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STATISTICAL RELEASE

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Consumer Price Index

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Please see the following note on page 4: Changes to the collection and compilation of the CPI resulting from the COVID-19 lockdown

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KEY FINDINGS

Headline consumer price index (CPI for all urban areas)

Annual consumer price inflation was 2,1% in May 2020, down from 3,0% in April 2020. The consumer price index decreased by 0,6% month-on-month in May 2020.

The main contributors to the 2,1% annual inflation rate were food and non-alcoholic beverages; housing and utilities; transport; and miscellaneous goods and services (Table C on page 7).

Food and non-alcoholic beverages increased by 4,4% year-on-year, and contributed 0,7 of a percentage point to the total CPI annual rate of 2,1%.

Housing and utilities increased by 4,5% year-on-year, and contributed 1,1 percentage points.

Transport decreased by 8,4% year-on-year, and contributed -1,2 percentage points.

Miscellaneous goods and services increased by 6,2% year-on-year, and contributed 1,0 percentage point.

The annual inflation rates for goods and for services were 0,0% and 4,1% respectively. Provincial annual inflation rates ranged from 1,6% in Limpopo to 2,6% in Western Cape (Table A on page 5).

Note: Not all items in the CPI are surveyed every month. Table F (page 10) shows the survey schedule for items that are not surveyed monthly.

Risenga Maluleke

Statistician-General

Changes to the collection and compilation of the CPI resulting from the COVID-19 lockdown

At the heart of measuring inflation is the comparison of prices of a fixed set of products in two periods. The COVID-19 lockdown restrictions and gradual normalisation have posed particular challenges for the calculation of the consumer price index.

Special imputation methods were used in the April CPI to account for the absence of consumer expenditure on certain CPI basket items. These were documented in a note published on 22 May on the Stats SA website and the April CPI statistical release.

May saw the loosening of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions and the opening of a wider range of goods and services available for sale. However, as prices for these imputed product groups were not available in April, it is not possible to compute changes to their indices for the calculation of the May CPI. The following addresses the different methods used to compute the CPI for May and is based on a note published on the Stats SA website on 10 July 2020 [[Covid_19 method issues](#)].

Online and in-store collection

Data collection from the online presence of chain stores continued in May and will do so indefinitely. Stats SA's fieldwork team resumed in-store collection at the end of May. As these field prices will only have use as a comparator between May and June, price changes for most of the retail products in the May CPI are based on the online collection. Fieldworkers have focussed their efforts on those products that are less easily priced online such as perishable groceries, outlets which do not have an online presence, and clothing. Online prices contribute 20,0% of the weight of the CPI in May.

Headline CPI imputation

In May 2020 indices are imputed by the headline index if they meet one of two conditions. First, the product category was banned for sale in May by regulation. Second, the product category was banned for sale in April meaning there was no price in that month with which to compare in May.

The imputation factor is the weighted average change of products available in April and May. This monthly change is -0,6% for May. Once this change is applied to each respective elementary index, the higher-level indices and inflation rates are recalculated. It should be noted that due to the rounding and aggregation processes, the published monthly changes for indices imputed by this factor vary between -0,5% and -0,7%. These indices contribute 23,7% of the weight of the CPI.

Periodic surveys

The prices of many services do not change every month and are therefore surveyed quarterly, six-monthly or annually according to a schedule. The standard treatment is to carry forward the value of an index if it is not due to be updated in a particular month. The weight of indices carried forward in May is 43,0%.

Treatment of other indices

Watches, travelling bags, school bags, prams and sunglasses, with a combined weight of 0,2%, were imputed using the personal care index. The remaining indices, contributing 13,1% of the weight of the CPI, were collected directly.

Interpretation of regional and analytical indices

Where online prices or the headline imputation method are used, the index change is calculated at a national level and then replicated for each regional index (provincial CPIs, total country and rural areas). As a result of these methods, monthly changes in the regional indices will mainly vary according to different weights, rather than price variations.

Analytical indices, especially those which exclude fuel and food products, have reduced meaning as the headline index imputation factor does include these product groups.

DETAILED RESULTS

Table A - Consumer Price Index: Main indices

Unless otherwise stated the table refers to all urban areas.

