

**Documentation of statistics for  
Consumer Expectations Survey 2020**

## 1 Introduction

The purpose of the survey is to analyze the consumer climate through questions about the economic situation as perceived by consumers at a given time concerning both the general economic situation in Denmark and the financial situation of the family. The main results are coordinated in the so-called consumer confidence indicator. The Danish surveys have been conducted since 1974. From 1996 data is collected in all 12 months of the year.

## 2 Statistical presentation

Consumer monthly questions for: financial situation, general economic situation, price trends, unemployment, major purchases and savings. Consumer quarterly questions for: intention to buy a car, purchase or build a home, home improvements.

### 2.1 Data description

The statistics contain one overall consumer confidence indicator as well as 12 detailed indicators, which are called net figures on consumers' expectations of their own family and the country's economic situation. In addition to the 12 monthly indicators, the statistics contain three additional quarterly indicators, which are net figures of consumers' plans for major investments. The overall consumer confidence indicator is a simple average of the net figures for the following five questions to consumers' expectations:

- How is the financial situation of your household today compared with one year ago?
- How do you think the financial situation of your household will be in a year compared with today?
- How do you think the economic situation in Denmark is today compared with one year ago?
- How do you think the economic situation in Denmark will be in a year compared with today?
- Seen in the light of the economic situation do you think it is at present an advantage to make major purchases, such as TV sets, washing machines or similar, or it is better to wait?

The remaining seven indicators are about consumers expectations / assessments of:

- How do you think the prices are today compared with one year ago?
- Compared with the present situation how do you think the prices will develop during the next 12 months?
- How do you think the level of unemployment will be in a year compared with today?
- In the next 12 months how much will your household spend on major purchases compared with the last 12 months?
- Do you consider it to be reasonable to put money aside in order to save up in the present economic situation?
- Do you expect to put money aside in order to save up over the next 12 months? (Excluding savings such as repayments on priority loans and other loans)
- How is the present financial situation of your household, or in other words: Do you spend more than you earn, or do you find it difficult to make ends meet, or are you able to put money aside?

Quarterly questions are about consumers' future plans about major investments: How likely are you to buy a car over the next 12 months? Are you planning to buy or build a home over the next 12 months (to live in yourself, for a member of your family, as a holiday home, to let etc.)? How likely are you to spend any large sums of money on home improvements or renovations over the next 12 months?

Alternatives of answers and weights:

- How has the financial situation of your household changed over the last 12 months?
- Got a lot better 100
- Got a little better 50
- Stayed the same 0
- Got a little worse -50
- Got a lot worse -100
- How do you expect the financial position of your household to change over the next 12 months? It will:
- Get a lot better 100
- Get a little better 50
- Stay the same 0
- Get a little worse -50
- Get a lot worse -100
- How do you think the general economic situation in the country has changed over the past 12 months? It has:
- Got a lot better 100
- Got a little better 50
- Stayed the same 0
- Got a little worse -50
- Got a lot worse -100
- How do you expect the general economic situation in the country to develop over the next 12 months? It will:
- Got a lot better 100
- Got a little better 50
- Stayed the same 0
- Got a little worse -50
- Got a lot worse -100
- In view of the general economic situation, do you think that now it is the right moment for people to make major purchases such as furniture, electrical/electronic devices, etc.?
- Yes, it is the right moment now 100
- It is neither the right moment nor the wrong moment 0
- No, it is not the right moment now -100
- How do you think that consumer prices have developed over the last 12 months? They have:
- Risen a lot 100
- Risen moderately 50
- Risen slightly 0
- Stayed about the same -50

- Fallen -100
- By comparison with the past 12 months, how do you expect that consumer prices will develop in the next 12 months? They will:
  - Increase more rapidly 100
  - Increase at the same rate 50
  - Increase at a slower rate 0
  - Stay about the same -50
- Fall -100
- How do you expect the number of people unemployed in this country to change over the next 12 months? The number will:
  - Increase sharply 100
  - Increase slightly 50
  - Remain the same 0
  - Fall slightly -50
- Fall sharply -100
- Compared to the past 12 months, do you expect to spend more or less money on major purchases (furniture, electrical/electronic devices, etc.) over the next 12 months?
  - Much more 100
  - A little more 50
  - About the same 0
  - A little less -50
- Much less -100
- In view of the general economic situation, do you think that now is:
  - A very good moment to save 100
  - A fairly good moment to save 50
  - Not a good moment to save -50
- A very bad moment to save -100
- Over the next 12 months, how likely is it that you save any money?
  - Very likely 100
  - Fairly likely 50
  - Not likely -50
- Not at all likely -100
- Which of these statements best describes the current financial situation of your household?
  - We are saving a lot 100
  - We are saving a little 50
  - We are just managing to make ends meet on our income 0
  - We are having to draw on our savings -50

