

Advisory Panel on Consumer Prices - Stakeholder

24 April 2026



Basket quality review

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Development Plan Updates – **HIGH** priority items

Grocery Scanner Data

In March 2026, we introduced “scanner data” for approximately 50% of the grocery market into CPI. Instead of collecting 25,000 prices per month directly from shops by price collectors, we now 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. We also published updated technical guidance in line with OSR recommendations.

Some outstanding work is ongoing to produce further outputs from the microdata, and hand over business processes.

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 has been completed for remaining legacy improvements, which we will take forward as resource allows.

Classification of individual consumption by purpose (COICOP) 2018 implementation

We are currently in the 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. We have high level discovery document completed and are working multiple options papers to refine the scope of the work within Prices.

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.

An update was provided to the Technical Advisory Panel, setting out some further technical considerations and an update on progress.

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 focus is on incorporating structural changes in the Rail Delivery Group dataset.

CPI Deep Dive: Part II

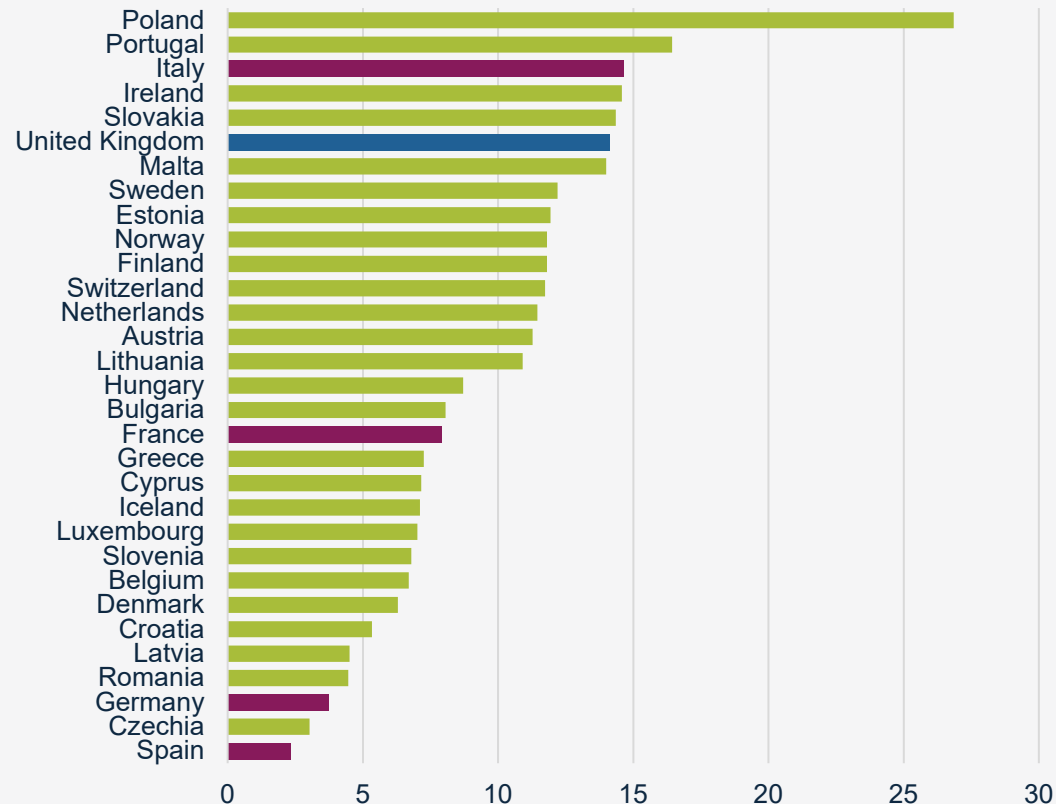
Background: The first CPI Deep Dive identified potential areas for data collection and methodology improvements. Several recommendations such as video games and hotels were marked as “quick wins” and implemented with the 2026 annual round. Other initiatives were marked for “continuous development” and rolled into Part II, where we aim to implement additional improvements with the 2027 annual round.

Progress and next steps:

- We have proposed fares and telecommunication prices as next areas for development at the previous stakeholder panel, where there was interest in developing these workstreams.
- We have now resourced these workflows with a combination of economists and statisticians familiar with prices collection and methodology.
- We aim to take a proportionate and pragmatic approach of incremental improvement where possible, based on comparison of best practices with other NSI's.