Group		Weight	Index (Dec 2016=100)			Percentage change		
			May 2019	Apr 2020	May 2020	May 2020 vs. Apr 2020	May 2020 vs. May 2019	
All items (CPI Headline)		100,00	112,0	115,0	114,3	-0,6	2,1	
CPI excluding food and NAB, fuel and energy		74,43	111,3	114,9	114,7	-0,2	3,1	
Trimmed mean		..	111,4	114,7	114,5	-0,2	2,8	
Analytical series	CPI for all goods	48,70	110,5	111,8	110,5	-1,2	0,0	
	CPI for durable goods	7,81	103,6	105,6	105,2	-0,4	1,5	
	CPI for semi-durable goods	5,68	103,5	104,4	103,7	-0,7	0,2	
	CPI for non-durable goods	35,21	113,5	115,0	113,3	-1,5	-0,2	
	CPI for services	51,30	113,4	118,0	118,0	0,0	4,1	
	CPI for administered prices	Total	16,17	118,5	118,5	114,8	-3,1	-3,1
		Regulated	11,76	117,9	115,3	110,2	-4,4	-6,5
		Not regulated	4,41	120,2	127,2	127,2	0,0	5,8
	CPI excluding administered prices	83,83	110,7	114,3	114,2	-0,1	3,2	
	CPI for administered prices excluding fuel and paraffin	11,54	113,8	122,0	122,0	0,0	7,2	
	CPI excluding food and NAB	82,76	112,3	115,0	114,1	-0,8	1,6	
	CPI excluding fuel	95,42	111,1	115,2	115,1	-0,1	3,6	
	CPI excluding food and NAB and fuel	78,18	111,3	115,3	115,1	-0,2	3,4	
	CPI excluding housing	75,38	112,5	114,8	113,9	-0,8	1,2	
	CPI excluding fuel and energy	91,67	111,1	114,9	114,8	-0,1	3,3	
	CPI excluding energy	96,25	112,0	114,6	113,9	-0,6	1,7	
	CPI excluding owners' equivalent rent	86,68	112,5	115,5	114,7	-0,7	2,0	
CPI for pensioners	..	112,3	115,7	115,1	-0,5	2,5		
Geographic indices	CPI for total country	100,00	111,7	114,6	114,0	-0,5	2,1	
	CPI for rural areas	12,23	109,8	112,2	111,7	-0,4	1,7	
	CPI per province	Western Cape	17,25	113,8	117,6	116,8	-0,7	2,6
		Eastern Cape	8,04	111,0	113,6	113,1	-0,4	1,9
		Northern Cape	1,93	110,4	113,7	113,1	-0,5	2,4
		Free State	5,93	111,4	114,2	113,7	-0,4	2,1
		KwaZulu-Natal	12,70	110,4	113,3	112,8	-0,4	2,2
		North West	5,31	109,7	112,3	111,6	-0,6	1,7
		Gauteng	36,25	112,1	114,8	114,0	-0,7	1,7
		Mpumalanga	6,89	110,5	113,2	112,6	-0,5	1,9
Limpopo	5,70	111,1	113,5	112,9	-0,5	1,6		
Deciles	CPI per expenditure decile	1	0,50	108,0	112,1	112,1	0,0	3,8
		2	1,13	108,5	112,5	112,6	0,1	3,8
		3	1,89	108,9	112,5	112,4	-0,1	3,2
		4	2,81	109,3	112,6	112,3	-0,3	2,7
		5	3,93	109,4	112,5	112,3	-0,2	2,7
		6	5,61	109,6	112,5	112,2	-0,3	2,4
		7	7,91	110,4	113,2	112,7	-0,4	2,1
		8	11,30	111,3	113,9	113,3	-0,5	1,8
		9	16,35	112,8	115,7	114,9	-0,7	1,9
		10	48,57	113,0	116,0	115,1	-0,8	1,9

Table B - CPI headline

Table B1 - CPI headline index numbers (Dec 2016=100)

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Average ¹
2016	94,4	95,7	96,4	97,2	97,4	97,9	98,7	98,6	98,8	99,3	99,6	100,0	97,8
2017	100,6	101,7	102,3	102,4	102,7	102,9	103,2	103,3	103,8	104,1	104,2	104,7	103,0
2018	105,0	105,8	106,2	107,0	107,2	107,6	108,5	108,4	108,9	109,4	109,6	109,4	107,8
2019	109,2	110,1	111,0	111,7	112,0	112,4	112,8	113,1	113,4	113,4	113,5	113,8	112,2
2020	114,1	115,2	115,6	115,0	114,3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

Table B2 - CPI headline year-on-year rates

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Average ¹
2016	6,2	7,0	6,3	6,2	6,1	6,3	6,0	5,9	6,1	6,4	6,6	6,8	6,4
2017	6,6	6,3	6,1	5,3	5,4	5,1	4,6	4,8	5,1	4,8	4,6	4,7	5,3
2018	4,4	4,0	3,8	4,5	4,4	4,6	5,1	4,9	4,9	5,1	5,2	4,5	4,7
2019	4,0	4,1	4,5	4,4	4,5	4,5	4,0	4,3	4,1	3,7	3,6	4,0	4,1
2020	4,5	4,6	4,1	3,0	2,1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

¹ Annual average.

