

Article

Actual individual consumption per head in the UK: 2020

A measure of material welfare of households of the 37 European countries within and outside of the European Union, using actual individual consumption per head and price levels for consumer goods and services.

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1 . Overview of actual individual consumption in the UK

- In 2020, the UK actual individual consumption (AIC) per head was 13% higher than the EU27 average.
- AIC is an indicator that describes the material welfare of households and is derived from purchasing power parities (PPPs), which equalise the purchasing power of different currencies by eliminating the differences in price levels between countries.
- Price levels for consumer goods and services in the UK for 2020 were 21% above the EU27 average.
- The data presented in this article are for countries in Europe, produced collaboratively by the Eurostat and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Purchasing Power Parities Programme; harmonised methodology and surveys are used to create direct comparisons between countries.

2 . Annual results

In 2020, consumption per head in the UK, measured using actual individual consumption (AIC) per head, was equivalent to the 11th highest in the EU, equal to that of Finland, below Belgium and above Sweden. This is according to new figures recorded by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and compiled and released by Eurostat, the statistical office of the EU, on 15 December 2021.

AIC, which is a measure of material welfare of households, was 13% higher in the UK than the EU27 average; this compares with 17% higher in 2019. Luxembourg was again the highest in the EU (45% above the EU27 average), with Bulgaria the lowest (61% of the EU27 average). AIC per head is often used as a measure of households material welfare. It consists of consumer goods and services consumed by individuals. This is irrespective of whether these goods and services are purchased and paid for by households, by non-profit organisations or by government (such as health and education) services.

Table 1: Countries ranking by actual individual consumption (AIC) per head in 2020

AIC volume index per head, EU27_2020=100

	2018	2019	2020
EU27_2020	100	100	100
Luxembourg	152	149	145
Germany	123	122	124
Denmark	117	115	122
Netherlands	115	115	117
Austria	119	118	116
Belgium	114	114	114
Finland	113	111	113
Sweden	111	108	112
France	109	109	110
Italy	100	100	96
Cyprus	95	96	96
Lithuania	91	92	95
Ireland	95	95	90
Spain	92	91	85
Portugal	85	86	84
Czechia	84	85	84
Poland	78	79	83
Slovenia	81	82	82
Malta	86	86	81
Romania	74	78	80
Estonia	75	75	77
Greece	78	77	74
Slovakia	68	69	71
Latvia	71	71	70
Hungary	65	67	70
Croatia	65	66	68
Bulgaria	57	59	61
EU Exit Country			
United Kingdom	116	117	113
EFTA¹ Countries			
Norway	132	128	126
Switzerland	125	123	124
Iceland	116	114	119

EU Candidate Countries

Turkey	66	67	68
Montenegro	59	60	59
Serbia	48	49	51
North Macedonia	42	42	43
Albania	38	39	39

Accession Country

Bosnia and Herzegovina	40	41	42
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Source: Eurostat

Notes

1. European Free Trade Association.

Table 1 details EU, EU exit, European Free Trade Association, candidate and accession countries' ranking per head in 2020, by actual individual consumption.

3 . Price levels for consumer goods and services

In 2020, [price levels for consumer goods and services](#) differed widely across Europe. Price levels provide a comparison of countries' price levels relative to the EU average, which is now calculated excluding the UK. Denmark has the highest price levels among EU member states, 40% above the average, whilst in Bulgaria the price level was 45% below the EU average. The UK had price levels of 21% above the EU average.

Table 2: Countries ranking by Price levels for consumer goods and services in 2020

Price Level, EU27_2020=100**2020**

EU27_2020	100
Denmark	140
Ireland	140
Luxembourg	132
Finland	127
Sweden	123
Netherlands	116
Belgium	114
France	113
Austria	112
Germany	107
Italy	101
Spain	98
Cyprus	91
Slovakia	90
Malta	90
Portugal	89
Greece	88
Slovenia	88
Estonia	85
Latvia	79
Czechia	77
Croatia	71
Lithuania	70
Hungary	66
Poland	60
Romania	56
Bulgaria	55
EU Exit Country	
United Kingdom	121
EFTA¹ Countries	
Switzerland	170
Iceland	143
Norway	136

EU Candidate Countries

Albania	60
Montenegro	60
Serbia	59
North Macedonia	51
Turkey	44

Accession Country

Bosnia and Herzegovina	56
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Notes

1. European Free Trade Association.

Table 2 details EU, EU exit, European Free Trade Association, candidate and accession countries' ranking in 2020, by price levels for consumer goods and services.

4 . Future developments

Following the UK's exit from the EU, new governance arrangements are being put in place that will support the adoption and implementation of high-quality standards for UK economic statistics. These governance arrangements will promote international comparability and add to the credibility and independence of the UK's statistical system. At the centre of this new governance framework will be the new National Statistician's Committee for Advice on Standards for Economic Statistics (NSCASE). NSCASE will support the UK by ensuring its processes for influencing and adopting international statistical standards are world-leading. The advice NSCASE provides to the National Statistician will span the full range of domains in economic statistics, including the National Accounts, fiscal statistics, prices, trade and the balance of payments and labour market statistics. [Further information](#).

5 . Related links

[Personal and economic well-being in Great Britain](#)

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Estimates looking across personal and economic well-being covering the period from March 2020 to April 2021.