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Information note

Istat

2014

CONSUMER PRICE INDICES

Basket, weight structure and survey updating

■ As every year, Istat updates the list of products included in the consumer price index basket. The updating takes into account the novelty emerged in the household spending habits and enriched, in some cases, the range of products which represent consolidated consumption.

■ The 2014 basket for the Italian consumer price indices for the whole nation (NIC) and for blue and white-collar households (FOI) is made up of 1,447 products (1,429 in 2013), which are grouped into 614 representative items (603 in 2013).

■ The 2014 basket for the Italian harmonized index of consumer price (HICP) is made up of 1,463 (1,451 in 2013) products, which are grouped into 619 representative items (in 2012 there were 608).

■ Compared with 2013 the items *Packaged grated cheese*, *Packaged cream cheese*, *Coffee pods or capsules, Machine for coffee pods or capsules*, *Ecological bags for organic waste* and *Electronic cigarettes and refills* have been included in the basket for the first time.

■ Collection of prices of "*Newspaper on-line*" will be added to that of *Newspaper*, as well as "*Hybrid Notebook*" – which can be used as a tablet – has been included in the representative item *Notebook*.

■ The items *Organic yoghurt*, *Women's suit* and *Audiovisual or IT repair equipment* has been dropped from the basket: the first two ones have been replaced respectively by *Probiotic yoghurt* and *Women's dress*.

■ In 2014, data coming from chief towns of 80 provinces are processed to estimate monthly inflation (they were 82 in 2013); the survey coverage, measured in terms of provincial population is equal to 83.3% (84.0% in 2013)

■ Other 11 chief towns will collaborate to the territorial survey with regard to a subset of products (local tariffs and some services). The weight of this subset of products on the NIC basket is 6.2%. For these products, the coverage of survey, measured in terms of provincial population, is 91.5%.

■ In the chief towns, prices are collected in more than 41,000 statistical units (including outlets, enterprises and institutions) and rents are observed for about 8,000 dwellings.

■ In total 595,600 price quotes are collected each month; 500,600 of them are collected locally by Municipal Offices of Statistics (MOS) using Tablet PCs and sent to Istat and 95,000 are collected directly by Istat (about 13,000 prices more than those collected in 2013, under the adoption of web scraping techniques for data collection on Internet).

■ In the weighting structure of the Consumer price index for the whole nation (NIC), the relative weights increased for the following divisions: *Food and non-alcoholic beverages*, *Miscellaneous goods and services*, *Health*, *Restaurants and hotels* and, to a limited extent, *Recreation and culture* and *Education*. In contrast, the largest decreases of weights in absolute terms regarded *Transport*, *Clothing and footwear* and *Communication*.

■ Concerning the survey methodology, the following innovations have been carried out: the systematic use of new technique of data collection on Internet (web scraping); for the HICP, the discount survey has been extended to cases of "take 2 pay 1" and to reduction prices related to the possession of "loyalty cards" which can be acquired for free. Both these kinds of discounts were previously excluded from price collection.

■ In 2014, NIC indices by 43 COICOP groups at municipal and macro-area level will be released (they were already published at regional level).

■ For NIC, the price index of grocery and unprocessed food will be published. For HICP, the index for All-items, excluding energy, food & alcohol and tobacco will be released.

Next scheduled publication: February 2015

The 2014 basket of goods and services

The 2014 basket for the Italian consumer price index for the whole nation (NIC) and for blue and white-collar households (FOI) is made up of 1,447 *products* (1,429 in 2013), which are grouped into 614 *representative items* (in 2013 there were 603).The 2014 basket for the Italian harmonized consumer price index (HICP) is made up of 1,463 products, which are grouped into 619 representative items (in 2013 there were 608)[1].

It is worth to mention that the *products* are the most elementary level of consumption aggregation structure for which prices are collected once or twice a month. The *representative items* are, within the *Consumption segments*, the sample of products or groups of products for which consumer price indices are calculated monthly.

