

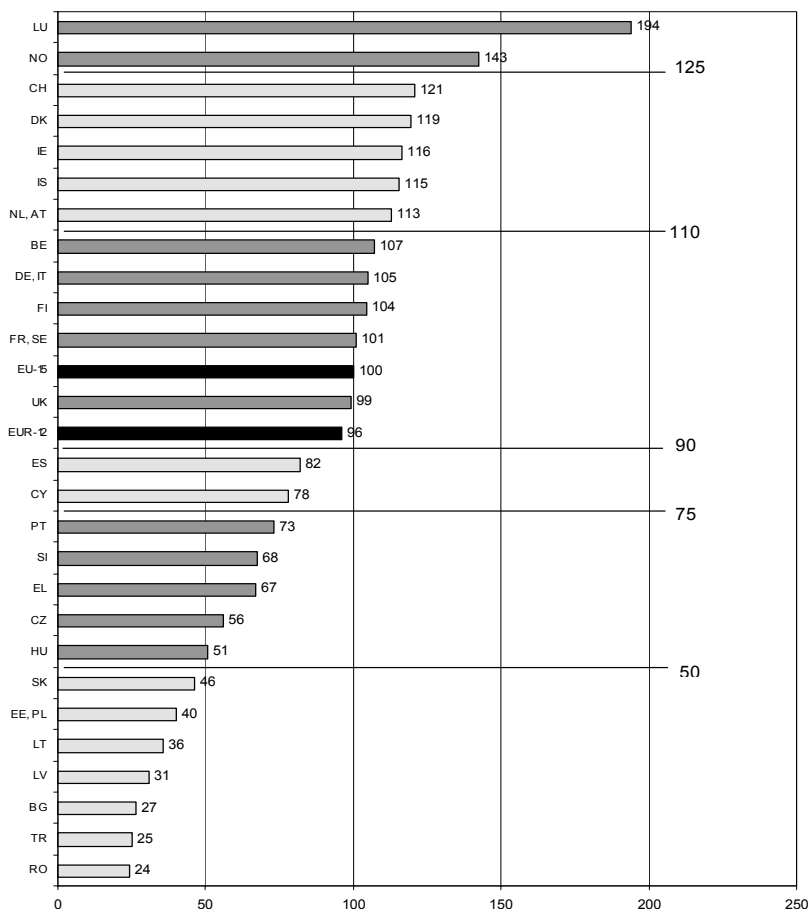
Purchasing Power Parities and related economic indicators for EU, EFTA¹ and Candidate Countries

Preliminary results for 2000

Silke STAPEL

This article presents Purchasing Power Parities and related economic indicators for the 31 countries⁽²⁾ participating in the European Comparison Programme (ECP) for 2000. The ECP – in which Eurostat closely co-operates with the OECD – is aimed at making annual volume comparisons of the main National Accounts aggregates: Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and its components. The data analysed here are preliminary and should, therefore, be interpreted with caution, as they are subject to revision. The final data for 2000 will be published in December 2002⁽³⁾.

**Chart 1 : Per capita GDP volume indices, EU-15=100
2000 preliminary results**



Statistics in focus

ECONOMY AND FINANCE

THEME 2 – 32/2002

PRICES AND PURCHASING POWER PARITIES

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⁽¹⁾ Excluding Liechtenstein.

⁽²⁾ The 15 EU Member States, the 13 Candidate Countries, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland.

⁽³⁾ For the ECP publication calendar 2002, see methodological note on page 7.

Purchasing Power Parities and international volume comparisons

The differences in values of GDP expenditure between countries, even when revalued in a common currency using exchange rates, correspond not only to a “volume of goods and services” component but also to a “level of prices” component, which can sometimes assume sizeable proportions.

Exchange rates are determined by many factors, which reflect demand and supply on the currency markets, such as international trade and interest rate differentials. In other words, exchange rates usually reflect other elements than price differences alone. Therefore, the use of exchange rates as conversion factors in cross-country comparisons is not advisable.

To obtain a pure comparison of volumes, it is essential to use special conversion rates (spatial deflators) which remove the effect of price level differences between countries. Purchasing Power Parities (PPPs) are such currency conversion rates that convert economic indicators expressed in national currencies to an artificial common currency, called Purchasing Power Standard (PPS), that equalises the purchasing power of different national currencies. In other words, PPPs are used to convert nominal final expenditures on product groups, aggregates and GDP of the different countries taking part in the comparison into comparable expenditure volumes.

