

Piraeus, 11 March 2008

PRESS RELEASE

HARMONIZED INDEX OF CONSUMER PRICES^{1,2,3,4,5} (2005=100,0)

FEBRUARY 2008

The Harmonized Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) in February 2008, as compared to February 2007, increased by 4,5%. A year earlier, the annual rate of change of the HICP was 3,0%.

The HICP in February 2008, as compared to January 2008, decreased by 1,0%. A year earlier, the monthly rate of change of the HICP was -1,6%.

In the twelve month period March 07 – February 08 the annual average rate of change of the HICP was 3,2%. A year earlier, the annual average rate of change of the HICP was 3,3%.

¹ The Harmonized Indices of Consumer Prices (HICPs) are compiled by the Member States of E.U. in accordance to EC Regulations, in order to provide comparable data for the international inflation comparisons and, in particular, for the assessment of the convergence criterion, of price stability, in the frame of the European Monetary Union (EMU) requirements.

² The weights of items of the HICPs are derived on the basis of the consumption expenditure, which takes place in the economic territory of each Member State independently of the category of consumer (private households, individuals living in institutions, foreign visitors). The main sources of the expenditure data used for the calculation of the weights of the HICPs' items are the National Accounts and the Household Budget Survey (HBS).

³ The renewal of the weights of the HICPs' items, which is necessary to ensure their reliability, is governed by the Commission Regulation (EC) No 2454/97, as regards minimum standards for the quality of HICP weightings. In conformity to the above Commission Regulation the weights of items of the HICP are price updated every January to the previous December prices.

⁴ The Harmonized Index of Consumer Prices in Greece, is compiled, by the National Statistical Service of Greece, in parallel to the national Consumer Price Index, since 1997.

⁵ More information for the HICPs and specifically for the Greek HICP is available in the NSSG website(www.statistics.gr) in a special methodological note {"Harmonized Index of Consumer Prices (2005=100,0)".}

Harmonized Index of Consumer Prices – February 2008
(2005=100,0)

HICP and main groups	Weights(%) (2008)	Indices			Annual rate of change (%)	
		February			February	
		2006	2007	2008	2007/2006	2008/2007
HICP (Overall index)	1000,00	100,07	103,11	107,80	3,0	4,5
1. Food and non-Alcoholic Beverages	173,07	103,76	104,05	110,81	0,3	6,5
2. Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco	43,48	101,25	112,21	113,47	10,8	1,1
3. Clothing and Footwear	88,21	87,81	91,40	92,79	4,1	1,5
4. Housing	92,86	105,19	106,09	118,86	0,9	12,0
5. Household Equipment	64,41	97,33	99,35	102,01	2,1	2,7
6. Health	62,04	101,97	105,29	108,80	3,3	3,3
7. Transport	133,72	99,90	101,74	107,17	1,8	5,3
8. Communication	38,31	99,96	101,04	96,74	1,1	-4,3
9. Recreation and Culture	54,15	100,82	104,67	106,42	3,8	1,7
10. Education	23,10	102,48	106,36	111,20	3,8	4,6
11. Hotels, Cafés and Restaurants	164,55	101,38	104,71	109,20	3,3	4,3
12. Miscellaneous Goods and Services	62,11	101,27	104,08	107,17	2,8	3,0

Monthly change of HICP (Overall Index)
(2005=100,0)

Months	Indices			Annual rate of change (%)		Annual average rate of change (%)	
	2006	2007	2008	2007/2006	2008/2007	2007/2006	2008/2007
January	101,67	104,76	108,85	3,0	3,9	3,3	3,1
February	100,07	103,11	107,80	3,0	4,5	3,3	3,2
March	102,82	105,66		2,8		3,3	
April	103,84	106,50		2,6		3,2	
May	103,96	106,69		2,6		3,1	
June	103,90	106,64		2,6		3,1	
July	103,02	105,83		2,7		3,0	
August	101,96	104,75		2,7		2,9	
September	104,05	107,11		2,9		2,9	
October	104,73	107,86		3,0		2,9	
November	104,57	108,67		3,9		2,9	
December	105,16	109,22		3,9		3,0	
Annual average index	103,31	106,40				3,0	

Comparison between HICP and CPI

HICP (2005=100,0)

CPI (2005=100,0)