The updating operations of the 2014 basket are of different kind. With regard to operations which take more directly into account household expenditure behaviour changes, *Packaged grated cheese*, *Packaged cream cheese*, *Coffee pods or capsules, Machine for coffee pods or capsules* have been included in the basket (Table 1)*.* Likewise new items, such as for example *Probiotic yoghurt* and *Women's dress* have been added in order to better represent, within their consumption segments, the consumer spending patterns which were expressed until 2013 by items *Organic yoghurt* and *Women's suit*, now dropped.

As such revisions, within the consumption segment *Other non-durable household articles,* the item *Ecological bags for organic waste* have been added and within the segment *Other articles for smokers* the new item *Electronic cigarettes and refills* have been included.

Further, the basket has been enriched by the inclusion of new products, which have become more relevant in the household consumption such as "*Newspaper on-line*" (inside the representative item Newspaper), "*Hybrid notebook*"[2] (inside the item *Notebook*) and "*Camera large sensor*" (within the item *Digital camera*).

Among dropped representative items, in addition to *Organic yogurt* and *Women's suit*, there is *Audio-visual or IT repair equipment* for which the household expenditure is very low now. The exclusion of this representative item entails the elimination, within the classification scheme of basket products, of the consumption segment and of the two upper aggregations, class and sub-class, which are equally named.[3]

Aiming at improving coverage of several consumption aggregates (by the increase of number of items or products which represent them or by changes of already-existing items) the following operations have been done:

► the representative item *Fresh milk* is now composed by two products "*Fresh milk*" and "*High quality fresh milk*", while the item *UHT milk* is made up of "*UHT milk*" and "*UHT milk Lactaid*";

► the two new items *Swimming suit for babies* and *Trousers for babies*[4] have been included, respectively, in the consumption segments *Sportswear for children babies (3 to 13 years)* and *Other clothes for children (3 to 13 years)*;

► the new item *Running shoes for babies* has been included in the segment *Footwear for infants and children*;

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[1] The difference between the two baskets is due to two elements: in the HICP basket (but not in the NIC/FOI one), contribution to the NHS for pharmaceutical products, specialist practices and services of medical analysis (six items) are included whereas in the NIC/FOI basket (but not in the HICP one), Games of chance are included.