Figure 1 - CPI headline index numbers and year-on-year rates

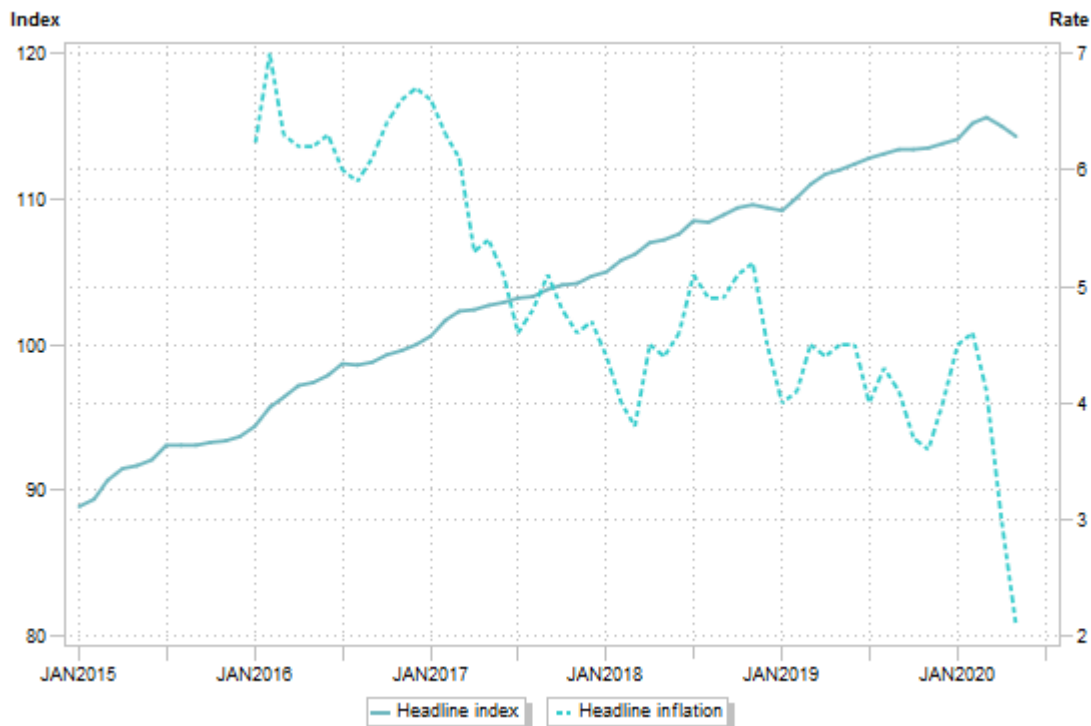


Table C - Contributions of the different groups to the annual percentage change in the CPI headline

Group	Contribution	
	Apr 2020	May 2020
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	0,7	0,7
Alcoholic beverages and tobacco	0,1	0,1
Clothing and footwear	0,1	0,0
Housing and utilities	1,1	1,1
Household contents and services	0,1	0,1
Health	0,1	0,1
Transport	-0,5	-1,2
Education	0,2	0,2
Miscellaneous goods and services	1,0	1,0
Residual	0,1	0,0
All Items	3,0	2,1

Table D - Contributions of the different groups to the monthly percentage change in the CPI headline

Group	Contribution	
	Apr 2020	May 2020
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	0,1	0,0
Transport	-0,6	-0,6
All Items	-0,5	-0,6