Box 1: How are PPPs calculated and what is PPS?

In their simplest form, PPPs are a set of price relatives, which show the ratio of the prices in national currency of the same good or service in different countries (e.g. a loaf of bread costs 1.87 euro in France, 1.68 euro in Germany, 95 pence in the UK, etc). For the price collections⁽⁴⁾, a basket of comparable goods and services is used which are selected to represent the whole range of goods and services, and to be representative of consumption patterns in the various countries.

The simple price relatives at product level are subsequently aggregated (weighted together) to PPPs for groups of products, for total consumption and finally for GDP.

To fix a numéraire for the numerical procedure of the PPP calculation, usually one country is used as a base country and set to equal 1. For the European Union the selection of a single country (currency) as a base seemed inappropriate. Therefore, PPS is the artificial common reference currency unit used in the European Union to express the volume of economic aggregates for the purpose of spatial comparisons in real terms. Economic volume aggregates in PPS are obtained by dividing their original value in national currency units by the respective PPPs. 1 PPS, therefore, buys the same given average volume of goods and services in all countries, whereas different amounts of national currency units are needed to buy this volume of goods and services, depending on the national price level.

Per capita GDP volume index

The **per capita GDP volume indices** shown in **Chart 1** are calculated as real expenditure volumes (expenditure values in national currency, converted using PPPs) in per capita terms, expressed in relation to the European Union average. These indices are not intended to rank countries strictly. In fact, they only provide an indication of the comparative order of magnitude of the per capita GDP volumes in one country in relation to others. It is therefore preferable to use these indices for dividing countries into groups of a comparable level. The 2000 preliminary results presented here highlight in this respect the following groups of countries:

- **Group I** ($\geq 125\%$ of the EU average): Norway and Luxembourg;

- **Group II** ($\geq 110\%$ and $< 125\%$ of the EU average): the Netherlands, Austria, Iceland, Ireland, Denmark and Switzerland;
- **Group III** ($\geq 90\%$ and $< 110\%$ of the EU average, i.e. close to the EU average): United Kingdom, France, Sweden, Finland, Germany, Italy and Belgium;
- **Group IV** ($\geq 75\%$ - threshold for the Structural Funds⁽⁵⁾ - and $< 90\%$ of the EU average): Cyprus and Spain;
- **Group V** ($\geq 50\%$ and $< 75\%$ of the EU average): Hungary, Czech Republic, Greece, Slovenia and Portugal;
- **Group VI** ($< 50\%$ of the EU average): Romania, Turkey, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland and Slovakia.

⁽⁴⁾ See methodological note at the end of this publication.

⁽⁵⁾ One of the particularly important uses of PPPs is for the European Commission to establish both the list of regions that could benefit from the EU Structural Funds as well as the amount of funds to be allocated to each region. One criterion for allocating these funds is based on PPP-converted GDP per capita being less than 75 % of the EU average. The aim of the Structural Funds is to gradually reduce economic disparities between and within EU Member States.

Box 2: Comparability of the 2000 preliminary data with 1999 and earlier

It should be noted that the data given in this issue are not fully comparable with previous years' data. This is why no time series are given.

For the majority of the ECP participants, the reference year 2000 can be seen as the first year in which the PPP weights from the National Accounts are fully based on ESA95⁽⁶⁾. The years before 2000 were affected by the gradual introduction of ESA95 since 1995, in different countries at different points in time. Moreover, all Candidate Countries now fully participate in the price surveys according to the survey cycle, while in the past, estimates had to be partly used. The years before 2000, therefore, include a multitude of minor or major breaks in the time series, which negatively affected the comparability over time or even between countries within one given year. To facilitate economic analysis, Eurostat and the EU Member States and Candidate Countries have decided to revise the PPPs for the years 1995 to 1999 in the light of ESA95 and bring them in line with the final data for 2000. At the earliest, this will be done in spring 2003, after the final data for 2000 have been released in December 2002.

Box 3: Grouping of countries

As referred to in the main text, this publication has for the first time presented the GDP volume indices in the form of country groups. This helps to focus attention on the broad ranking of countries rather than the precise results which are subject to a statistical margin of error. For example, a recent review of French construction prices, which has resulted in a significant change to construction prices compared with 1999, has not resulted in a significant change of the position of France relative to other countries at the level of GDP: it remains in a group, including Belgium, Germany, Italy, Finland, Sweden and the UK, close to the EU average.

