



Luxembourg, 15 December 2025

Questions & Answers on the improvements in the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) effective January 2026

This document explains the improvements that will be introduced in the HICP from January 2026.

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A. About COICOP

1. What is the COICOP?

The Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose (COICOP) is the international reference classification of household expenditure. The objective of COICOP is to provide a framework of homogeneous categories of goods and services, which are considered a function or purpose of household consumption expenditure. As established by [Regulation \(EU\) 2016/792](#), the HICP should be compiled according to those classification categories.

2. What is the UN COICOP 2018?

The UN COICOP 2018 is the most updated Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose, endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSD) in March 2018. It replaces the currently used version COICOP 1999. The UN COICOP 2018 publication is available on the UNSD website [UNSD – Classifications on economic statistics](#).

The UN COICOP 2018 reflects significant changes in the nature of goods and services as well as changes in household consumption patterns since the introduction of COICOP 1999. The revision also improves linkages with other classifications and addresses emerging statistical and policy needs identified by various international organisations.

Within the EU, for the purposes of the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP), COICOP 2018 is referred to as European Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose version 2 (ECOICOP ver. 2).

3. What is the link between UN COICOP 2018 and ECOICOP ver. 2?

ECOICOP ver. 2 is identical to UN COICOP 2018 down to the 5th digit.

B. ECOICOP revision

4. Why is it necessary to change from ECOICOP to ECOICOP ver. 2?

As a consequence of the wide-ranging changes in consumer markets in the period following the implementation of the ECOICOP in 2015:

- some categories of the classification have become obsolete;
- new products and services may have become difficult to classify (e.g., subscription services);
- the boundaries between categories may have become blurred (e.g., smart watches).

Therefore, a revision of the ECOICOP has become necessary.

ECOICOP ver. 2 addresses the above challenges in several important ways:

- It helps align the classification with current economic needs and consumption patterns to ensure the quality of the HICP;
- It provides a clearer and more consistent structure for the classification of consumer goods and services;

- It satisfies the requirement of harmonising the classifications of different domains, including national accounts, household budget surveys, and purchasing power parities;
- It ensures international comparability of European statistics.

The revised COICOP classification – COICOP 2018 – was endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission as the internationally accepted standard. The implementation of ECOICOP ver. 2 represents the alignment of the classification used in European statistics with the international standard.

5. What are the main differences between ECOICOP and ECOICOP ver. 2

Indicatively, a few of the important differences are as follows:

- ECOICOP ver. 2 distinguishes between goods and services wherever possible, and new classes and subclasses for services such as repair, maintenance, installation, and rental of products have been created. Changes in subclasses and classes have resulted from reclassification and changes in their content.
- Divisions 08 (Communications) and 09 (Recreation and culture) have been extensively revised in ECOICOP ver. 2.
- In ECOICOP ver. 2, division 07 (Transport), previously focused on the transportation of passengers, now also includes the transportation of goods (delivery fees). Such fees were previously included in the price of the goods.
- An additional division, Division 13: ‘Personal care, social protection and miscellaneous goods and services’ has been introduced in ECOICOP ver. 2.

For more details and a comprehensive discussion of the differences, please refer to the UN COICOP 2018 publication below.

6. Where can I find the ECOICOP ver. 2 classification and the correspondence table to ECOICOP?

The documentation can be found on Eurostat’s website:

- [Classifications - Eurostat](#)

7. Will the implementation of ECOICOP ver. 2 in the HICP be legally enforced?

ECOICOP ver. 2 was introduced by [Commission Delegated Regulation 2024/3159](#) that amended Regulation (EU) 2016/792. The new requirements shall apply to the transmission of HICP and HICP-CT data to the Commission (Eurostat) starting with the reference month of January 2026.

C. What will change with the revised ECOICOP?

8. Will the already published HICP inflation figures change?

The implementation of ECOICOP ver. 2 for past HICP data (1996-2025) is subject to one strict requirement: The all-items HICP should remain the same for any month, country, or European regional aggregate, up to the second decimal.

Details on the ECOICOP ver. 2 back series compilation methods can be found in the country metadata files ([Eurostat's HICP database](#)).

Historical inflation figures for all-items HICP will not change.

Users will continue to be able to reproduce the all-items HICP and any other aggregate from the published underlying sub-indices and their corresponding weights.

9. How will the HICP series change starting with the January 2026 data?

The published HICP series for January 2026 will fully reflect the changes from the adoption of ECOICOP ver. 2. As the classification structure will follow ECOICOP ver. 2, users will notice changes in the labels of classes, subclasses, etc., as well as in the content of the classification explanatory notes.

The ECOICOP ver. 2 classification will lead to changes in the HICP baskets of countries. For example, with a further disaggregation of fruits more prices need to be collected to make each sub-index representative.

Additionally, a new division will be introduced in the published data: Division 13 - Personal care, social protection and miscellaneous goods and services.

10. How will the HICP back series be linked to those of January 2026?

The HICP indices in January 2026 will be chain-linked to those in ECOICOP ver. 2. The linking will be done according to one of the two options foreseen in the current legislation, namely via monthly linking or annual linking.

