

User needs from consumer price inflation item indices and price quote microdata

Office for National Statistics

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# Overview

Consumer price inflation (CPI) is the rate at which the prices of goods and services bought by households rise or fall, estimated by using price indices. They are a crucial component for understanding the economy’s health.

We publish our headline CPI statistics on a monthly basis, complemented by [consumer price inflation item indices and price quotes](https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/datasets/consumerpriceindicescpiandretailpricesindexrpiitemindicesandpricequotes) microdata. These microdata are used to construct our headline consumer price indices.

They give users unprecedented access to the detailed data, such as the detailed item-level indices and prices quotes for different types of goods and services. The price quotes dataset currently includes individual prices quotes collected manually from outlets across the UK, and also includes base (or reference) prices, validity markers and stratum weights. The item indices datasets includes item-level weights and indices for each of our consumer price inflation measures.

**Why your views matter**

As part of our ongoing programme of quality improvements to price statistics, we are [modernising our collection of prices data](https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/transformationofconsumerpricestatisticsaugust2024), making better use of data sources, methods and systems available to us. This allows us to reflect our changing economy and produce more robust and granular inflation statistics for businesses, individuals, and government.

As part of our improvements, from March 2025 we will be introducing [grocery scanner data](https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/consumerpricesdevelopmentplanupdatedaugust2024) into our headline CPI measures.

**What will be changing**

The introduction of these new data sources will affect the publishing of the microdata, including discontinuing quote-level microdata for the groceries market (Divisions 1 and 2 in the Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose, or COICOP). This is because the size and structure of the new data is intrinsically different to the current dataset. For example, we will have access to data on every type of cereal bought across the month, rather than on the sample of cereal products currently collected by our price collectors on a particular day.

We will also not be able to publish detailed scanner datasets because this may disclose the identity of the major UK retailers from whom we receive the data. Our data sharing agreements with those retailers include their data remaining anonymous.

Within groceries expenditure categories, item indices will be replaced by [broader consumption segments](https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/articles/automatedclassificationofwebscrapedclothingdatainconsumerpricestatistics/2020-09-01#defining-our-target-classes-updating-the-classification-structure-to-introduce-new-data-sources) reflecting the increased coverage of scanner data.

It’s vital that the data and statistics we provide best meet the needs of our users, and that any changes are made with consideration of how you use our data. We would like to hear from you to understand how you have used these microdata. Your feedback will inform our future publication data strategy and, in particular, where there are any new aggregate outputs that we can regularly produce to meet current user needs

**How to respond**

We welcome contributions from all users of ONS consumer price statistics, particularly those who use our lower-level price quote data on a regular or ad-hoc basis. This includes but is not limited to:

* Arm’s-length bodies and other public sector institutions
* Business and retail
* Central, local government and devolved administrations
* Charities and civil society bodies
* Financial institutions
* Policy thinktanks
* Research institutes and academia

**Accessibility**

If you prefer a different format, or you would like to discuss your feedback, please email cpi@ons.gov.uk

**Confidentiality and data protection**

We aim to be as open as possible in our decision-making process. As part of this, we plan to publish an anonymised summary of the responses we receive. We will not publish the personal name of any respondent. Names of individuals, organisations and groups will not be linked to any comments that you give.

Please be aware that, as a public authority, we are subject to the[Freedom of Information Act](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents) and can never completely guarantee that names and responses will not be published. We will not publish personal contact details, such as email addresses. To find out more, [please read our Privacy Policy.](https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/privacy_policy/)

Once completed, please submit your response to cpi@ons.gov.uk.

**Questionnaire**

## Introduction

1. **What is your name?**

*(Required)*

1. **What is your email address?**

*(Required)*

1. **Which sector do you work in?**

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

[ ]  Arm's-length body

[ ]  Business, finance or industry

[ ]  Charity

[ ]  Civil society organisation

[ ]  Community or voluntary group

[ ]  Devolved government

[ ]  Education - higher education

[ ]  Education - schools and further education

[ ]  International organisation

[ ]  Local government

[ ]  National government department

[ ]  Public body or service

[ ]  Research and development

[ ]  Social enterprise

[ ]  Other – please specify below

Please specify:

1. **Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

1. **What is your organisation?**

*(Required)*

1. **What is your role?**

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

[ ]  Academic

[ ]  Analyst

[ ]  Communications or public affairs specialist

[ ]  Data scientist

[ ]  Economist

[ ]  Interested member of the public

[ ]  Policy specialist

[ ]  Researcher

[ ]  Retired or not working

[ ]  Service commissioner

[ ]  Service designer

[ ]  Service provider

[ ]  Statistician

## Consumer price inflation price quote microdataset

The following questions ask for your feedback on our consumer price inflation price quote microdataset.

1. **Have you used the ONS consumer price inflation price quote microdataset?**

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No (If selected, please continue to question 16)

1. **What have you used the microdataset for?**

*(Required)*

*Select all that apply*.

[ ]  Academic research

[ ]  Analytical publications

[ ]  Business cases

[ ]  Exploratory analysis

[ ]  Personal interest

[ ]  Service development or commissioning

[ ]  Supporting policy and decision making

[ ]  Understanding and contextualising movements in the data

[ ]  Other - please specify

Please specify:

1. **How often do you use the microdataset?**

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*.

[ ]  Monthly

[ ]  Quarterly

[ ]  Annually

[ ]  Exploratory analysis

[ ]  Irregular or occasional usage

[ ]  I no longer use it

[ ]  Other - please specify

Please specify:

1. **Please explain what you have used the price quote microdata for and why this is necessary or useful to perform your work.**

*(Required)*

1. **Please summarise which specific variables you have used.**
2. **Please summarise which expenditure categories you have used (COICOP, Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose)**
3. **Please summarise what aggregate statistics, charts or statistical models you have produced using the price quote microdataset.**
4. **Are there any implications on your work if detailed microdata for groceries are not available?**
5. **Is there anything else you would like to tell us about how you have used the price quote microdataset?**

## Consumer price inflation item indices dataset

The following questions ask for your feedback on our consumer prices inflation indices dataset.

1. **Have you used the ONS consumer price inflation item indices dataset?**

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No (If selected, you have reached the end of the questionnaire)

1. **What have you used the dataset for?**

*(Required)*

*Select all that apply*.

[ ]  Academic research

[ ]  Analytical publications

[ ]  Business cases

[ ]  Exploratory analysis

[ ]  Personal interest

[ ]  Service development or commissioning

[ ]  Supporting policy and decision making

[ ]  Understanding and contextualising movements in the data

[ ]  Other - please specify

Please specify:

1. **How often do you use the dataset?**

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*.

[ ]  Monthly

[ ]  Quarterly

[ ]  Annually

[ ]  Exploratory analysis

[ ]  Irregular or occasional usage

[ ]  I no longer use it

[ ]  Other - please specify

Please specify:

1. **Please explain what you have used the item indices data for and why this is necessary or useful to perform your work.**

*(Required)*

1. **Please summarise which specific variables you have used.**
2. **Please summarise which item IDs (or broad expenditure categories) you have used.**
3. **Please summarise which aggregate statistics, charts or statistical models you have produced using the item indices dataset.**
4. **Is there anything else you would like to tell us about how you have used the item indices dataset?**

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please submit your response to cpi@ons.gov.uk.