Box 4: Luxembourgish and Norwegian results

Per capita GDP is highest for Luxembourg and Norway. One of the reasons for Luxembourg's high GDP per capita index is the large share of cross-border workers in total employment that contribute to GDP. In addition, a non-negligible part of the expenditure on certain products on the Luxembourg territory is accounted for by cross-border shoppers. Regarding Norway, results are significantly influenced by oil price variations, due to its position as a large oil exporter.

Box 5: Maltese results

The data for Malta are not included in this publication. Malta is currently undertaking a revision of its National Accounts in order to adopt the European System of Accounts, ESA95. The revision results are expected in autumn 2002. To avoid multiple revisions of data and user confusion, the Maltese statistical office and Eurostat decided not to show the preliminary results for 2000 but to publish the figures for Malta in December 2002, when the final data for all countries will be provided. These data will then be based on Maltese National Accounts data that are in line with ESA95.

Purchasing Power Parities for GDP and its components

The first two columns of **Table 1** show the exchange rate to the euro and the PPP at GDP level, respectively. In addition to PPPs at GDP level, **Table 1** also presents PPPs for the three following components: *Household and NPISH final consumption expenditure*, *Actual individual consumption* and *Gross fixed capital formation*. When analysing these PPPs, it appears that they are generally close to that of total GDP.

Nevertheless results for *Gross fixed capital formation* reveal that the PPP for this component is lower than that for the other items for Nordic countries (Finland, Sweden and Iceland), whereas it is significantly higher for the majority of the Candidate Countries. The latter is clearly influenced by the fact that most Candidate Countries import a large share of their equipment goods, which implies higher relative prices (see Table 2).

⁽⁶⁾ ESA95 (European System of Accounts 1995; Council Regulation (EC) 2223/1996 of 25 June 1996) is the current European methodological framework for compiling National Accounts. Since 1995, it has gradually replaced the former system – ESA79.

Table 1 : Euro exchange rates and Purchasing Power Parities, in 2000

	Exchange rate to the Euro	Purchasing Power Parity (1 PPS in National Currency)			
		GDP	Household and NPISH final consumption expenditure (†)	Actual individual consumption (**)	Gross fixed capital formation
Belgium (BE)	1	1.00286	1.00971	1.01238	0.979345
Denmark (DK)	7.45382	9.02100	9.09561	9.12526	9.06801
Germany (DE)	1	1.03779	1.00708	1.01934	1.05754
Greece (EL)	1	0.761929	0.794643	0.765426	0.812811
Spain (ES)	1	0.826580	0.833858	0.824188	0.849962
France (FR)	1	1.03051	1.02886	1.02414	1.04514
Ireland (IE)	1	1.04227	1.08504	1.05472	1.04017
Italy (IT)	1	0.855137	0.857581	0.863153	0.823947
Luxembourg (LU)	1	1.05963	0.969256	1.04097	1.04652
Netherlands (NL)	1	0.989246	0.981495	0.949356	1.10427
Austria (AT)	1	0.993090	0.977113	0.991218	1.00036
Portugal (PT)	1	0.694697	0.715635	0.694822	0.781023
Finland (FI)	1	1.07832	1.16581	1.15316	0.920672
Sweden (SE)	8.44519	10.3803	10.8351	10.7558	9.64564
United Kingdom (UK)	0.609478	0.705756	0.722574	0.717096	0.708222
EU-15	:	1	1	1	1
Iceland (IS)	72.5848	92.2076	95.1153	92.7169	85.3816
Norway (NO)	8.11292	9.85977	10.4824	10.3577	10.3228
Switzerland (CH)	1.55786	2.06968	2.13564	2.17482	1.82020
Bulgaria (BG)	1.94792	0.546603	0.592566	0.539236	0.813967
Cyprus (CY)	0.573924	0.466295	0.477550	0.476849	0.412696
Czech Republic (CZ)	35.5995	15.3100	16.2913	14.4068	20.6004
Estonia (EE)	15.6466	6.96111	7.18031	6.31985	12.1384
Hungary (HU)	260.045	114.820	117.774	104.436	169.418
Latvia (LV)	0.559227	0.262075	0.297445	0.253729	0.405895
Lithuania (LI)	3.69516	1.59412	1.73744	1.48782	2.73184
Poland (PL)	4.00817	1.98016	2.15012	1.93840	2.47369
Romania (RO)	19 921.8	6 530.19	7 565.89	6 523.24	9 041.91
Slovakia (SK)	42.6017	16.0588	17.0694	14.4183	25.6803
Slovenia (SI)	206.613	132.932	137.064	131.108	145.394
Turkey (TR)	574 816	328 671	376 013	343 155	377 647

*Household and non-profit institution serving households (NPISH) final consumption expenditure refers to consumption of goods and services which households and NPISH actually paid for.