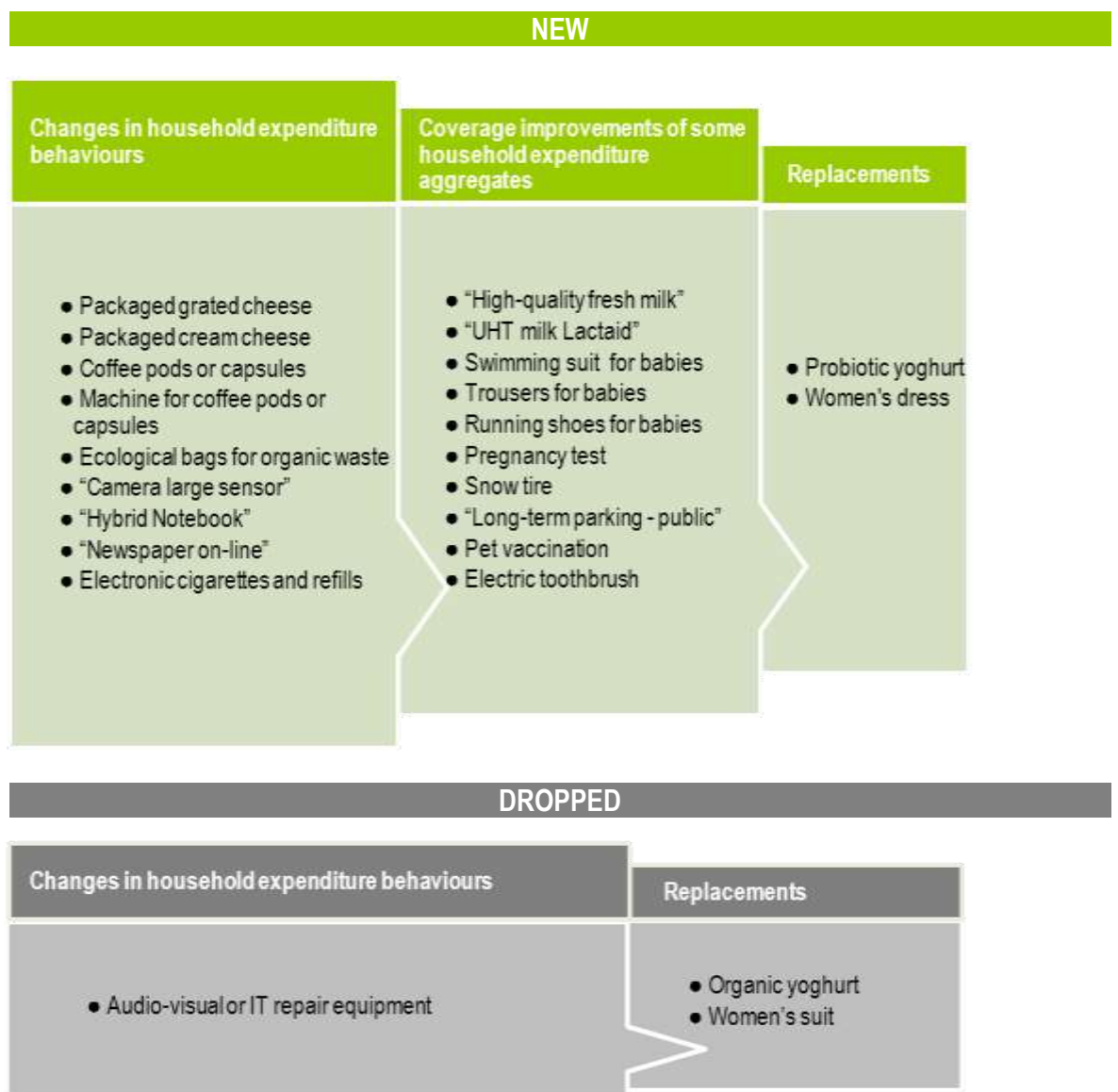[2] Notebook with detachable display, which can be turned into a tablet.

[3] To be stressed that the household expenditure for consumption of dropped items, although now insignificant, continues to be taken into account in the aggregate weight in which they were included. Likewise the weight of a consumption segment or of a sub-class/class of products, which are dropped, continues to be taken into account in the weight of upper aggregations. Furthermore, the exclusion of one or more representative items assumes the maintenance of an adequate coverage of the consumption segment, in which they were included, by the already-existing items or new items which become part of the basket; just as the exclusion of a product aggregation (consumption segment, sub-class, etc.) assumes the maintenance of an adequate coverage of upper aggregation, by the already-existing or new product aggregations.

[4] This item has been split into winter and summer product and so its price collection has been scheduled according to a specific seasonal calendar like what happens to the other seasonal clothing items.

► the item *Electric toothbrush* has been added in the segment *Electric razors, hair trimmers and other electric appliances for personal care*;

► within the segment *Toll facilities and parking meters*, the composite representative item *Parking* covers now the new product "*Long-term parking – public*", which is added to the already existing products "*Parking meter – public*" and "*Parking meter – private*";

► the new representative item *Pregnancy test* has been added in order to improve the coverage of the aggregate *Other medical products*;

► in the segment *Car tires*, the representative item *Snow tire* has been included;

► the new item *Pet vaccination* has been added in the consumption segment *Veterinary services for pets.*

TABLE 1. CONSUMER PRICE INDICES BASKET 2014: NEW AND DROPPED
Representative items and products