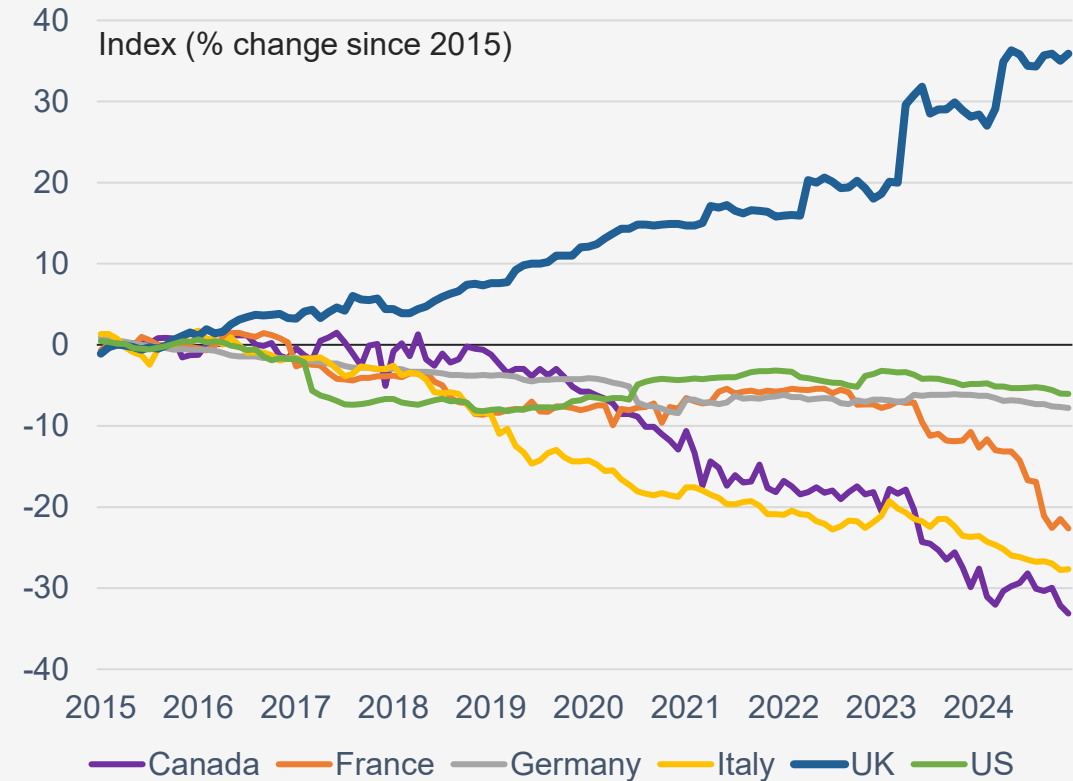
CPI Deep Dive: Airfares and Telecomm's

CPI/HICP airfares, 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

CPI communication, 2015 to 2024



Source: OECD, ONS

Prioritisation framework

- The Devereux Review provided a clear steer to prioritise the quality of core economic statistics.
- Within Prices Division, we have established two governance boards to manage the division's portfolio of work: a quarterly Prioritisation Board and a monthly Delivery Group. Feedback from the Panel can be considered through the Prioritisation Board.
- The division currently has a relatively settled set of priorities, consistent with discussions previously held with the Panel. However, the design of the Prioritisation Board allows for flexibility, enabling resources to be re-prioritised in response to emerging issues where necessary.

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 >9), and recent updates.

Risk description	Current assessed likelihood	Current assessed impact	Combined score	Recent or expected updates	2025 Combined score
Risks to timely data supply from retailers as we learn how to use new data in regular production	5	4	20	Several controls are in place including validation pipelines, regular meetings with the retailers and knowledge-sharing within Prices division	20
Key person risk	4	4	16	Existing controls include desk instructions and succession plans. Considering how the structure of the division will work going forward with a focus on single points of knowledge	16
Future changes to deliveries by suppliers of new granular data (eg: rail fares)	5	3	15	Current controls include regular engagement so that we understand forthcoming changes in advance and ensuring plans are in place to assess the impact of any changes with clear next steps	15
Manual steps in production (eg: running multiple pipelines in sequence, reliance on different spreadsheets)	3	4	12	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	12
Risk of delays to established administrative and survey data sources or changes in reporting, potentially leading to low quality data or missed during a production round	3	3	9	Current control is to incorporate automated data checks on the data with appropriate flags for critical issues. Following the VED error, the formal error review published end of Nov 2025 sets out some key requirements for Prices to address in the quality assurance of administrative data. The Central Spreadsheets options paper includes how we will address some of the centrally collected items and includes options on how we would automate certain aspects	9

Scanner data launch reflections

Michael Hardie

Office for National Statistics

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Scanner data implementation

- Introduced scanner data into UK consumer price inflation statistics for the first time
- Scanner data now covers around 50% of the grocery market, from the February 2026 index
- Scanner data will be included in the Household Costs Indices (HCIs) from 28 May
- Published an overview video and Podcast
- Consumer Price Indices Technical Manual updated to reflect new data sources
- Changes to microdata: Regional consumption segment indices and weights and counts of indicator marker codes (e.g. sales and recoveries)
- Very positive feedback from a range of different stakeholders

Panel members are invited to provide feedback on the implementation of scanner data and related outputs, and to highlight any further work required over the coming months.