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Harmonized Indices of Consumer Prices March 2006

Euro-zone¹ annual inflation, as measured by the Monetary Union Index of Consumer Prices (MUICP), was 2.2% in March 2006, down from 2.3% in February 2006. A year earlier the rate was 2.1%.

EU annual inflation, as measured by the European Index of Consumer Prices (EICP)², was 2.1% in March 2006³, down from 2.2% in February 2006. A year earlier the rate was 2.1%.

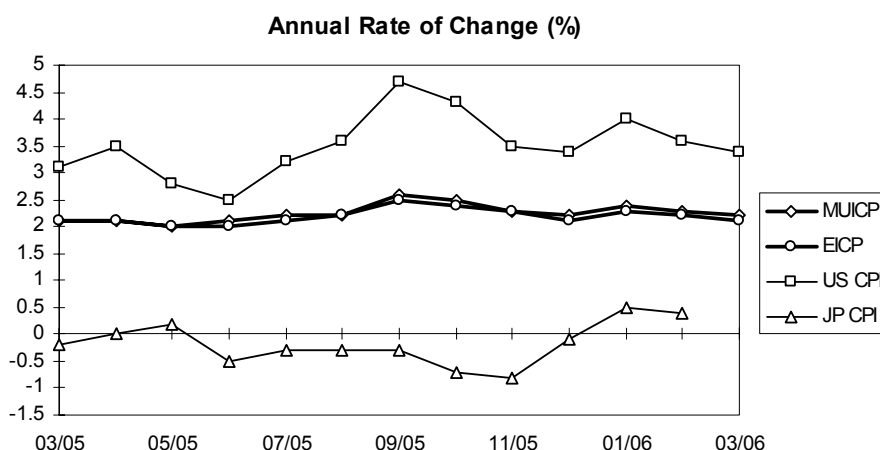
EEA annual inflation, as measured by the European Economic Area Index of Consumer Prices (EEAICP), was 2.1% in March 2006.

In March 2006, the highest annual inflation rates in EU Member States were recorded in **Latvia** (6.6%), **Slovakia** (4.3%), **Estonia** (4.0%) and **Spain** (3.9%), and the lowest rates were observed in **Poland** (0.9%), **Finland** (1.2%), **Austria** (1.3%) and the **Netherlands** (1.4%).

For the **USA**⁴ the annual inflation rate was 3.4% in March 2006, down from 3.6% in February 2006. For **Japan**⁴ no March data was available in time for publication.

The annual inflation rates for the **euro-zone**, the **EU** and the latest available rates for the **USA** and **Japan** are shown in the graph below.

Methodological notes can be accessed via the Eurostat internet site under Publications/Methods and nomenclatures/Harmonized Indices of Consumer Prices – [Short guide for users](#) (issue date: 17/05/2004).



1 The euro-zone comprises: Belgium, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal and Finland.

2 The EICP (EICP='European Index of Consumer Prices' as defined in Council Regulation (EC) No 2494/95 of 23 October 1995) is the official EU aggregate. It covers 15 Member States until April 2004 and 25 Member States starting from May 2004. The ten new Member States are integrated into the EICP starting from May 2004 using a chain index formula.

3 March 2006 data for the UK were not available in time for publication. Eurostat estimates have been used to compute EU and EEA indices.

4 For the USA and Japan the national CPIs are given, which are not strictly comparable with the HICPs.

