing were lower by 3.8 %. In 'housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels', prices of natural gas and electricity went down (-12.3 % and -2.7 %, respectively). In 'recreation and culture', prices of audiovisual and photographic equipment and data-processing equipment were lower by 7.8 %. In 'communications', prices of mobile phones decreased and so did prices of telephone and telefax services due to discounts provided by mobile operators (-12.0 % and -2.5 %, respectively).

Prices of goods in total dropped by 0.5 %, while prices of services were higher by 2.2 %. The overall consumer price index excluding imputed rentals was 100.4 %, year-on-year.

**Average inflation rate**, i.e. the increase in the average consumer price index in the twelve months to March 2010 compared with the average CPI in the previous twelve months, stood at 0.7 % in March, which is 0.1 percentage point down compared with February 2010.

According to preliminary data of Eurostat, the year-on-year increase in the average **harmonized index of consumer prices** (HICP) in the **EU27 member states** was 1.4 % in **February 2010** (0.3 percentage point down on January). The highest annual rates were observed in Hungary (5.6 %) and Romania (4.5 %). A year-on-year drop was recorded for five EU member states. The biggest decrease was reported for Latvia (-4.3 %). In Germany, the y-o-y growth slowed down to 0.5 % (from 0.8 % in January). In Slovakia, the price drop was 0.2 % in February (the same as in January). According to preliminary calculations, the HICP in the **Czech Republic in March** increased by 0.2 %, **month-on-month**, and by 0.4 % (for the third month), **year-on-year**. The **MUICP** (Monetary Union Index of Consumer Prices) flash estimate for **the Eurozone in March 2010** was 1.5 %, y-o-y, as Eurostat announced (more information on the Eurostat's web pages: [HICP](#)).