

# Advisory Panel on Consumer Prices - Stakeholder

13 February 2026



# Scanner data – comms plan

January		February / March	25 March
Impact analysis	Scanner data blog	Trail changes in the CPI bulletin	Scanner data introduced into live production (Feb index)
Plans for the microdata	Economic Forum	Update to the basket of goods and services	Updated Technical Manual (and minor updates to standing documents)
Accessible explanation of the methodology	<a href="#">Webinar on introducing scanner data into CPI</a>	Updates to the weights	Targeted social media, including video
Commonly asked questions	Correspondence on RPI changes		Targeted stakeholder emails
			Media note

# ONS progress against OSR recommendations

Recommendation	ONS actions
1. Overall picture for non-technical expert users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. January publications, webinar</li><li>ii. March Technical Manual update, QMI</li></ul>
2. Understanding and mitigating for transformation risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Ongoing retailer engagement and escalation plans</li><li>ii. QAAD for grocery scanner data (longer term)</li></ul>
3. Opportunities to expand international engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Beginning to identify further engagement opportunities</li></ul>
4. Prioritisation after implementation of grocery scanner data in March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Role of APCP and Prices prioritisation board</li><li>ii. Published development plans (for Prices and Economic Statistics)</li></ul>
5. Mitigate for reduced availability of microdata	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Published details of new outputs in January</li><li>ii. March and summer – begin publication of new outputs</li></ul>

# Basket quality review

**Chris Payne, Stephen Burgess &  
Stefan Ubovic**

Office for National Statistics

13/02/2026



# Development Plan Updates – **HIGH** priority items

## Grocery Scanner Data

We will introduce “scanner data” for approximately 50% of the grocery market with the February 2026 index, which will be published on 25 March 2026. Instead of collecting 25,000 prices per month directly from shops by price collectors, we will use approximately 300 million price points derived from sales of over a billion units of products per month, collected directly from supermarket scanners at the checkouts or online.

## Removal of Legacy Platforms and Systems

During 2026, the central data collection will begin transitioning from legacy technology to a cloud-based strategic platform. Feasibility work will also begin into remaining legacy improvements.

## Classification of individual consumption by purpose (COICOP) 2018 implementation

We are currently in a discovery phase for consumer prices, working to understand the main requirements for COICOP implementation. This includes close collaboration with other outputs, particularly the Living Costs and Food Survey (LCF) and HHFCE, to ensure a coordinated and aligned approach to implementation. The delivery date has been updated in the latest iteration of the ESP milestones, targeting March 2029 as go live.

# Development Plan Updates – **MEDIUM** priority items

## Seasonally adjusted Consumer Prices Index (CPI)

We commissioned a feasibility study on the most appropriate methodology to use in the production of seasonally adjusted consumer prices inflation by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR). The project has now been successfully handed over to us, where development work to implement the adjustments are underway. We aim to produce a monthly seasonally adjusted set of indices in the second half of 2026.

## Developing the Household Costs Indices (HCIs)

We now publish monthly HCIs data in our quarterly Household Costs Indices for UK household groups bulletin. The HCIs are currently classed as "Official statistics in development" so future work will focus on seeking official statistic accreditation.

## Developing measures of accuracy for consumer price statistics

In 2021, an academic review on producing standard errors for consumer price indices was published, *Estimating Sampling Errors in Consumer Price Indices* (Wiley Online Library). We plan to publish further work in collaboration with the University of Southampton, including:

- interim estimates of sampling variance for consumer price inflation statistics
- an academic paper on these estimates
- extending variance estimation to new data sources such as rail fares, second-hand cars, grocery scanner data and rental microdata

## Expanding the use of administrative data

We have successfully incorporated administrative data in several categories across consumer prices. This workstream looks at where we can continue to expand the use of these data sources. Our current priority is for a feasibility study into using our new data source for used cars to expand the coverage of electric and hybrid second hand vehicles

# Continuous Improvement

Alongside the existing planned complex changes, we continually review the quality and relevance of our consumer price statistics. This work informs our priorities for future development, either as part of ongoing maintenance of our statistics or potential future development workstreams. In setting these priorities, we consider a range of factors, including: stakeholder feedback, data quality and associated risks, efficiency gains and resources available

In March 2025, we set up a quarterly internal delivery board to prioritise continuous improvement work across consumer prices. As part of this, we have commissioned ongoing reviews ("deep dives") to identify areas for improvement in data collection and methodology of consumer price inflation.