- We are running into debt -100

How likely are you to buy a car over the next 12 months? - Very likely 100 - Fairly likely 50 - Not likely -50 - Not at all likely -100

Are you planning to buy or build a home over the next 12 months (to live in yourself, for a member of your family, as a holiday home, to let etc.)? - Very likely 100 - Fairly likely 50 - Not likely -50 - Not at all likely -100

How likely are you to spend any large sums of money on home improvements or renovations over the next 12 months? - Very likely 100 - Fairly likely 50 - Not likely -50 - Not at all likely -100

## **2.2 Classification system**

Respondents are categorized according to five criteria: income, occupation, education, age and sex.

## **2.3 Sector coverage**

Consumer survey is compiled for consumers' sector.

## **2.4 Statistical concepts and definitions**

Consumer Confidence Indicator: The economic situation as perceived by consumers at a given time, concerning both the general economic situation in Denmark and the financial situation of the family.

Net Figure: An arithmetic average of balances i.e. the difference between positive and negative answers. The answers are weighted into a net figure.

## **2.5 Statistical unit**

Persons and families.

## **2.6 Statistical population**

Persons in the age group from 16-74 years residing in Denmark.

## **2.7 Reference area**

Denmark.

## **2.8 Time coverage**

Statistics covers the period from 1974 henceforward.

## **2.9 Base period**

Not relevant for these statistics.

### **2.10 Unit of measure**

The information is collected through the so-called omnibus surveys. The data are compiled as arithmetic average of balances i.e. the difference between positive and negative answers. The answers are being weighted into a net figure.

### **2.11 Reference period**

The reference period is the survey month. The reference period for the few additional questions, which are added every quarter to the survey is the first month of the respective quarter i.e. for e.g. for the fourth quarter October.

### **2.12 Frequency of dissemination**

Monthly and quarterly for quarterly questions.

### **2.13 Legal acts and other agreements**

The survey is voluntary and therefore does not require a legal act. The work is carried out in accordance with guidelines laid down by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (ECFIN).

### **2.14 Cost and burden**

A sample of 1,500 persons is questioned each month over the telephone. The interviews are fully conducted with approx. 67 %.

### **2.15 Comment**

Additional information can be obtained by Statistics Denmark.

## **3 Statistical processing**

This survey are sample surveys, where a representative sample of persons 16-74 years are asked among other things about the consumer expectations. The results are corrected from the effects of non-sampling and non-response and then enumerated so that the figures can directly be classed with the population of adult persons and families in Denmark. Data are validated using logical validation rules. A seasonal pattern could not be identified in the series and no seasonal adjustment was undertaken.

### **3.1 Source data**

The data is collected through Statistics Denmark's omnibus surveys. The information used for the purpose of the consumer expectations survey has always been collected as part of Statistics Denmark's omnibus surveys. These surveys are sample surveys, where a representative sample of persons 16-74 years are asked among other things about the consumer expectations. The results are corrected from the effects of non-sampling and non-response and then enumerated so that the figures can directly be classed with the population of adult persons and families in Denmark. The data collection takes place within the first two weeks of the month, as well as a few days before the first day of the reference month in order to achieve a satisfactory response rate.

### **3.2 Frequency of data collection**

Monthly.

### **3.3 Data collection**

An omnibus survey.

### **3.4 Data validation**

In the frame of data validation the check of the data correctness is conducted by checking the consistency of the responses by every single respondent, comparison of the results with the results of the previous month, as well as comparison of the non-response rate are also undertaken. There is also a built in formulae in Excel to check whether the results comply with the output from SAS program. Otherwise data are validated using logical validation rules.

### **3.5 Data compilation**

As it is not possible to interview around 34 percentage of 1500 persons, each completed interview is given a personal weight, which partly corrects the effects of non-sampling and non-response and partly ensures that if you sum up all completed interviews you end up with a number of persons in tables and analyses corresponding to a number of persons of the age between 16 and 74 years. The questions asked to the persons are being enumerated with this weight, as well as weighted figures are being used by calculations.

