

HARMONISED INDEX OF CONSUMER PRICE

March 2026

Inflation measured by the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) in March 2026 was 2.6 %.

The largest increase in prices was recorded in the group "Recreation, sport and culture" with 6.4 %, followed by "Insurance and financial services" with 3.6 %, "Personal care, social protection and miscellaneous goods and services" with 3.4 %, "Alcoholic beverages and tobacco" with 3.2 %, "Restaurants and accommodation services" with 3.0 %, "Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels", "Transport", and "Education services" with 2.7 % each, "Furniture, household equipment and routine household maintenance" with 2.3 %, "Food and non-alcoholic beverages" with 1.7 %, "Clothing and footwear" with 1.6 %, and "Health" and "Information and communication" with 1.4 % each.

In March 2026, consumer prices increased by 0.9 % compared with the previous month. The monthly increase was mainly influenced by the rise in prices of the group "Transport" by 2.8 %, followed by "Restaurants and accommodation services" with 1.3 %, "Food and non-alcoholic beverages" with 0.9 %, "Alcoholic beverages and tobacco" and "Information and communication" with 0.7 % each, "Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels", "Health", and "Education services" with 0.5 % each, and "Clothing and footwear", "Recreation, sport and culture", "Insurance and financial services", and "Personal care, social protection and miscellaneous goods and services" with 0.4 % each. On the other hand, prices in the group "Furniture, household equipment and routine household maintenance" decreased by 0.2 %.

FIG. 1 ANNUAL CHANGE OF HICP BY COUNTRIES, MARCH 2026¹

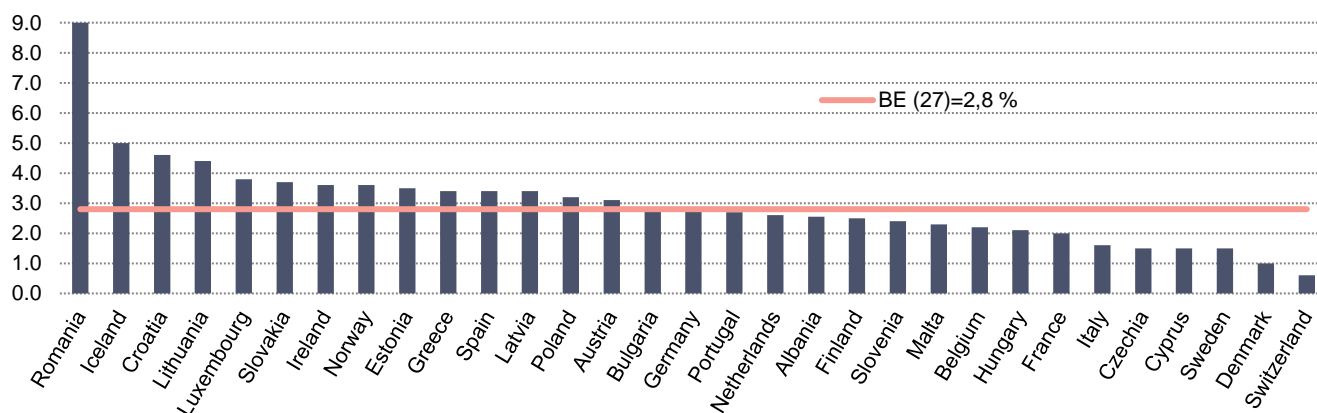
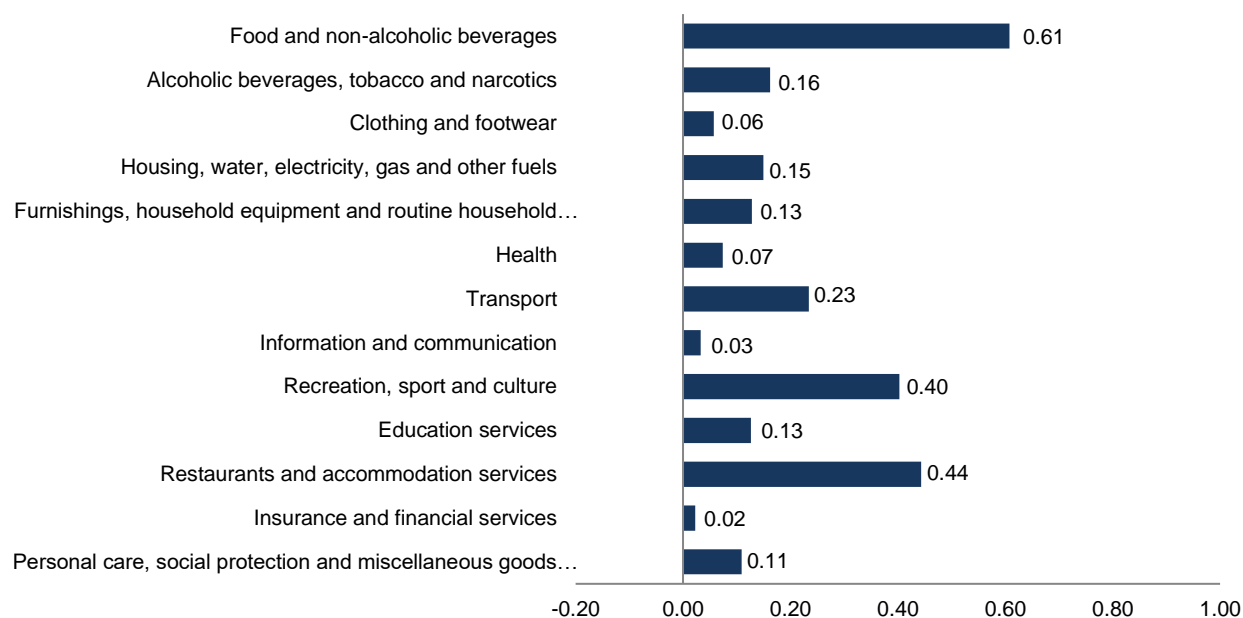


