



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Consumer price index March 1999

The March consumer price index (CPI) was up 0.9% on February. This increase is mainly due to higher prices of clothing and shoes, according to the most recent figures by Statistics Netherlands. The level of increase is not unusual for the time of the year.

Compared to March a year ago consumer prices were up 2.2%. The inflation rate in the first quarter stabilised around this level. Dutch inflation is more than 1% higher than the inflation rate for the Eurozone.

Consumer prices up 0.9% in March

The rise in consumer prices from March on February averaged 0.9%. Clothes and shoes became more expensive, due to the seasonal change to the new summer collection. Fruits and vegetables, as well as car fuel also became more expensive. Household appliances and consumer electronics became cheaper. Furthermore, holiday accommodation was cheaper in March than in February because of the February spring holiday.

Inflation rate at 2.2%

On average the prices in March were up 2.2% on March 1998. The first quarter inflation rate was stable at 2.2% in 1999. This is relatively high within its international context as the harmonised consumer price index shows. Apart from the national CPI, Statistics Netherlands has calculated this harmonised CPI ever since March of 1997 on behalf of the European Union. The Harmonised CPI serves to compare the situation within the European Union, but it provides a less comprehensive picture than the national CPI does.

Compared to February 1998 the harmonised index for the Netherlands went up 2.0%. The National CPI showed a virtually identical increase. The inflation rate was only 1.0% for the 15 member states of the European Union, and only 0.8% for the 11 countries of the Eurozone. That makes the Dutch inflation rate almost 1% above the Eurozone total.

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In March 1999 the harmonised index for the Netherlands comes at 2.0% higher than in March 1998. The EU figures for March are not yet available.

The derived consumer price index

The derived CPI by Statistics Netherlands shows the price developments without the effects of indirect taxes, and tariffs. The derived CPI for March 1999 was up 1.6% on March 1998. So part of the inflation rate can be attributed to these tax categories.