As part of continuous improvement, we are also in the process of updating our Consumer Prices Technical Manual to be published in March 2026. These updates aim to ensure our documentation reflects current practices and supports transparency and confidence in our methods.

# The CPI Deep Dive

## Progress Update and Next Steps



# Progress update and next steps

**Background:** The CPI Deep Dive was presented to the Stakeholder Panel on 11 July 2025. The Panel welcomed the due diligence carried out by the ONS. It was agreed that the ONS will keep the Panel updated on progress and further discussions.

## Today's agenda:

1. RAG update on recommendations from the CPI Deep Dive : Part I
2. Airfares and telecom's as potential workstreams for CPI Deep Dive : Part II
3. Discussion and feedback

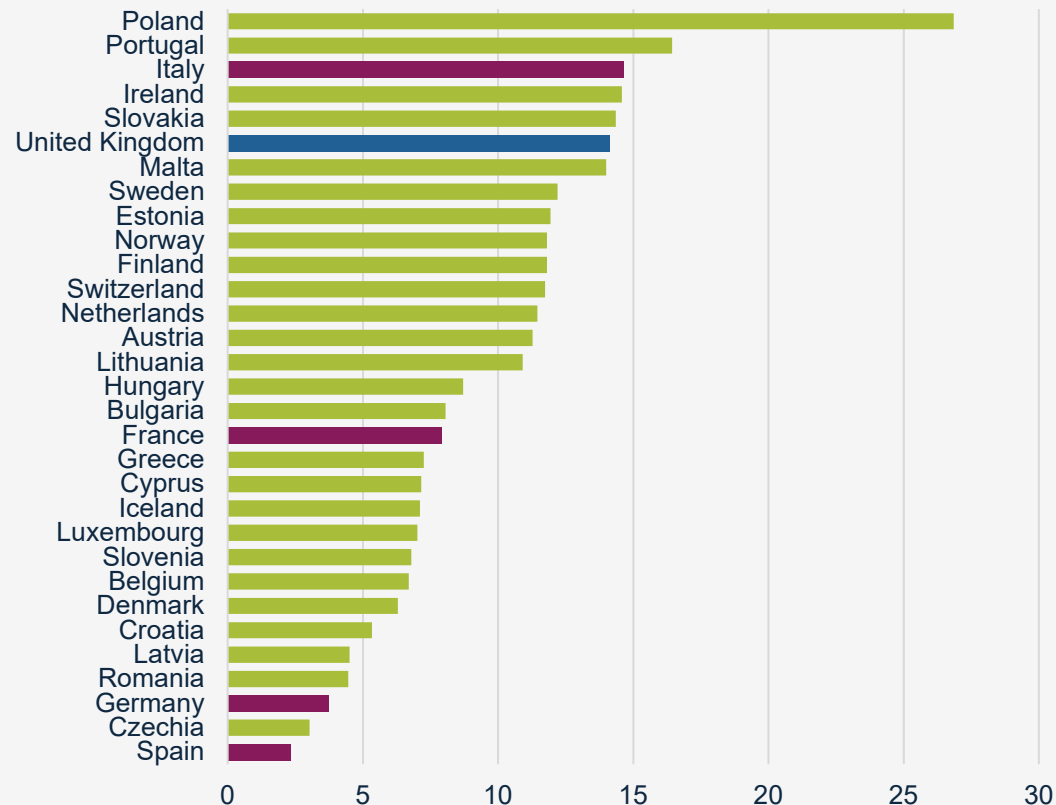
# Progress update on the previous Deep Dive

Recommendation	RAG update
1. Video games – increase frequency and sample size	Implemented improvements
2. Video games – track only original releases	Implemented improvements
3. Revisit ADS for air fares (and possibly hotels)	Exploring different options and costs
4. Develop index day / holiday adjustment	Embedded into SA workstream
5. Expand sample coverage for health items	Postponed to “waiting room”
6. Explore PHIN as possible ADS (health)	Postponed to “waiting room”
7. Review sources for Wales / Scotland / NI once per year	Exploring resources and timings
8. Review market shares and structures once per year	Setting up Pulse Survey
9. Item-level information readily available	Setting up Pulse Survey
10. Carry out a similar review in future	Deep Dive: Part II has been commissioned