**Actual individual consumption consists of household and NPISH final consumption expenditure plus goods and services for individual consumption provided by the government free of charge or at reduced prices, e.g. in education and health. The latter are goods and services that, while provided by government, are consumed individually by households and NPISH.

Price level indices and per capita volume indices for GDP and its components

The first part of **Table 2** shows Price Level Indices for total GDP and three of its components: *Household and NPISH final consumption expenditure*, *Actual individual consumption* and *Gross fixed capital formation*. In its second part, **Table 2** shows per capita volume indices for the total GDP and for the same three components.

Price Level Indices (PLIs) are obtained as the ratio between PPP and the exchange rate for each country, in relation to the EU average. These indices provide a comparison of the countries' price levels with respect to the EU average: if the price level

index is higher than 100, the country concerned is relatively expensive compared to the EU average. In this case, the use of exchange rates would overestimate the volumes; the opposite is true if the price level index is lower than 100.

The first column of **Table 2** shows that, at GDP level, disparities in the price level index among EU Member States lie between 69 (Portugal) and 123 (Sweden), while they are spread between 28 (Bulgaria) and 133 (Switzerland) when considering all participating countries in the ECP.

Table 2 : Price level indices and per capita volume indices for GDP and selected components for the year 2000

	Price level index, EU-15=100				Per capita volume index, EU-15=100			
	GDP	Household and NPISH final consumption expenditure (ˆ)	Actual individual consumption (**)	Gross fixed capital formation	GDP	Household and NPISH final consumption expenditure (ˆ)	Actual individual consumption (**)	Gross fixed capital formation
BE	100	101	101	98	107	99	102	112
DK	121	122	122	122	119	96	109	124
DE	104	101	102	106	105	109	106	108
EL	76	79	77	81	67	77	72	69
ES	83	83	82	85	82	82	81	98
FR	103	103	102	105	101	95	99	97
IE	104	109	105	104	116	92	92	133
IT	86	86	86	82	105	108	106	104
LU	106	97	104	105	194	145	139	200
NL	99	98	95	110	113	97	104	111
AT	99	98	99	100	113	112	111	128
PT	69	72	69	78	73	75	77	90
FI	108	117	115	92	104	82	87	114
SE	123	128	127	114	101	84	96	91
UK	116	119	118	116	99	109	107	83
EUR-12	96	95	95	97	96	95	95	99
EU-15	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
IS	127	131	128	118	115	114	124	144
NO	122	129	128	127	143	98	107	131
CH	133	137	140	117	121	120	110	140
EFTA-3	128	134	135	121	129	112	109	137
BG	28	30	28	42	27	29	29	13
CY	81	83	83	72	78	90	84	76
CZ	43	46	40	58	56	49	55	57
EE	44	46	40	78	40	39	43	26
HU	44	45	40	65	51	44	50	40
LV	47	53	45	73	31	29	33	26
LT	43	47	40	74	36	36	43	19
PL	49	54	48	62	40	41	43	38
RO	33	38	33	45	24	25	27	16
SK	38	40	34	60	46	39	46	41
SI	64	66	63	70	68	62	65	80
TR	57	65	60	66	25	27	26	23
CC-13	48	53	48	62	33	34	35	30

*Household and non-profit institution serving households (NPISH) final consumption expenditure refers to consumption of goods and services which households and NPISH actually paid for.

**Actual individual consumption consists of household and NPISH final consumption expenditure plus goods and services for individual consumption provided by the government free of charge or at reduced prices, e.g. in education and health. The latter are goods and services that, while provided by government, are consumed individually by households and NPISH.