NEW

Changes in household expenditure behaviours	Coverage improvements of some household expenditure aggregates	Replacements
• Packaged grated cheese • Packaged cream cheese • Coffee pods or capsules • Machine for coffee pods or capsules • Ecological bags for organic waste • "Camera large sensor" • "Hybrid Notebook" • "Newspaper on-line" • Electronic cigarettes and refills	• "High-quality fresh milk" • "UHT milk Lactaid" • Swimming suit for babies • Trousers for babies • Running shoes for babies • Pregnancy test • Snow tire • "Long-term parking - public" • Pet vaccination • Electric toothbrush	• Probiotic yoghurt • Women's dress

DROPPED

Changes in household expenditure behaviours	Replacements
• Audio-visual or IT repair equipment	• Organic yoghurt • Women's suit

Other revisions and innovations

In the updating operations, revisions of product denomination and of short and long description and any splits or grouping of already existing representative items are included. The revisions have been carried out in order to adapt them to the changes in the characteristics products or to better guide data collection activity[5]. Moreover, as it already has happened for some years, products short and long description updating has been carried out in order to improve the comparability of average prices in the European context, within the European Commission project "Consumer Market Scoreboard". This project aims at the extension of descriptive detail of current consumer price statistics system by integration among temporal indices (HICP) and Purchasing Power Parities (PPP). For 2014, short and/or long descriptions and/or reference quantities of 132 representative items have been changed.

In the perspective of a continuous data quality improvement the following revisions in consumer price collection have been carried out:

▶ with regard to collection of prices electronic products, carried out directly by Istat, new data collection technique on Internet have been adopted, using web scraping automatic procedures which query web sites and download information. The considerable increase (about 13,000) of number of price quotes collected monthly is due to this innovation;

▶ for the HICP, the discount survey has been extended to cases of "take 2 pay 1" and to reduction prices related to the possession of "loyalty cards" which can be acquired for free. Both these kinds of discounts were previously excluded from price collection.

The new weighting structure

The weighting coefficients of indices are determined on the basis of the values of household final consumption expenditure as derived from National Accounts. Additional information used to define weights are originated from the Household Budget Survey, from other Istat surveys and from external sources, which have an auxiliary function[6].

Price changes of goods and services included in the basket concur in the calculation of All-item index taking into account their weight in terms of the expenditure share sustained by household to purchase them. However, in order to measure the expenditure shares with reference to the value of the computation base period of indices (December 2013), household final consumption data, referred to the year 2012, are price-updating using the price changes measured between the year 2012 and December 2013.

Table 2 shows the 2014 weighting structures by expenditure division of NIC, HICP and FOI indices and their differences. Ordering expenditure divisions according to their relative weights, the three indices, with exception of the division *Health*, show relatively small differences. For all indices the divisions with a comparatively higher weight are those of *Food and non-alcoholic beverages* and *Transport*, with weights ranging between 14.2% and 17.3%.

In the case of the NIC index, the divisions with highest relative weight are *Food and non-alcoholic beverages* (16.4%), *Transport* (14.2%), *Restaurant and hotels* (11.4%) and *Housing*, *water*, *electricity*, *gas and other fuels* (10.9%)[7].

The differences among the weighting structures of NIC, FOI and HICP indices are largely due to the different definition of the economic aggregate of reference for the three indices. This issue has significant implications for determining the weight of the division *Health*, and in particular the weight of pharmaceutical products. The NIC and FOI indices include expenditure incurred by

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[5] Among these, for example, the case of the representative item *Pizza (by the slice)* that becomes composite and is made up of the two products "*Pizza by the slice - for sale in weight*" and "*Pizza by the slice - for sale in piece*", thus allowing the price collection to be carried out according to the local way of sale; it is also the case of the two items *Football Matches - ticket and Basketball/volleyball matches or other sport of national importance - ticket* which are now aggregated in the composite representative item *Football match and other sporting events - ticket*, so allowing to overcome the difficulties of some municipalities in the price survey of sporting events other than football matches.