Notes: RAG denotes Red, Amber, Green

# CPI airfares: Exploring a range of options

CPI/HICP passenger travel by air, inflation volatility



**Notes:** Volatility measured as the standard deviation of 1-month change in the annual rate of inflation over 2002-2019; **Source:** Eurostat, ONS

## Examples of higher-cost options:

- OPTION 1: Alternative data sources
- OPTION 2: Increased price collection

## Examples of lower-cost options:

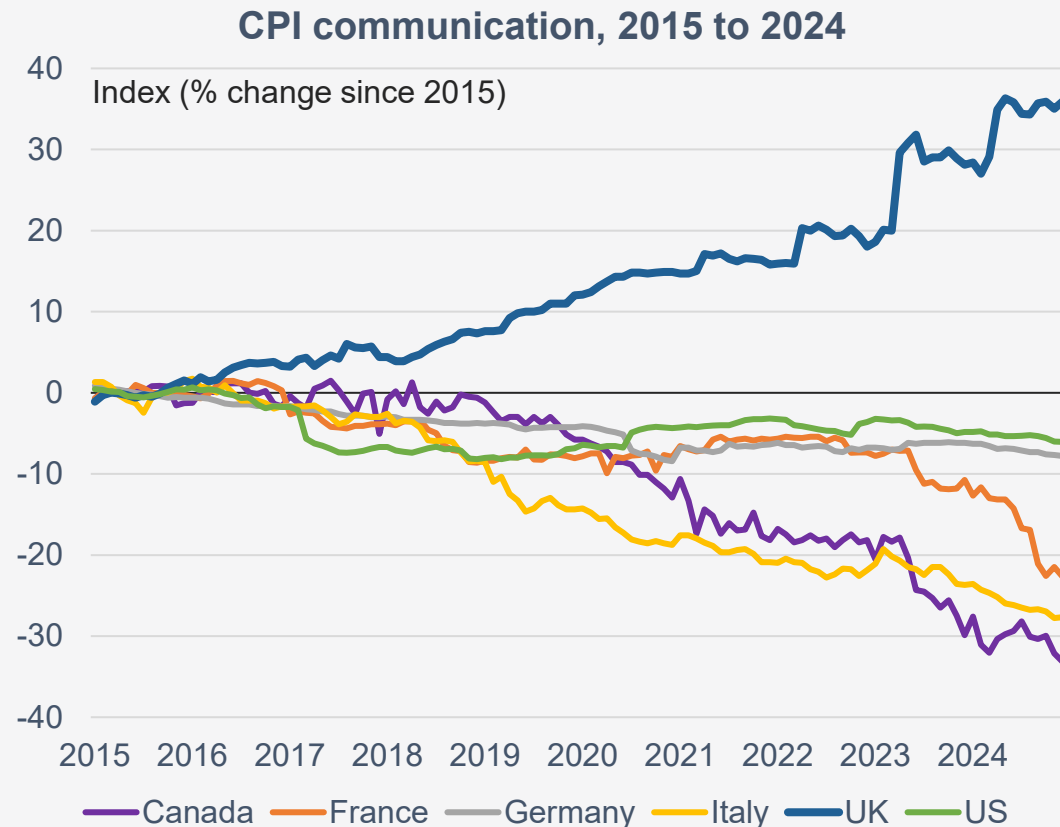
- OPTION 3: Hedonic adjustment
- OPTION 4: Smoothing factor
- OPTION 5: Changes to collection rules
- OPTION 6: Payment approach

**Proposed decision tree:** Only proceed with high-cost options if low-cost options are deemed unsuitable

## Next steps:

- Explore proto-types for low-cost options
- Reach out to Destatis and INE about Option 1
- Any decisions depend on RESOURCES and COSTINGS

# CPI comm's: UK at odds with international trends



Source: OECD, ONS

## Examples of potential drivers of the wedge:

- *Regulatory and market conditions:* UK-specific factors, including inflation-linked contract uplifts and the reintroduction of roaming charges post-Brexit, have contributed to upward price pressures. EU markets operate under stricter regulatory frameworks, such as the European Electronic Communications Code, which limits such practices.
- *Methodological differences:* While UK CPI and European indices use COICOP classifications, the UK CPI includes a broader range of items (eg, smartwatches) and applies varied collection and quality adjustment methods. Approaches in the EU often rely on “cheapest offer” techniques, which assume consumers can substitute between packages from month to month, rather than tracking a fixed product.

We hope to undertake additional research on this topic as part of the second CPI Deep Dive, pending on resources.