FIG. 2 CONTRIBUTION OF MAIN GROUPS IN ANNUAL RATE

¹ INSTAT publishes unrounded indices, while EUROSTAT publishes indices rounded to two decimal places. This may lead to differences between them due to the different rounding methods used by each institution.

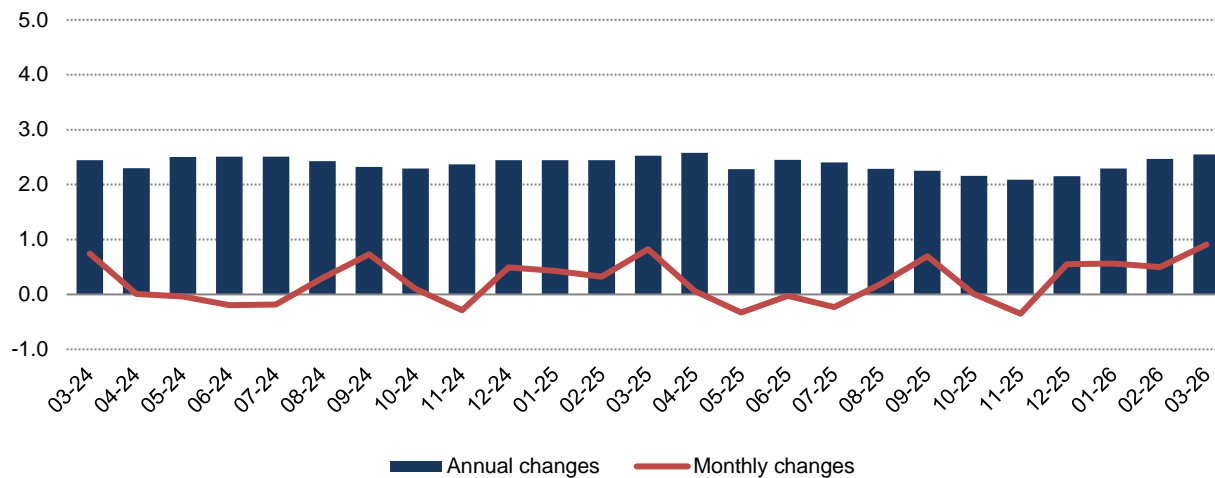


TAB. 1 RATES OF CHANGES (%) MEASURED BY HARMONISED INDEX OF CONSUMER PRICE

| COICOP | Divisions | Weights | March/2026 ² | 03-26/1 Year 2025 | 03-26/03-25 | 03-26/02-25 |
|--------|---|---------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | | | 1000 | 102.7 | 2.7 | 2.6 |
| 01 | Food and non-alcoholic beverages | 344.6 | 103.4 | 3.4 | 1.7 | 0.9 |
| 02 | Alcoholic beverages, tobacco and narcotics | 51.9 | 102.7 | 2.7 | 3.2 | 0.7 |
| 03 | Clothing and footwear | 36.9 | 101.3 | 1.3 | 1.6 | 0.4 |
| 04 | Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels | 57.9 | 101.8 | 1.8 | 2.7 | 0.5 |
| 05 | Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance | 56.5 | 101.6 | 1.6 | 2.3 | -0.2 |
| 06 | Health | 53.5 | 101.0 | 1.0 | 1.4 | 0.5 |
| 07 | Transport | 82.7 | 103.3 | 3.3 | 2.7 | 2.8 |
| 08 | Information and communication | 24.5 | 101.1 | 1.1 | 1.4 | 0.7 |
| 09 | Recreation, sport and culture | 63.9 | 104.4 | 4.4 | 6.4 | 0.4 |
| 10 | Education services | 46.1 | 102.0 | 2.0 | 2.7 | 0.5 |
| 11 | Restaurants and accommodation services | 144.5 | 102.4 | 2.4 | 3.0 | 1.3 |
| 12 | Insurance and financial services | 6.6 | 103.5 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 0.4 |
| 13 | Personal care, social protection and miscellaneous goods and services | 30.5 | 102.8 | 2.8 | 3.4 | 0.4 |