Table 3 : Final consumption expenditure of households
Cross table of Price Level Indices

	BE	DK	DE	EL	ES	FR	IE	IT	LU	NL	AT	PT	FI	SE	UK	EU-15	IS	NO	CH	BG	CY	CZ	EE	HU	LV	LT	PL	RO	SK	SI	TR	
BE	100	83	101	126	121	98	93	118	105	102	104	140	86	79	85	101	77	78	74	328	121	218	217	220	187	212	186	261	248	151	153	BE
DK	121	100	122	153	146	119	112	142	127	124	125	170	104	95	103	122	93	95	90	397	147	263	262	265	227	256	225	316	300	183	185	DK
DE	99	82	100	126	120	98	92	117	105	102	103	140	86	78	85	101	76	78	74	326	121	217	216	218	186	211	185	260	247	150	152	DE
EL	79	65	79	100	96	78	73	93	83	81	82	111	68	62	67	80	61	62	59	259	96	172	172	174	148	168	147	207	196	120	121	EL
ES	83	68	83	105	100	81	77	97	87	85	86	116	71	65	70	84	64	65	61	272	100	180	180	182	155	175	154	216	206	125	126	ES
FR	102	84	103	129	123	100	95	120	107	105	106	143	88	80	87	103	78	80	76	335	124	222	221	224	191	216	190	266	253	154	156	FR
IE	108	89	108	136	130	106	100	127	113	110	112	151	93	85	92	109	83	84	80	353	130	235	234	236	202	228	200	281	268	163	165	IE
IT	85	70	85	107	103	83	79	100	89	87	88	119	73	67	72	86	65	66	63	279	103	185	184	187	159	180	158	222	211	129	130	IT
LU	95	79	96	120	115	93	88	112	100	97	98	133	82	75	81	96	73	74	70	312	115	207	206	208	178	201	176	248	236	144	145	LU
NL	98	81	98	123	118	96	91	115	103	100	101	137	84	77	83	99	75	76	72	320	118	212	212	214	183	207	181	255	242	148	149	NL
AT	97	80	97	122	117	95	90	114	102	99	100	136	83	76	82	98	74	76	72	317	117	210	210	212	181	205	179	252	240	146	148	AT
PT	71	59	72	90	86	70	66	84	75	73	74	100	62	56	61	72	55	56	53	234	86	155	154	156	133	151	132	186	177	108	109	PT
FI	116	96	116	146	140	113	107	136	122	119	120	163	100	91	98	117	89	91	86	380	140	252	251	254	217	246	215	302	288	175	177	FI
SE	127	105	128	161	154	125	118	150	134	130	132	179	110	100	108	129	98	100	94	418	154	277	276	279	239	270	237	333	316	193	195	SE
UK	118	97	118	149	142	115	109	138	124	120	122	165	102	92	100	119	90	92	87	386	142	256	255	258	220	249	218	307	292	178	180	UK
EU-15	99	82	100	125	120	97	92	116	104	101	102	139	85	78	84	100	76	77	73	325	120	216	215	217	185	210	184	259	246	150	151	EU-15
IS	130	108	131	165	157	128	121	153	137	133	135	183	112	102	111	131	100	102	97	427	158	283	282	286	244	276	242	340	323	197	199	IS
NO	128	106	129	162	155	125	119	150	135	131	132	180	110	100	109	129	98	100	95	420	155	279	277	281	240	271	238	334	318	193	195	NO
CH	135	111	136	171	163	132	125	159	142	138	140	189	116	106	115	136	104	105	100	442	163	294	292	296	253	286	250	352	335	204	206	CH
BG	30	25	31	39	37	30	28	36	32	31	32	43	26	24	26	31	23	24	23	100	37	66	66	67	57	65	57	80	76	46	47	BG
CY	83	68	83	104	100	81	77	97	87	85	85	116	71	65	70	83	63	65	61	271	100	180	179	181	155	175	153	216	205	125	126	CY
CZ	46	38	46	58	55	45	43	54	48	47	48	64	40	36	39	46	35	36	34	151	56	100	100	101	86	97	85	120	114	69	70	CZ
EE	46	38	46	58	56	45	43	54	49	47	48	65	40	36	39	47	35	36	34	151	56	100	100	101	86	98	86	120	115	70	70	EE
HU	46	38	46	58	55	45	42	54	48	47	47	64	39	36	39	46	35	36	34	149	55	99	99	100	85	97	85	119	113	69	70	HU
LV	53	44	54	67	64	52	50	63	56	55	55	75	46	42	45	54	41	42	40	175	65	116	116	117	100	113	99	139	133	81	82	LV
LT	47	39	47	60	57	46	44	55	50	48	49	66	41	37	40	48	36	37	35	155	57	103	102	103	88	100	88	123	117	71	72	LT
PL	54	45	54	68	65	53	50	63	57	55	56	76	46	42	46	54	41	42	40	177	65	117	117	118	101	114	100	141	134	81	82	PL
RO	38	32	38	48	46	38	36	45	40	39	40	54	33	30	33	39	29	30	28	126	46	83	83	84	72	81	71	100	95	58	58	RO
SK	40	33	40	51	49	39	37	47	42	41	42	57	35	32	34	41	31	31	30	132	49	88	87	88	75	85	75	105	100	61	62	SK
SI	66	55	66	84	80	65	61	78	70	68	68	93	57	52	56	67	51	52	49	217	80	144	143	145	124	140	123	173	164	100	101	SI
TR	65	54	66	83	79	64	61	77	69	67	68	92	57	51	56	66	50	51	49	215	79	143	142	144	123	139	122	171	163	99	100	TR