[6] It should be note that, for not availability of sufficiently robust estimates of provincial consumption, in the first stage of indices aggregation the consumer price indices, chief towns of provinces contribute to the calculation of regional indices taking into account the relative importance of the province in the region in terms of population. For the calculation of this set of weights which are based on provincial population data, in 2014, 2011 Census data have been used.

[7] It is pointed out that, in Italy, as in Europe, items in the division *Housing*, *water*, *electricity*, *gas and other fuels* exclude dwelling purchase, as it is an investment and not a consumer item, while they consider actual rentals for housing, which regard about 16.5% of Italian households according to 2011 Census data (the remaining 83.5% of households own their dwellings, or occupy them as usufructuary or free of charge).

public administration for the household consumption of pharmaceutical products and health services, whereas it is excluded from the calculation of the HICP. Therefore the weight of the division *Health* in the basket of the harmonised index of consumer prices (3.6%) is significantly lower than the weight calculated for the national indices.

TABLE 2. WEIGHTS USED FOR CALCULATING CONSUMER PRICE INDICES
2014, percentage values

Divisions	Weights		
	NIC	HICP	FOI
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	16.3728	17.3363	15.8362
Alcoholic beverages, tobacco	3.1690	3.3588	3.5202
Clothing and footwear	7.9726	9.1398	8.6180
Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels	10.8816	11.5541	10.9034
Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance	7.9214	8.4314	7.3571
Health	7.6988	3.5444	6.4896
Transport	14.1669	15.0222	15.8594
Communication	2.2992	2.4406	2.4840
Recreation and culture	8.0176	6.3379	8.6894
Education	1.1481	1.2188	1.2855
Restaurants and hotels	11.4030	12.0946	10.5895
Miscellaneous goods and services	8.9490	9.5211	8.3677
ALL ITEMS	**100.0000**	**100.0000**	**100.0000**

With regard to changes in the weighting structure of the NIC index, between 2013 and 2014, the highest increase in absolute terms concerns the expenditure division *Food and non-alcoholic beverages* (+0.4445 percentage points). This increase has been determined both by the relative importance ("expenditure effect") of this group of products, as measured in the National Accounts of 2012 compared to the previous year, and by the "revaluation effect" by which the expenditure in 2012 is reported to the index computation base period (December 2013). Further, increases have been registered for weights of *Miscellaneous goods and services*, *Health*, *Restaurants and hotels*. Finally weight increases, although modestly, have been registered for the division the *Recreation and Culture* and *Education*: these changes are mainly due to the revaluation effect of the corresponding expenditure (Table 3).

Looking at the divisions of which weight in the NIC basket has reduced in 2014, the largest decrease concerns the weight of *Transport* (-0.7504 percentage points); in part this decrease is due to the decline in the relative share of expenditure observed between 2011 and 2012, but the main cause is the price dynamics, which in 2013 (in contrast to what happened in the previous year) has been lower than All-item inflation rate. A large decrease has also been registered for the weight of *Clothing and footwear* (-0.3661 percentage points), entirely due to the decline of its share of expenditure, only partially offset by the effect related to its revaluation.

Considering the weighting structure by type of consumption, in 2014 the relative weights of the two main components have undergone slight changes: goods down from 55.9% to 54.7%, while services rise from 44.1% to 45.3% (Table 4).

TABLE 3. NIC INDEX: WEIGHTING STRUCTURE BY EXPENDITURE DIVISION
2013 and 2014, percentage values and absolute differences

Divisions	2013	2014	Absolute difference	Spending effect	Revaluation effect
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	15.9283	16.3728	0.4445	0.2052	0.2393
Alcoholic beverages, tobacco	3.1924	3.1690	-0.0234	0.0398	-0.0632
Clothing and footwear	8.3387	7.9726	-0.3661	-0.4006	0.0345
Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels	10.8990	10.8816	-0.0174	0.3637	-0.3811
Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance	8.0405	7.9214	-0.1191	-0.2354	0.1163
Health	7.2976	7.6988	0.4012	0.1896	0.2116
Transport	14.9173	14.1669	-0.7504	-0.2623	-0.4881
Communication	2.5293	2.2992	-0.2301	-0.0922	-0.1379
Recreation and culture	7.9758	8.0176	0.0418	-0.1591	0.2009
Education	1.1306	1.1481	0.0175	0.0003	0.0172
Restaurants and hotels	11.2287	11.4030	0.1743	-0.0533	0.2276
Miscellaneous goods and services	8.5218	8.9490	0.4272	0.4043	0.0229
ALL ITEMS	**100.0000**	**100.0000**			