These methods are also described in Chapter 8 of the [HICP methodological manual](#) and in the [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1720](#).

11. Will the implementation of ECOICOP ver. 2 change the HICP Special Aggregates?

In most cases, the classification changes in ECOICOP ver. 2 resulting from splits and aggregations of the ECOICOP subclasses cause the new subclasses to remain part of the same Special Aggregates as in ECOICOP. In a few cases the [composition of the main special aggregates](#) may change. These cases concern mostly items with durability, seasonality, and processing characteristics as well as the separation of goods and services.

12. Where can I find information about the composition of the HICP Special Aggregates?

Information on the updated composition of Special Aggregates in ECOICOP ver. 2 will be available on [ShowVoc](#).

Information on the content of Special Aggregates in ECOICOP is available on Eurostat's portal: [Information on data - Harmonised Indices of Consumer Prices \(HICP\) - Eurostat](#).

13. Will the rescaling of the HICP to base year 2025=100 take place at the same time as the introduction of ECOICOP ver. 2 in the HICP?

The HICP and HICP-CT indices will be rescaled to 2025=100 in January 2026, at the same time as the introduction of ECOICOP ver. 2.

The new common index reference period for the harmonised indices shall be 2025=100, replacing the previous common index reference period of 2015=100. Member States will apply the new common index reference period for the harmonised indices and sub-indices, including any data revisions, transmitted to the Commission (Eurostat) starting with the index for January 2026 and onwards.

14. What does the rescaling of the HICP mean for inflation?

The rescaling of the HICP significantly enhances the index's readability and interpretability. Changing the index reference period is essentially a straightforward scaling exercise.

It improves usability by aligning the base year to a more recent point in time, which users typically prefer over a distant past date. Users often ascribe more importance and authority to index values around 100, rather than larger numbers.

Although the rescaling of the HICP does not in principle affect the published inflation rates, in a few cases, small discrepancies may result due to rounding.

15. Games of chance will be included in the HICP in 2026. What does this mean for the HICP?

The inclusion of games of chance in the HICP with the January 2026 data represents a noteworthy enhancement in the product coverage of the index. Previously, the lack of sufficient methodological harmonisation meant that games of chance were not covered in the HICP. The publication of Eurostat's [Recommendations on the treatment of the games of chance in the HICP](#) in December 2024 has established the necessary harmonised methodology for their inclusion.

While in many Member States, this category constitutes a significant enough portion of household expenditure to merit inclusion in the HICP in many Member States, the inclusion is not expected to have a major impact on inflation rates. Estimates for the weight of games of chance in the HICP range from 0.2% to 3.5% in the Member States. No significant impact on the all-items HICP is expected by the Member States due to the inclusion of games of chance. A more in-depth analysis of the impact for the euro area and EU aggregates will be carried out at the beginning of 2026 when HICP indices and weights are available.

D. Impact of the changes on the HICP

16. What is the expected impact on the HICP indices of 2026?

Based on available data for 2025, the preliminary analysis shows that the transition to ECOICOP ver. 2 on the HICP in 2026 would result in changes in the second or third decimal of the European aggregates of the all-item HICP. The national all-item indices would change only for countries applying reconciliation factors, but this is mostly confined to the second or third index decimals.

Other factors that could affect index levels in 2026 — such as annual weights update, sample changes, Bulgaria’s entry into the euro area on 1 January 2026, and/or the inclusion of transaction data or other methodological changes — are independent of the classification change. Their impact will be communicated with the data release on 4 February 2026.

E. HICP dissemination according to the revised ECOICOP

17. Will the HICP data in ECOICOP remain available?

The HICP data in ECOICOP for the period 1996-2025 will be frozen and remain available as archived data sets in Eurostat’s HICP database.

18. When will the first release of HICP data in ECOICOP ver. 2 take place?

Eurostat will publish the first HICP data in ECOICOP ver. 2 with the flash estimate release for the reference month January 2026.

As usual, the publication will include the HICP news release and the release of HICP data in Eurostat’s public database. The publication will take place at the end of January 2026 or the beginning of February 2026.

19. Will the HICP series in ECOICOP ver. 2 be published for the years before 2026?

Yes. The back series will cover the period from 1996 to 2025. The compilation of the HICP back series in ECOICOP ver. 2 will need to follow a harmonised methodology.

20. Will there be changes in Eurostat’s release calendar in relation to ECOICOP ver. 2?

No, the transition to ECOICOP ver. 2 will not change the HICP release calendar by Eurostat.

F. Additional information sources

21. Where can I find additional information about the ECOICOP ver. 2 implementation in the HICP at the country level?

Country information will become available via the Metadata files in Eurostat’s HICP database. Relevant information may also be found in the National Statistical Institutes’ websites. Additionally, it will be possible to contact the NSIs directly.

22. Where can I find more information about the HICP?

You can refer to the [HICP dedicated section](#) (on Eurostat’s website and the [HICP data tables](#) in Eurostat’s database). Relevant information can also be found in the [HICP methodological manual](#).

For additional information, please contact:

- Eurostat user support: [User support – Eurostat](#), or
- Eurostat media support: [Media and fact-checkers - Eurostat](#).