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Inflation 0.6 per cent in December 2003

According to Statistics Finland, the year-on-year change in consumer prices, i.e. inflation, rose to 0.6 per cent in December 2003. In November 2003, it stood at 0.5 per cent. The average rate of inflation for the year 2003 was 0.9 per cent.

Increases in the prices of food, above all of vegetables and milk products, between December 2002 and December 2003 put consumer prices up by most, or 0.3 percentage points, year-on-year. The effect from risen price of electricity on inflation amounted to 0.2 percentage points, and those from higher restaurant and health care prices were of almost the same magnitude. Rent increases and higher prices of dwellings also pushed consumer prices up year-on-year. Cuts in interest rates again curbed inflation by most, or 0.6 percentage points, and reduced prices of cars by 0.3 percentage points.

From November to December 2003, consumer prices went up by 0.1 per cent, mainly because the Christmas season pushed the prices of package holidays up and fresh fruit became more expensive.

Inflation indicators in Finland, December 2003

	Point figure	Change on one year	Change on one month
Consumer Price Index (2000=100)	105.1	0.6%	0.1%
Cost of Living Index (1951:10=100)	1,577		
Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (1996=100)	113.7	1.2%	0.1%

Each mid-month, Statistics Finland interviewers collect around 50,000 prices on 492 commodities from approximately 3,500 outlets for the Consumer Price Index. In addition, some 1,000 items of price data are gathered by centralised collection.

According to preliminary data, inflation in EMU countries 2.1 per cent in December 2003

According to preliminary data on the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices, the rate of inflation in the member states of the EMU was 2.1 per cent in December. In November it stood at 2.2 per cent. The corresponding figure for Finland in December 2003 was 1.2 per cent.

Eurostat's estimate on inflation in the EMU area is based on preliminary data published by certain member states and on the price development of energy. Eurostat will publish detailed data on the Harmonised Indices of Consumer Prices for December 2003 on 21 January 2004.

Source: Consumer Price Index 2003, December. Statistics Finland