# Quality and risks



# April 2025 VED error: update on lessons learned

- Following the discovery of an error in the Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) component of CPI in April 2025 data, Prices division have worked closely with ONS's Quality and Improvement Division, who have recently completed a thorough internal review of the error. This section briefs the panel on its key findings.
- We take the error and the report's recommendations very seriously, while noting that errors of this magnitude have been rare. The report highlighted several contributing factors including the complexity of CPI and tight delivery times, and reliance on some manual processes with centrally collected data.
- Here is a high-level summary of the recommended mitigations (not exhaustive):

Summary of recommendation	Prices Division response
Enhancing communication and engagement with admin data suppliers, including clarifying expectations and using bespoke data handover templates	Action already taken for DfT and in the process of being rolled out to other admin sources on a proportionate basis.
Strengthen quality assurance and verification activities	Validation for VED has now been brought into line with that for other central items. We are raising awareness of quality best practice in Prices Division through masterclasses and are reviewing our processes for Curiosity meetings.
Collaborate with HMT and BoE to get policy impact assessments ahead of time as additional layer of assurance	We were already doing this, but we will push for further examples to be shared. We have appreciated HMT collaboration.
Review the division's revisions and corrections policy to reduce confusion around publication of errors	We took a clarified policy through our advisory panel last September and published it on 23 <sup>rd</sup> December.
Build more automated validation checks and make greater use of AI	Early conversations are underway but this depends on what is prioritised during ONS business planning for 26/27 and beyond

# Brief update on risks – panel request

- As part of ONS’s quality framework, individual production areas are expected to report regularly on risks to output quality, as well as on issues (i.e. risks which have already crystallised).
- This means we already have a framework internally for monitoring risks, including their likelihood (1-5) and potential impact (1-4). The combined score is the product of these.
- The table below shows the highest-ranked risks on *consumer* prices (scores >12), and recent updates.
- If the panel feel this is useful, we can continue to update at future meetings as a standing item.

Risk description	Owner	Current assessed likelihood	Current assessed impact	Combined score	Recent or expected updates
Risks to timely data supply from retailers as we learn how to use new data in regular production	Mike	5	4	20	Several controls are in place including validation pipelines, regular meetings with the retailers and knowledge-sharing within Prices division
Key person risk	Stephen	4	4	16	Econ Stats Plan recruitment has helped to some extent. Existing controls include desk instructions and succession plans
Future changes to deliveries by suppliers of new granular data (eg: rail fares)	Stephen	5	3	15	Current controls include regular engagement so that we understand forthcoming changes in advance
Manual steps in production (eg: running multiple pipelines in sequence, reliance on different spreadsheets)	Stephen	3	4	12	A recent error on package holidays was partly due to this. Good progress is being made on pipeline upgrades and reducing Ingres dependency, and further automation is being discussed as part of current ONS business planning
Exposure to legacy SAS system with limited central support	Stephen	3	4	12	This is used in some inputs to RPI, but we expect to be off SAS by April, at which point we can downgrade or remove this risk.

# Household Costs Indices

**Chris Payne**

Office for National Statistics

13/02/2026



# Household Costs Indices

- **Revisions policy for the HCIs and future plans:**  
We're planning to cover this in more detail at the April Panel meeting
- **Annual round for 2026:**  
Improvements to processes and quality assurance
- **Also:**  
Learning from Northern Ireland CPI development

# ADS update

**Mike Hardie**

Office for National Statistics

13/02/2026



# Scanner data update

- Implementation of grocery scanner data remains on track for March.
- Recent activity has centred on working with production teams to ensure a clear understanding of the new business and quality assurance processes.
- On the 28th we released a wide set of materials, including the impact analysis, GEKS-T explainer, blog, microdata update, and a Q&A document.
- Media coverage of the announcement has been very positive, with stakeholders recognising the change as a significant improvement.
- We also held a webinar with 160 attendees and received over 30 questions, for which written responses have now been published.