Year and month	HICP	Annual rate of change (%)	Annual average rate of change (%)	CPI	Annual rate of change (%)	Annual average rate of change (%)
2002 : 1	88,96	4,8	3,8	89,20	4,4	3,5
2	87,95	3,8	3,8	88,26	3,4	3,5
3	90,49	4,4	3,9	90,49	4,0	3,5
4	91,22	4,1	3,9	91,18	3,8	3,6
5	91,44	3,8	3,9	91,17	3,4	3,5
6	91,22	3,6	3,9	91,01	3,3	3,5
7	89,40	3,6	3,8	89,45	3,3	3,4
8	89,55	3,8	3,8	89,65	3,5	3,4
9	91,44	3,8	3,8	91,34	3,5	3,4
10	91,87	3,9	3,8	91,81	3,7	3,5
11	91,94	3,9	3,9	91,83	3,6	3,6
12	92,60	3,5	3,9	92,47	3,4	3,6
2003 : 1	91,87	3,3	3,8	92,00	3,1	3,5
2	91,65	4,2	3,8	92,09	4,3	3,6
3	93,98	3,9	3,8	94,18	4,1	3,6
4	94,20	3,3	3,7	94,26	3,4	3,6
5	94,63	3,5	3,7	94,66	3,8	3,6
6	94,49	3,6	3,7	94,48	3,8	3,6
7	92,53	3,5	3,7	92,66	3,6	3,7
8	92,53	3,3	3,6	92,62	3,3	3,6
9	94,42	3,3	3,6	94,39	3,3	3,6
10	94,78	3,2	3,5	94,73	3,2	3,6
11	94,92	3,2	3,5	94,90	3,3	3,6
12	95,51	3,1	3,4	95,31	3,1	3,5
2004 : 1	94,71	3,1	3,4	94,69	2,9	3,5
2	94,05	2,6	3,3	94,40	2,5	3,4
3	96,74	2,9	3,2	96,73	2,7	3,2
4	97,10	3,1	3,2	97,01	2,9	3,2
5	97,54	3,1	3,2	97,43	2,9	3,1
6	97,32	3,0	3,1	97,15	2,8	3,1
7	95,43	3,1	3,1	95,38	2,9	3,0
8	95,14	2,8	3,0	95,14	2,7	2,9
9	97,18	2,9	3,0	97,05	2,8	2,9
10	97,90	3,3	3,0	97,79	3,2	2,9
11	97,98	3,2	3,0	97,89	3,1	2,9
12	98,49	3,1	3,0	98,26	3,1	2,9
2005: 1	98,70	4,2	3,1	98,51	4,0	3,0
2	97,03	3,2	3,2	97,32	3,1	3,0
3	99,50	2,9	3,2	99,53	2,9	3,1
4	100,30	3,3	3,2	100,29	3,4	3,1
5	100,67	3,2	3,2	100,58	3,2	3,1
6	100,45	3,2	3,2	100,37	3,3	3,2