Table E - Consumer price indices for all urban areas

Group	Weight	Index (Dec 2016=100)			Percentage change	
		May 2019	Apr 2020	May 2020	May 2020 vs. Apr 2020	May 2020 vs. May 2019
All items (CPI Headline)	100,00	112,0	115,0	114,3	-0,6	2,1
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	17,24	110,2	114,7	115,0	0,3	4,4
Food	15,48	109,5	114,1	114,8	0,6	4,8
Processed	8,67	109,7	113,4	113,9	0,4	3,8
Unprocessed	6,81	109,4	114,6	115,4	0,7	5,5
Bread and cereals	3,21	102,0	104,9	104,9	0,0	2,8
Meat	5,46	115,6	122,1	122,0	-0,1	5,5
Fish	0,40	115,7	117,5	118,5	0,9	2,4
Milk, eggs and cheese	2,57	107,6	111,1	115,2	3,7	7,1
Oils and fats	0,45	99,6	105,5	107,9	2,3	8,3
Fruit	0,34	94,3	107,2	110,2	2,8	16,9
Vegetables	1,30	114,4	115,8	113,9	-1,6	-0,4
Sugar, sweets and desserts	0,56	108,7	116,2	116,1	-0,1	6,8
Other food	1,19	106,8	109,3	109,4	0,1	2,4
Non-alcoholic beverages	1,76	116,2	120,1	117,2	-2,4	0,9
Hot beverages	0,65	111,7	118,2	115,9	-1,9	3,8
Cold beverages	1,11	118,7	121,2	117,9	-2,7	-0,7
Alcoholic beverages and tobacco	5,82	114,8	117,0	116,3	-0,6	1,3
Alcoholic beverages	3,89	116,1	117,7	117,0	-0,6	0,8
Spirits	0,86	115,7	118,6	117,8	-0,7	1,8
Wine	1,05	121,6	124,4	123,6	-0,6	1,6
Beer	1,98	113,4	113,9	113,2	-0,6	-0,2
Tobacco	1,93	112,3	115,6	114,8	-0,7	2,2
Clothing and footwear	3,83	104,6	105,8	105,2	-0,6	0,6
Clothing	2,71	105,2	106,7	106,0	-0,7	0,8
Footwear	1,12	103,1	103,7	103,1	-0,6	0,0
Housing and utilities	24,62	110,5	115,5	115,5	0,0	4,5
Actual rentals for housing	3,52	110,1	113,1	113,1	0,0	2,7
Owners' equivalent rent	13,32	108,6	111,4	111,4	0,0	2,6
Maintenance and repair	0,82	109,1	110,7	110,8	0,1	1,6
Water and other services	3,16	119,7	128,0	128,1	0,1	7,0
Electricity and other fuels	3,80	110,1	122,7	122,9	0,2	11,6
Household contents and services	4,35	106,3	108,9	108,4	-0,5	2,0
Furnishings, floor coverings and textiles	0,81	94,8	92,9	92,3	-0,6	-2,6
Appliances, tableware and equipment	0,73	99,5	100,3	99,6	-0,7	0,1
Supplies and services	2,81	111,5	115,8	115,4	-0,3	3,5
Domestic workers' wages	2,45	111,9	117,0	117,0	0,0	4,6
Health	1,40	116,5	121,2	121,1	-0,1	3,9
Medical products	0,53	112,8	116,1	115,6	-0,4	2,5
Medical services	0,87	119,0	124,6	124,9	0,2	5,0

Table E - Consumer price indices for all urban areas (concluded)

Group		Weight	Index (Dec 2016=100)			Percentage change		
			May 2019	Apr 2020	May 2020	May 2020 vs. Apr 2020	May 2020 vs. May 2019	
Transport		14,28	115,9	110,8	106,2	-4,2	-8,4	
	Purchase of vehicles	6,12	108,0	111,2	110,5	-0,6	2,3	
	Private transport operation		5,86	126,2	110,4	99,9	-9,5	-20,8
		Fuel	4,58	130,5	110,1	96,7	-12,2	-25,9
		Other running costs	1,28	110,7	111,6	111,4	-0,2	0,6
Public transport	2,30	111,3	110,7	110,5	-0,2	-0,7		
Communication		2,63	99,8	99,6	99,4	-0,2	-0,4	
	Postal services and telecommunication services	2,43	102,2	102,3	102,2	-0,1	0,0	
	Telecommunication equipment	0,20	71,8	67,0	67,0	0,0	-6,7	
Recreation and culture		5,16	102,3	102,6	103,2	0,6	0,9	
	Recreational equipment	1,25	96,2	95,5	96,4	0,9	0,2	
	Recreational and cultural services	3,10	102,7	103,3	103,2	-0,1	0,5	
	Books, newspapers and stationery	0,64	114,3	116,7	120,4	3,2	5,3	
	Package holidays	0,17	96,9	91,2	90,6	-0,7	-6,5	
Education		2,53	121,8	129,6	129,6	0,0	6,4	
	Primary and secondary	1,54	123,8	133,1	133,1	0,0	7,5	
	Tertiary	0,99	118,7	124,3	124,3	0,0	4,7	
Restaurants and hotels		3,09	108,7	109,4	108,7	-0,6	0,0	
	Restaurants	1,98	113,6	117,3	116,5	-0,7	2,6	
	Hotels	1,11	99,4	94,3	93,8	-0,5	-5,6	
Miscellaneous goods and services		15,05	119,1	126,6	126,5	-0,1	6,2	
	Personal care	2,12	106,7	108,0	107,7	-0,3	0,9	
	Insurance	10,06	123,2	132,8	132,8	0,0	7,8	
	Financial services	1,53	115,9	123,9	123,9	0,0	6,9	
	Other goods and services	1,34	111,1	112,2	112,2	0,0	1,0	