TABLE 4. NIC INDEX: WEIGHTING STRUCTURE BY TYPE OF CONSUMPTION
2013 and 2014, percentage values and absolute differences

Special aggregates	2013	2014	Absolute difference	Spending effect	Revaluation effect
Food including alcohol:	16.8499	17.3611	0.5112	0.2423	0.2689
Processed food including alcohol	10.3559	10.7103	0.3544	0.2073	0.1471
Unprocessed food	6.4940	6.6508	0.1568	0.0350	0.1218
Energy:	9.4758	8.5796	-0.8962	0.2714	-1.1676
Regulated energy products	4.2914	3.8202	-0.4712	0.0694	-0.5406
Non-regulated energy products	5.1844	4.7594	-0.4250	0.2020	-0.6270
Tobacco	2.2708	2.1807	-0.0901	0.0027	-0.0928
Other goods:	27.3437	26.5510	-0.7927	-1.1797	0.3870
Durable goods	8.9934	8.0901	-0.9033	-0.9712	0.0679
Non-durable goods	7.1031	7.4391	0.3360	0.1106	0.2254
Semi-durable goods	11.2472	11.0218	-0.2254	-0.3191	0.0937
Goods	55.9402	54.6724	-1.2678	-0.6633	-0.6045
Services related to housing	7.1158	7.7009	0.5851	0.3760	0.2091
Services related to communication	2.0227	1.8206	-0.2021	-0.0603	-0.1418
Services related to recreation and personal care	17.1125	17.4131	0.3006	-0.0256	0.3262
Services related to transport	8.1266	8.1924	0.0658	0.0941	-0.0283
Miscellaneous services	9.6822	10.2006	0.5184	0.2791	0.2393
Services	44.0598	45.3276	1.2678	0.6633	0.6045
ALL ITEMS	**100.0000**	**100.0000**			
All items index excluding energy and unprocessed food (Core inflation)	84.0302	84.7696	0.7394	-0.3064	1.0458
All items index excluding energy	90.5242	91.4204	0.8962	-0.2714	1.1676

Concerning goods aggregate, only weight of *Food including alcohol* increases (from 16.8% in 2013 to 17.4% in 2014) − mainly due to the component of processed foods −, while for the other good groups the weight changes are negative. In particular, the weight of *Energy* declines (8.6% from 9.5 % in the last year) owing to the price fall in 2013 which has more than offset the expenditure increase measured in 2012; the weight reduction of *Other goods* is mainly due to the decrease of weight of the durable goods component (which includes cars) as a consequence of the corresponding expenditure decline.

Concerning services aggregate, the largest weight increases have been registered for *Services related to housing* (from 7.1% to 7.7%; the increase mainly reflects the change of the household expenditure in 2012 but the price dynamics in last year also has an impact) and *Miscellaneous services* (from 9.7 % to 10.2 %). Finally, a slight increase concerns the weight of *Services related to recreation and personal care* (from 17.1% to 17.4 %).

The weight of *All items index excluding energy and unprocessed food* (*Core inflation*) rose (+0.7394 percentage points).

With regard to regulated products, *Regulated goods* and *Regulated services* registered slightly decreases (respectively from 6.6% to 6.4% and from 7.0% to 6.8%) (Table 5).

Finally, concerning products by purchase frequency, the weight of *Low-frequency purchases* decreased (-0.6325 percentage points) whereas the weight of *Medium-frequency purchases* rose (a little more than a quarter of percentage point); the weight of High-frequency purchases increased from 39.9% to 40.3% (Table 6).

