

Press release

31 January 2025

ECB Consumer Expectations Survey results – December 2024

Compared with November 2024:

- median consumer perceptions of inflation over the previous 12 months increased for the second consecutive month, as did median inflation expectations for the next 12 months, while median inflation expectations for three years ahead remained unchanged;
- expectations for nominal income growth over the next 12 months remained unchanged, as did expectations for spending growth over the next 12 months;
- expectations for economic growth over the next 12 months were unchanged, while the expected unemployment rate in 12 months' time decreased;
- expectations for growth in the price of homes over the next 12 months remained unchanged, as did expectations for mortgage interest rates 12 months ahead.

Inflation

The median rate of perceived inflation over the previous 12 months increased in December, for the second month in a row, to 3.5%, from 3.4% in November. Median expectations for inflation over the next 12 months increased, for the third month in a row, to 2.8% from 2.6%. Median expectations for inflation three years ahead were unchanged at 2.4% in December. Inflation expectations at the one-year and three-year horizons thus remained below the perceived past inflation rate. Uncertainty about inflation expectations over the next 12 months remained unchanged, for the fifth month in a row, at its lowest level since February 2022. While the broad evolution of inflation perceptions and expectations remained relatively closely aligned across income groups, expectations for lower income quintiles were slightly above those for higher income quintiles. Younger respondents (aged 18-34) continued to report lower inflation perceptions and expectations than older respondents (those aged 35-54 and 55-70), albeit to a lesser degree than in previous years. ([Inflation results](#))

Income and consumption

Consumers' nominal income growth expectations over the next 12 months remained unchanged at 1.1% in December. The income growth expectations of the lower income quintile increased more than the expectations of all other income quintiles, widening the positive gap with the other quintiles that had emerged over the previous months. Perceived nominal spending growth over the previous 12 months remained unchanged at 5.2% in December, as did expected nominal spending growth over the next 12 months at 3.5%. ([Income and consumption results](#))

Economic growth and labour market

Economic growth expectations for the next 12 months were stable in December, standing at -1.3%. Expectations for the unemployment rate 12 months ahead decreased to 10.5%, from 10.6% in November. Consumers continued to expect the future unemployment rate to be only slightly higher than the perceived current unemployment rate (9.9%), implying a broadly stable labour market. The lowest income quintile continued to report the highest expected and perceived unemployment rates, as well as the lowest economic growth expectations. ([Economic growth and labour market results](#))

Housing and credit access

Consumers expected the price of their home to increase by 2.9% over the next 12 months, which was unchanged from November. Households in the lowest income quintile continued to expect higher growth in house prices than those in the highest income quintile (3.5% and 2.7% respectively). Expectations for mortgage interest rates 12 months ahead also remained unchanged, at 4.6% – their level since October 2024. As in previous months, the lowest income households expected the highest mortgage interest rates 12 months ahead (5.2%), while the highest income households expected the lowest rates (4.0%). While the net percentage of households reporting a tightening (relative to those reporting an easing) in access to credit over the previous 12 months increased slightly, the net percentage of those expecting a tightening over the next 12 months declined. ([Housing and credit access results](#))

The release of the Consumer Expectations Survey (CES) results for January is scheduled for 28 February 2025.

For media queries, please contact: Nicos Keranis, Tel: +49 172 758 7237

Notes

- Unless otherwise indicated, the statistics presented in this press release refer to the 2% winsorised mean. For further details, see [ECB Consumer Expectations Survey – Guide to the computation of aggregate statistics](#).
- The CES is a monthly online survey of, currently, around 19,000 adult consumers (i.e. aged 18 or over) from 11 euro area countries: Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal and Finland. The main aggregate results of the CES are published on the ECB's website every month. The results are used for policy analysis and complement other data sources used by the ECB.
- Further information about the survey and the data collected is available on the [CES web page](#). Detailed information can also be found in the following two publications: Bańkowska, K. et al., "[ECB Consumer Expectations Survey: an overview and first evaluation](#)", *Occasional Paper Series*, No 287, ECB, Frankfurt am Main, December 2021; and Georgarakos, D. and Kenny, G., "[Household spending and fiscal support during the COVID-19 pandemic: Insights from a new consumer survey](#)", *Journal of Monetary Economics*, Vol. 129, Supplement, July 2022, pp. S1-S14.
- The survey results do not represent the views of the ECB's decision-making bodies or staff.