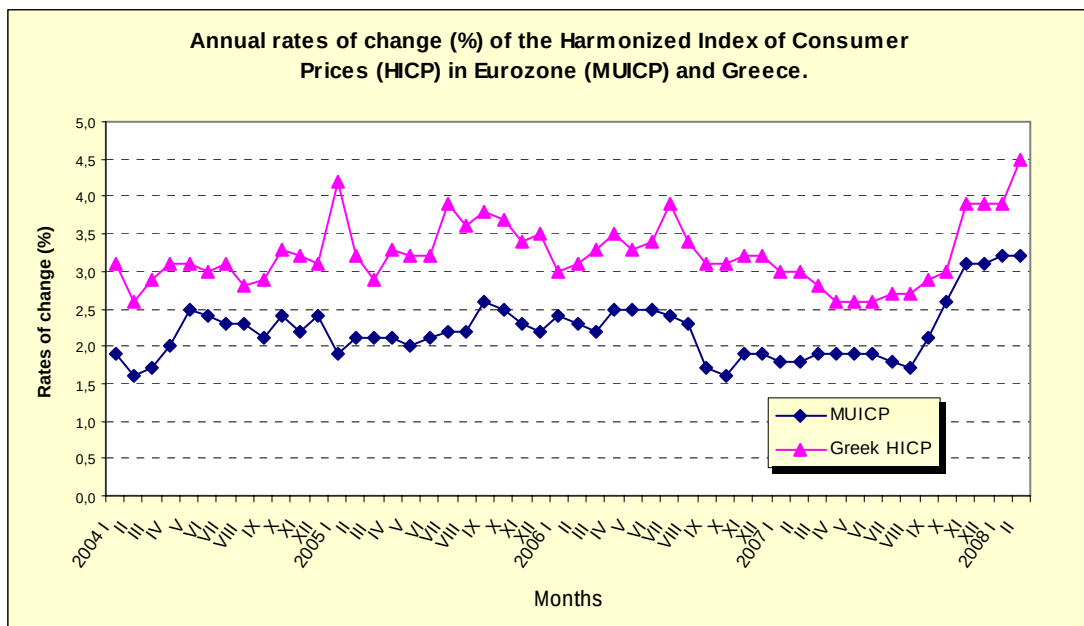
Comparison between HICP and CPI

HICP (2005=100,0)

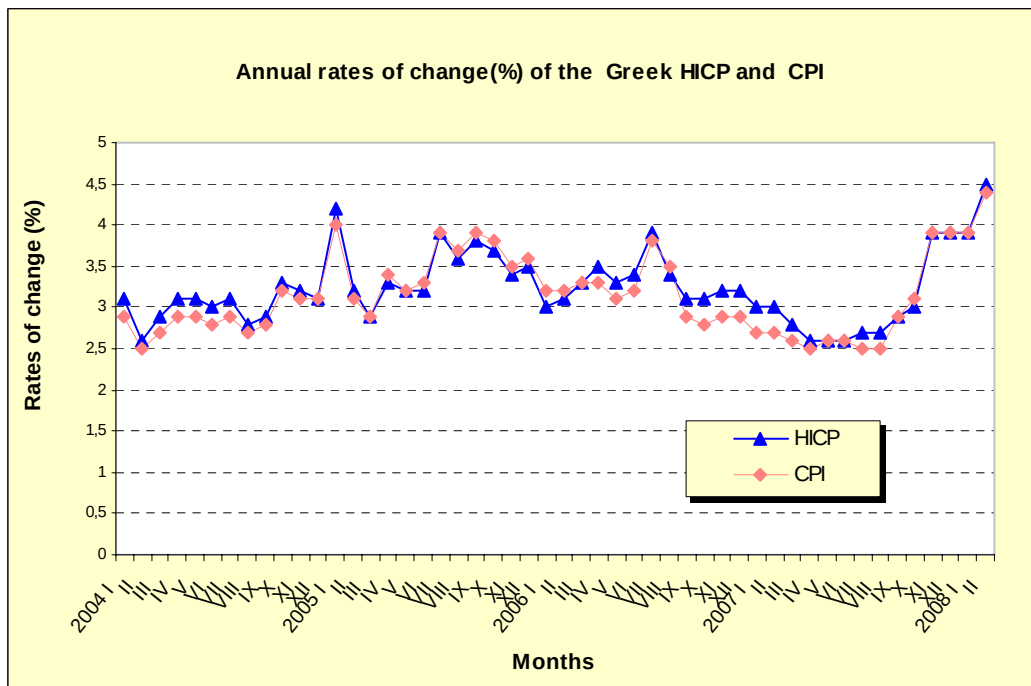
CPI (2005=100,0)