TABLE 5. NIC INDEX: WEIGHTING STRUCTURE BY REGULATED AND NON-REGULATED PRODUCTS
2013 and 2014, percentage values and absolute differences

Regulated and non-regulated products	2013	2014	Absolute difference
Non-regulated goods	49.3754	48.2395	-1.1359
Regulated goods	6.5648	6.4329	-0.1319
Goods	**55.9402**	**54.6724**	**-1.2678**
Non-regulated services	37.0242	38.5693	1.5451
Regulated services	7.0356	6.7583	-0.2773
Services	**44.0598**	**45.3276**	**1.2678**
ALL ITEMS	**100.0000**	**100.0000**	

TABLE 6. NIC INDEX: WEIGHTING STRUCTURE BY PURCHASE FREQUENCY
2013 and 2014, percentage values and absolute differences

Purchase frequency	2013	2014	Absolute difference
High-frequency purchases	39.9111	40.2664	0.3553
Medium-frequency purchases	42.5794	42.8566	0.2772
Low-frequency purchases	17.5095	16.8770	-0.6325
ALL ITEMS	**100.0000**	**100.0000**	

Geographical basis and coverage rate

In 2014 the geographical basis of the survey is made up of 80 municipalities (19 regional chief towns and 61 provincial chief towns) - which participate in the indices calculation of all representative items included in the basket - and of other 11 municipalities participating in the survey for a subset of products which includes local tariffs (water supply, solid waste, sewerage collection, gas for domestic use, urban transport, taxi, car transfer ownership, canteens in schools, public day nursery, etc.) and some local services (building worker, football matches, cinema, theatre shows, secondary school education, canteens in universities etc.).

In comparison with 2013, the municipality of Campobasso will no more participate in the index

calculation: it is a temporary interruption in the survey due to organizational difficulties; also the municipality of Matera does not participate in the price collection for the whole basket but its collaboration to the survey continues for the subset of products concerning local tariffs and some services.

On the whole, the coverage of the index, in terms of resident population in the provinces which chief towns take part in the survey, is 83.3%. The participation of provincial chief towns is total for six regions (Valle D'Aosta, Trentino Alto Adige, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Emilia-Romagna and Umbria) but it is still incomplete for the others, in particular in Puglia (40.6%) and Sardinia (53.7%); in Molise, no chief towns participate in the consumer price survey.

At the macro-area level, coverage is total in the North-East; it is equal to 90.4% in the North-West, 83.0% in the Centre, 66.1% in the South and 74.6% in the Island.

Concerning the basket subset including local tariffs and some local services – whose weight on the NIC basket is equal to 6.2% – with the participation of the other 11 municipalities, the coverage of the survey, measured in terms of provincial resident population, rises to 91.5%; the participation become total for 12 regions and, with the exclusion of Calabria and Sardinia, it increases in the remaining regions; in Molise, the participation remains nothing.

Price survey methods

Data contributing to the calculation of monthly consumer price indices are traditionally collected through two distinct surveys: the local survey, carried out by municipal statistics offices, under Istat supervision and coordination, and the central survey, carried out directly by Istat.

Local survey

In the 91 chief towns (80 for the full basket and 11 for a subset of product), taking part in the 2014 survey, prices are collected in more than 41,000 statistical units (including outlets, enterprises and institutions) and rents are observed for about 8,000 dwellings. Around 500,600 prices are sent monthly to Istat by Municipal Offices of Statistics each month (502,000 in 2013).

4.7% of the current elementary items (in total about 415,500) comes out from the annual update of municipal price collection plans: 3.2% is accounted for new products, while the remaining 1.5% is accounted for products already included in last year basket for which new references have been selected.

Central survey

In 2014 the percentage of products observed directly by Istat, calculated according to the weight assigned to each product within the NIC, is 22.6% (23.1% in 2013). The prices of the products belonging to the expenditure division *Communication* are exclusively monitored by Istat, while prices of products included in the divisions *Food and non-alcoholic beverages* and *Clothing and footwear* are exclusively collected by the Municipal Offices of Statistics.