# Communicating ONS statistics on the website

**David Beckett**

Office for National Statistics

13/02/2026



# CPI tables

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16	<a href="#">Table 3</a>	<a href="#">CPIH: Detailed figures by divisions, groups and classes</a>
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18	<a href="#">Table 5a, 5b</a>	<a href="#">A breakdown of the differences between CPIH/CPI and RPI</a>
19	<a href="#">Table 6a, 6b, 6c</a>	<a href="#">CPIH: All items index, 12month % change and 1month % change</a>
20	<a href="#">Table 7</a>	<a href="#">CPIH: Detailed indices: the latest 13 months</a>
21	<a href="#">Table 8</a>	<a href="#">CPIH: Detailed changes: Latest 13 months 12 months % change</a>
22	<a href="#">Table 9</a>	<a href="#">CPIH: Weights: 2008-2025</a>
23	<a href="#">Table 10</a>	<a href="#">CPIH: Contributions to changes in all items</a>
24	<a href="#">Table 11</a>	<a href="#">CPIH: Detailed goods &amp; services indices: the latest 13 months</a>
25	<a href="#">Table 12</a>	<a href="#">CPIH: Detailed goods &amp; services: the latest 13 month 12 months % change</a>
26	<a href="#">Table 13</a>	<a href="#">CPIH: Detailed goods &amp; services: Weights 2008-2025</a>
27	<a href="#">Table 14</a>	<a href="#">CPI: Detailed figures by division</a>
28	<a href="#">Table 15a, 15b, 15c</a>	<a href="#">CPI: All items index, 12 month % change and 1 month % change</a>
29	<a href="#">Table 16</a>	<a href="#">CPI: Detailed indices: the latest 13 months</a>
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35	<a href="#">Table 22</a>	<a href="#">CPI: Detailed goods &amp; services: Weights 2008-2025</a>
36	<a href="#">Table 23</a>	<a href="#">RPI: All items index: 1947-2025</a>
37	<a href="#">Table 24</a>	<a href="#">RPI: All items: 12 months % change 1948-2025</a>
38	<a href="#">Table 25</a>	<a href="#">RPI: All items: 1 month % change 1947-2025</a>
39	<a href="#">Table 26</a>	<a href="#">RPI: Detailed figures by division latest month</a>
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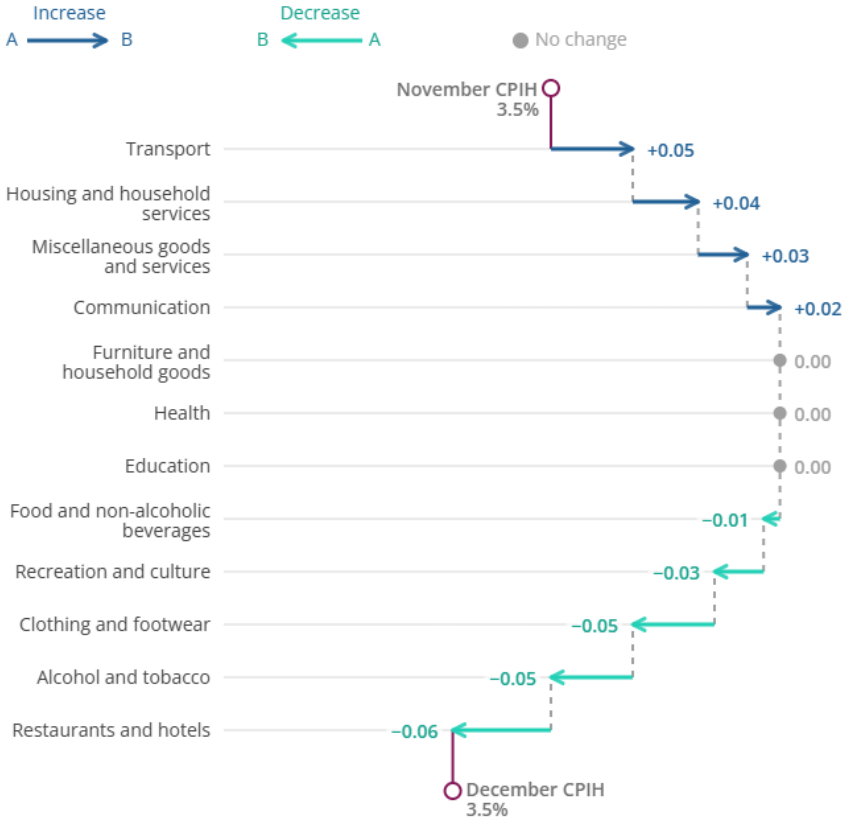
[Table 6a, 6b, 6c](#)

[Table 7](#)

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# Waterfall charts

Figure 2: Contributions to change in the annual CPIH inflation rate, UK, between November and December 2024



Source: Consumer price inflation from the Office for National Statistics

# Any other business



13/02/2026