



Statistics Netherlands

Press release

PB02-094
14 May 2002
9:30 AM

Inflation unchanged in April

At 3.6 percent, Dutch inflation was the same in April 2002 as in the previous month. Lower prices for food and non-alcoholic drinks moderated inflation, while on the other hand prices of electricity and alcoholic drinks pushed the rate up according to the consumer price index of Statistics Netherlands.

According to the European harmonised index, inflation fell by 0.1 of a percent point to 4.2 percent.

Fresh vegetables and meat contribute less to inflation

Inflation remained the same in April as in March at 3.6 percent, after decreasing every month between December and March. The rate is 1.3 percent points lower than in April 2001, when the highest figure for 2001 was measured: 4.9 percent. On average inflation was 4.5 percent in 2001.

The contribution of food and non-alcoholic beverages was again smaller in April, but prices of beer, wine and electricity pushed up inflation.

Fresh vegetables were cheaper in April than in March and also slightly cheaper than one year ago. The price rise for meat was smaller on a yearly basis: meat now costs just as much as a year ago. Last year meat prices rose strongly following the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the Netherlands.

Motor fuels, foreign holidays and flowers and plants also had a restraining effect on inflation. Although these items were all more expensive in April, the price increases were smaller than in April last year.

Alcoholic drinks and electricity contribute more to inflation

In April the excise duty on mineral water, soft drinks and fruit juices was lowered. At the same time excise on alcoholic beverages was raised. Although the consequences of these adjustments in excise rates just about cancel each other out, the prices of drinks are higher than could be expected on the basis of the changed excise rates alone. The strong increase in the price of beer in particular pushed up inflation.

Electricity rates remained unchanged in April. However, as they fell substantially in April last year, they had an inflationary effect this year.

For further information please contact Jan Walschots; e-mail: jwas@cbs.nl, tel. +31 70 337 55 11, or the press office.

Tel. +31 70 337 58 16

Fax +31 70 337 59 71

E-mail: persdienst@cbs.nl

www.cbs.nl

Statistics Netherlands
is a department of
the Ministry of
Economic Affairs

Prices 0.6 percent up in April

Prices rose by an average 0.6 percent between March and April. This is the same increase as in April last year but higher than in previous years.

Wine cost 4 percent more than in March, mainly because of the higher excise duties. Beer was more than 8 percent more expensive. Three percent points of this increase can be attributed directly to the higher excise rates. Prices of fruit, motor fuels and holidays also rose in April.

Fresh vegetables were more than 9 percent cheaper in April. Mineral water, soft drinks and fruit juices were also cheaper as a consequence of the lower excise duties on these items.

Derived consumer price index

Inflation according to the derived consumer price index for employee households in the low income bracket was 3.5 percent in April, 0.1 of a percent point lower than in March. This index is often used to adjust government tariffs and for collective labour agreements and other contracts.

Inflation according to European norm

Statistics Netherlands compiles not only the national consumer price index but also the European harmonised consumer price index for the Netherlands (HICP). This index is a component of the inflation rate for the Eurozone, which functions as an official guideline for the monetary policy of the European Central Bank. In April 2002 Dutch inflation according to the HICP was 4.2 percent, 0.1 of a percent point down on March.

Between February and March 2002 inflation according to the HICP fell from 4.5 to 4.3 percent. In the whole Eurozone it rose slightly from 2.4 to 2.5 percent. Just as in February, within the Eurozone inflation was highest in Ireland, followed by Greece and then the Netherlands. In March inflation was lowest in Luxembourg, Austria and Germany.

Inflation rates for the separate Eurozone and European Union countries will be published on 16 May by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union. Eurostat expects inflation for the Eurozone as a whole to decrease, from 2.5 to 2.2 percent.