Table F - Survey schedule for non-monthly surveys

Quarterly	
January, April, July, October	Gymnasium fees (Recreation and culture) Funeral expenses, funeral policies, gravestone maintenance (Miscellaneous)
February, May, August, November	Private-sector hospitals (Health) Rugby tickets (Recreation and culture) Cricket tickets (Recreation and culture)
March, June, September, December	Actual rentals for housing, owners' equivalent rent (Housing and utilities) Domestic workers' wages (Household contents and services) Taxi fares, train fares (Transport) Motor vehicle insurance (Miscellaneous)
Biannual	
January, July	Building insurance, household content insurance (Miscellaneous)
February, April	Medical aid (Miscellaneous)
April, October	Television licences (Recreation and culture)
May, November	Electricians, plumbers (Housing and utilities)
July, August	Municipal charges for water, property rates and electricity (Housing and utilities)
Annual	
January	Post box rental (Communication) Lotto tickets (Recreation and culture)
February	Private-sector doctors and dentists (Health)
March	School and university tuition fees (Education) Toll fees (Transport) University boarding fees (Restaurants and hotels) Crèche fees (Miscellaneous)
April	Public-sector hospitals and doctors (Health) Stamps (Communication)
Other	
January, March, April, June, July, September, October, December	Local bus fares (Transport)

Additional surveys are conducted for these items when Stats SA is aware of significant price changes outside regular survey months.

GLOSSARY

A complete set of definitions is available in the methods and sources document on the Stats SA website http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=2528

Annual inflation rate	The annual inflation rate is the change in the index of the relevant month of the current year compared with the index of the same month in the previous year expressed as a percentage.
Annual percentage change	The annual percentage change is the change in the index of the relevant month of the current year compared with the index of the same month in the previous year expressed as a percentage.
Average annual inflation rate	The average annual inflation rate is the change in the average index of one year compared with the average index of the previous year expressed as a percentage.
Average annual percentage change	The average annual percentage change is the change in the average index of one year compared with the average index of the previous year expressed as a percentage.
CPI for administered prices	An administered price is defined as the price of a product which is set consciously by an individual producer or group of producers and/or any price which can be determined or influenced by government, either directly or through a government agency/institution without reference to market forces. Products and services included are assessment rates, water, electricity, paraffin, petrol, diesel, public transport – trains, motor licences, motor registration, telephone fees, cell calls, television licence, school fees, university/technicons/colleges and university boarding fees.
CPI for regulated prices	Regulated prices are those administered prices that are monitored and controlled by government policy. To this end, price regulation does not necessarily imply the presence of an economic regulator, but the restriction on the extent to which prices may vary, depending on government's policy objective. Products and services included are water, electricity, paraffin, petrol, diesel, telephone fees and cell calls.
CPI per expenditure decile	Decile 1 - up to R17 721; Decile 2 - R 17 722 up to R 29 475; Decile 3 - R 29 476 up to R 42 582; Decile 4 - R 42 583 up to R 56 909; Decile 5 - R 56 910 up to R 73 813; Decile 6 - R 73 814 up to R 94 884; Decile 7 - R 94 885 up to R 124 227; Decile 8 - R 124 228 up to R 173 022; Decile 9 - R 173 023 up to R 269 902; and Decile 10 - R 269 903 and more.
Inflation rate	The inflation rate is the change in the CPI for all items of the relevant month of the current year compared with the CPI for all items of the same month in the previous year expressed as a percentage.
Monthly percentage change	The monthly percentage change is the change in the index of the relevant month compared with the index of the previous month expressed as a percentage.
Rural CPI	The rural CPI is compiled using data from rural and urban areas in accordance with the purchasing patterns of rural residents.

GENERAL INFORMATION

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