Changes in the central price collection activities in the occasion of the 2014 changing base regard - as usual - the revision of the samples in their composition, numbers and weighting structure, as well as the introduction of methodological improvements. Some of the main changes are described below.

Within division *Communication*, with regard to the consumption segment *Mobile telephone services*, for the homonymous item, the number of providers, whose prices are collected monthly, has been expanded, reaching almost a total coverage of the sector.

With reference to division *Recreation and culture*, several characteristics of the surveys on consumer electronics products have been revised, with the aim of taking into account the latest technological innovations and the guidelines of the users in these markets. In this context, within the segment *Laptop, hand-held computers and tablets*, for the item *Notebook*, the survey has been extended with the introduction of the new product "*Hybrid notebook*"; for this product (notebook with a detachable display which can be transformed into a tablet) prices of all the models offered on the Italian market by the main manufacturers are collected. In addition, within the consumption segment *Cameras and video cameras*, the range of types of *Digital cameras* has been enlarged introducing the new product "*Large sensor camera*".

For price collection of consumer electronics products, which is carried out by simulating purchase from online stores, a new technique of data collection, web scraping, has been adopted. This technique allows to extract data automatically from a website using specific software. The innovation introduced has entailed a high increase in the number of price quotes collected (about 13,000) and an increase in the number of stores involved in the Istat monthly survey.

Finally, within the division *Recreation and culture*, with regard to the class *Newspaper and periodicals*, the item *Newspaper* has been enriched with the new product "*Digital newspaper*". Therefore, the centralized price collection of newspapers has been revised and the number of newspapers surveyed has been enlarged. The new sample of newspapers, stratified by type of national and local circulation, provides for an articulation by type of distribution channel: paper publishing and online publishing. The inclusion of this new product reflects the ever-growing volume of sales of the on-line publishing in recent years, which is causing both by the rapid technological and market changes in the Italian publishing system and by the erosion in sales share of newspapers in paper format.

Changes in indices release

The NIC index release at territorial level has been extended in 2013, with the publication of special aggregates and purchase frequency indices of municipalities and of regions. Starting from data referred to January 2011, these indices are published in I.Stat, Istat data warehouse, under the theme Prices, sub-theme Consumer prices (http://dati.istat.it/).

In the first months of 2014, special aggregates and purchase frequency NIC indices of macro areas will be published in I.Stat[8] and, in order to extent further the territorial information, also COICOP (3 digits) group indices of municipalities and macro areas will be disseminated (they were already published at regional level). With these releases, for all territorial levels (municipality, region and macro area), NIC indices by division and product group (COICOP 2 and 3 digits), by special aggregates and frequency purchase will be available to users.

Starting from data referred to January 2014, for the purpose to provide further tools useful to an accurate analysis of inflationary dynamics of our Country, the NIC index of *grocery and unprocessed food,* will be released.

In order to provide information in advance for the analysis of inflation dynamics in the Euro area context – and according to the current release policy of Eurostat−, on the occasion of provisional data release, also flash estimates of the following HICP indices will be published: *All-items excluding energy*, *All-items excluding energy and unprocessed food* and *All-items excluding energy, food (including alcohol) and tobacco*. Their dissemination will start from data referred to January 2014. *All-items excluding energy, food (including alcohol) and tobacco* index will be calculated and disseminated for NIC, too.

Finally, with reference to HICP indices, the dissemination of indices referred to population subgroups identified by expenditure level, has been included in the 2014 Press release calendar. These indices are useful for the evaluation of the differential effects of inflation on households which are characterized by different levels of consumption expenditure; they will be made available twice a year (January and July).

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[8] In I.Stat, together with monthly indices, monthly rates of change and annual rate of change are published and together with annual average indices, annual average rates of change are available; furthermore, weights are published.