² 2025=100

FIG. 3 ANNUAL AND MONTHLY RATES OF HICP

**Note to users:**

Detailed monthly and annual data by groups are available in INSTAT's statistical database: [Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices](#), as well as in the tables section of the website under the topic: [Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices](#)

Methodology

Methodological changes

Starting from February 2026, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is calculated according to the ECOICOP 2018 classification. The transition to the new classification includes the restructuring of basket items and the reclassification of certain products. The structure of ECOICOP ver. 2 consists of 13 main divisions, further detailed into groups, classes, and subclasses. The implementation of this classification is in line with Regulation (EU) 2024/3159, ensuring full harmonisation with European and international statistical practices.

The index reference period has been changed from December 2020 = 100 to 2025 = 100.

Additionally, in January, as every year, the Consumer Price Index is accompanied by some methodological changes in accordance with the international methodology for compiling this indicator, which consist of:

- Updating of weights: The weights of goods and services have been updated based on National Accounts data – Household Final Monetary Consumption Expenditure.
- Updating of the list of goods and services: The basket consists of 410 goods and services.
- Updating of the list of outlets where prices are collected.

Definitions

The Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) measures the change in the level of retail prices of goods and services from the perspective of the expenditure structure of consumers (both domestic and foreign) for final consumption within the territory of Albania. The HICP is used to monitor price developments across European countries, enabling comparisons of inflation rates between countries and serving as the official measure of inflation for the European Central Bank, ensuring price stability within the Economic and Monetary Union.

The annual change measures the change in the price index between the current month and the same month of the previous year. This change reflects current price developments but may also be influenced by one-off effects in any given month.

The monthly change measures the change in the price index between the current month and the previous month. This indicator is sensitive to seasonal effects.

The 12-month average change measures the change in the average price index of the last 12 months compared with the average of the previous 12 months.

Comparison between CPI and HICP

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) are designed to measure changes in the average level of prices paid for the consumption of goods and services by all private and collective households, as well as by tourists in Albania. Both CPI and HICP are used as measures of consumer inflation.

Similarities between CPI and HICP

- Purpose
Both CPI and HICP measure changes in the average price level of a fixed basket of consumer goods and services.
- Classification system
Both indices use the same classification of goods and services – the European Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose (ECOICOP Version 2).
- Expenditure and data sources
Only expenditures within the territory of Albania are included. The main sources of expenditure data (weights) are the Household Budget Survey and National Accounts – Household Final Monetary Consumption Expenditure.
- Price data
Both CPI and HICP are calculated based on prices collected from the same outlets, use the same product classification, and follow the same index compilation methodology.
- Reference period (base)
Both CPI and HICP are calculated using 2025 = 100 as the index reference period.
- Methodology
Both indices follow the methodology defined in European Commission Regulation (EC) No 2016/792 on HICP, developed by Eurostat in cooperation with the National Statistical Institutes of EU Member States.

Differences between CPI and HICP

- Measure of consumer inflation
 - CPI is the official measure of inflation in Albania.
 - HICP is used to monitor price developments across European countries and to compare inflation rates between them.
- Product coverage
 - CPI includes 411 items
 - HICP includes 410 items

- Coverage and source of expenditure data (weights)
 - CPI covers only the expenditures of Albanian private households, both inside and outside the country.
 - HICP covers all expenditures made within the country by all households, including private and collective households, as well as tourists in Albania.

- Weights
 - CPI weights are expressed per 100
 - HICP weights are expressed per 1000

| COICOP | Divisions | Weights | |
|--------|---|------------|-------------|
| | | CPI | IHICP |
| | Total | 100 | 1000 |
| 01. | Food and non-alcoholic beverages | 34,1 | 344,6 |
| 02. | Alcoholic beverages, tobacco and narcotics | 5,0 | 51,9 |
| 03. | Clothing and footwear | 3,8 | 36,9 |
| 04. | Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels | 20,2 | 57,9 |
| 05. | Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance | 7,0 | 56,5 |
| 06. | Health | 3,2 | 53,5 |
| 07. | Transport | 6,4 | 82,7 |
| 08. | Information and communication | 3,6 | 24,5 |
| 09. | Recreation, sport and culture | 2,0 | 63,9 |
| 10. | Education services | 3,0 | 46,1 |
| 11. | Restaurants and accommodation services | 5,7 | 144,5 |
| 12. | Insurance and financial services | 1,5 | 6,6 |
| 13. | Personal care, social protection and miscellaneous goods and services | 4,5 | 30,5 |