Year and month	HICP	Annual rate of change (%)	Annual average rate of change (%)	CPI	Annual rate of change (%)	Annual average rate of change (%)
7	99,14	3,9	3,3	99,14	3,9	3,2
8	98,56	3,6	3,3	98,70	3,7	3,3
9	100,88	3,8	3,4	100,87	3,9	3,4
10	101,54	3,7	3,4	101,54	3,8	3,5
11	101,32	3,4	3,5	101,33	3,5	3,5
12	101,90	3,5	3,5	101,82	3,6	3,5
2006: 1	101,67	3,0	3,4	101,70	3,2	3,5
2	100,07	3,1	3,4	100,47	3,2	3,5
3	102,82	3,3	3,4	102,82	3,3	3,5
4	103,84	3,5	3,4	103,57	3,3	3,5
5	103,96	3,3	3,4	103,73	3,1	3,5
6	103,90	3,4	3,5	103,62	3,2	3,5
7	103,02	3,9	3,5	102,95	3,8	3,5
8	101,96	3,4	3,5	102,19	3,5	3,5
9	104,05	3,1	3,4	103,82	2,9	3,4
10	104,73	3,1	3,4	104,40	2,8	3,3
11	104,57	3,2	3,3	104,30	2,9	3,3
12	105,16	3,2	3,3	104,78	2,9	3,2
2007: 1	104,76	3,0	3,3	104,48	2,7	3,2
2	103,11	3,0	3,3	103,15	2,7	3,1
3	105,66	2,8	3,3	105,52	2,6	3,0
4	106,50	2,6	3,2	106,19	2,5	3,0
5	106,69	2,6	3,1	106,45	2,6	2,9
6	106,64	2,6	3,1	106,35	2,6	2,9
7	105,83	2,7	3,0	105,55	2,5	2,8
8	104,75	2,7	2,9	104,77	2,5	2,7
9	107,11	2,9	2,9	106,86	2,9	2,7
10	107,86	3,0	2,9	107,63	3,1	2,7
11	108,67	3,9	2,9	108,40	3,9	2,8
12	109,22	3,9	3,0	108,85	3,9	2,9
2008 1	108,85	3,9	3,1	108,55	3,9	3,0
2	107,80	4,5	3,2	107,73	4,4	3,1

DIAGRAMS



Note : MUICP February 2008 provisional data.



BACKGROUND NOTES

The Harmonized Index of Consumer Prices is compiled by the National Statistical Service of Greece, in parallel to the national Consumer Price Index.

The Harmonized Indices of Consumer Prices (HICPs) are calculated in each Member – State of the European Union for the purposes of European Comparisons, as required under the Article 121 of the Treaty of Amsterdam (109j of Treaty of European Union). The HICPs are designed for international comparison of consumer price inflation.

The HICPs are the basis for compiling the European Index of Consumer Prices (EICP) and the Monetary Union Index of Consumer Prices (MUICP), which provide the official measures of inflation in the EU27 and the Euro-zone Member States, respectively.

The characteristic of the HICPs is that they must be compiled according to several technical measures, as these are defined in the EC Regulations.

The main technical measures are, the use of a common classification of items (COICOP/HICP), the selection of the computation formula for the individual indices, the geographic and population coverage of the whole country, the annual renewal of weights, the item coverage and compilation of specific sub-indices, the minimum standards for price collection and sampling and the adjustments due to quality differences of items.

The expenditures used for the calculation of the weights of items entered into the computation of the HICPs include the expenditures of private households, the expenditures of foreign visitors and the expenditures of individuals living in collective households, while the expenditures of residents whilst in a foreign country are excluded. The weights of items are updated every January by using the prices of the previous December.

It is noted that the HICP is not a cost of living index, is not applied by a country for domestic use such as indexation or wage bargaining and is not intended to replace the national Consumer Price Index.

Between the national CPI and the Greek HICP there are similarities and differences.

The main similarities between the two indices are the following:

- Same base year (2005=100,0).
- Same geographic coverage, given that both indices refer to the whole country.
- Same price collection cities.
- Same item coverage.
- Use of the same classification of items (COICOP/HICP).
- Same outlets for the price collection.
- Same frequency of price collection
- Same price data.
- Use of the same formula for the computation of the individual indices for the price collection cities (geometric mean).
- Same treatment of the seasonality of items and of reduced and missing prices.
- Same dates of release of the indices.

The main differences between the two indices are the following:

- Different population coverage, given that the Greek HICP covers all consumption expenditures which take place on the economic territory of Greece, independently of the category of consumer, while the national CPI covers the consumption expenditures, which take place on the economic territory of Greece and abroad, of the private households only.
- Different weights of items because of the use of different data sources for the calculation of the weights and of the different frequency of renewal and updating of the weights of items.
- The weights of items of the HICP are price updated every January to the previous December prices. Such an update of the weights of items is not anticipated and it does not take place in the national CPI.

For further information on data:

Maria Stavropoulou
Economic and Short-Term Indicators Division
Tel:0030 210 4852125
Fax:0030 210 4852724

stavropm@statistics.gr