How to read the table?

The table should be read vertically. Each column indicates how many euro are needed in each of the countries listed in the rows to buy the same representative basket of consumer goods and services, which costs 100 euro in the country at the top of the column. For example, to buy the same basket of goods and services, costing 100 euro in Germany, will cost 136 euro in Switzerland. In other words, Switzerland is about 36% more expensive than Germany when it comes to *Final Consumption Expenditure of Households*.

Interesting also is the comparison of the volume index for household and NPISH final consumption expenditure and the actual individual consumption in **Table 2**.

The differences between both volume indices are, relative to the EU average, the goods and services which are provided free of charge or at reduced prices by the state to the households (e.g. for education and health). Denmark, as an example, when it comes to the volume of goods and services households and NPISH pay for, is to be found at 96% of the EU average. When it comes to what households and NPISH actually consume, Denmark is 9 percentage points above the EU average. A similar redistribution effect can be observed within the EU for Sweden, the Netherlands and France.

Among the EFTA countries it is noticeable for Iceland and Norway and among the Candidate Countries, particularly for Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary.

Table 3 provides an interesting cross comparison of price level indices for all ECP participants. Within the EU, when it comes to the basket of goods and services representing household consumption expenditure, Sweden (129% of EU-15) is the most expensive country, followed by Denmark (122) and the UK (119). All three EFTA countries are generally more expensive than the EU Member States, with Norway being about the same price level as Sweden. All Candidate Countries are less expensive than the EU average, with Cyprus (83) coming closest to it. The least expensive country in the comparison is Bulgaria (31).

➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Data used for the calculation of the 2000 preliminary data

The preliminary results presented in this document are based on the price data and the estimates of GDP nominal values in national currency and of population levels that were available to Eurostat in June 2002. These estimates will be revised using updated information, particularly for nominal expenditure data, by the end of 2002.

Publication calendar 2002

During the calendar year 2002 the following further PPP related publications are planned:

August 2002:	Relative prices for "Food, beverages and tobacco", for the year 2001
November 2002:	Relative prices for "Services", for the year 2001
December 2002:	Final PPP results 2000 and preliminary results 2001

International price and volume comparisons

Eurostat participates in the "International Comparison Programme" (ICP), which has been running for 30 years. In Europe, Eurostat and the OECD co-operate in the framework of the "European comparison programme" (ECP), in which Eurostat annually establishes PPPs for the 15 EU Member States, the 13 EU Candidate Countries and three EFTA countries, Norway, Iceland and Switzerland. A rolling 3-year survey cycle is used for consumer prices. About one third of the consumer goods is surveyed every year, and for the remaining two thirds, suitable consumer price indices are used for extrapolation in the intervening years. Capital goods prices, rents, and GDP weights are collected annually, as well as salaries in the government sector, which are used as proxy-PPPs for the respective part of this sector. For the remaining OECD member countries, the OECD follows the Eurostat survey cycle for consumer prices, whereas a benchmark-extrapolation approach is used for the other components, with PPP calculations every third year.

To know more about:

"Purchasing Power Parities and Real Expenditures, 1999 Benchmark Year", OECD 2002

Further information:

➤ Databases

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