However, a number of variables do not concern the individual person, but the family he/she is living with.

In these cases each respondent who is answering is being given a family weight, which ensures that the families with different numbers of persons aged 16 years or over are represented in the sample with varying probability. A family is defined as one or several persons between 16 and 74 years who live in the same accommodation and are related (includes also cohabiting couples) and their children, though there can only be one married or cohabiting couple in the family. The sum of the family weight for all completed interviews, gives the number of families in Denmark that have persons aged between 16 and 74 years. The number of families is thus an estimate for the random test.

### **3.6 Adjustment**

No further adjustments are undertaken, beyond those that have already been described under Data validation and Data compilation.

## **4 Relevance**

The most important user is the European Commission for Economy and Finances (ECFIN), which receives detailed tables for all questions and publishes seasonally adjusted consumer confidence indicators for all EU member states. The figures are also of great interest to the news media.

### **4.1 User Needs**

The most important user is the European Commission for Economy and Finances (ECFIN), which receives detailed tables for all questions and publishes consumer confidence indicators for all EU member states. The figures are also of great interest to the news media. Since January 2005 Statistics Denmark has delivered net figures and indicators for EU (ECFIN) with decimals. In the same period Statistics Denmark has published the figures with decimals in the Statbank and in "News" from Statistics Denmark.

### **4.2 User Satisfaction**

Relatively large press coverage. Statistics Denmark provides data on consumer expectations to the Ministry of Finance and researchers, for example from Copenhagen Business School (CBS). There have been no requests for changes to the statistics from these users.

### **4.3 Data completeness rate**

All needed statistics are available and comply fully with guidelines submitted by the European Commission. However, the consumer confidence indicator can be calculated in several ways, depending on the purpose of the indicator: to follow / predict growth of the households final consumption expenditures or to follow / predict a general development in the economic situation, both in terms of the family and general economic situation. Eurostat's consumer confidence is based on a slightly different combination of sub-indicators than the current one in Denmark. Therefore, the overall consumer confidence indicators calculated in Denmark and in Eurostat are not directly comparable, whereas all sub-indicators are directly comparable.

## **5 Accuracy and reliability**

As the results are based on a sample survey, they are subject to a certain degree of statistical uncertainty. This depends on both the size of the sample and the number of completed interviews, which vary from survey to survey. With a sample of approximately 1,500 persons and a response rate of about 65%, which has normally been achieved in the last few years, the statistical uncertainty is in 95 pct. of the cases estimated ranged within +/- 3 percentage points. A change in an indicator should be greater than 5 percentage points to indicate a significant change.



### **5.1 Overall accuracy**

Overall accuracy depends on on the sample size and on the number of conducted interviews., which vary from survey to survey. With a sample of approximately 1,500 persons and a response rate of about 65 pct., which has normally been achieved in the last few years, the statistical uncertainty is in 95pct. of the cases estimated ranged within +/- 3 percentage points. A change in an indicator should be greater than 5 percentage points to indicate a significant change.

### **5.2 Sampling error**

At present an omnibus survey consists of a sample of about 1,500 persons, drawn from a population of persons aged 16-74 years residing in Denmark.

As it is not possible to interview all 1,500 persons, each completed interview is given a personal weight, which partly corrects the effects of non-sampling and non-response and partly ensures that if you sum up all completed interviews you end up with a number of persons in tables and analyses corresponding to a number of persons of the age between 16 and 74 years. The questions asked to the persons are being enumerated with this weight, as well as weighted figures are being used at calculations of percentages.

However, a number of variables do not concern the individual person, but the family he/she is living with.

In these cases each respondent who is answering is being given a family weight, which ensures that the families with different numbers of persons aged 16 years or over are represented in the sample with varying probability. A family is defined as one or several persons between 16 and 74 years who live in the same accommodation and are related (includes also cohabiting couples) and their children, though there can only be one married or cohabiting couple in the family. The sum of the family weight for all completed interviews, gives the number of families in Denmark that have persons aged between 16 and 74 years. The number of families is thus an estimate for the random test.

With a sample of approximately 1,500 persons and a response rate of about 65%, which has normally been achieved in the last few years, the statistical uncertainty is in 95% of the cases estimated ranged within +/- 3 percentage points.

### **5.3 Non-sampling error**

Not available information.

### **5.4 Quality management**

Statistics Denmark follows the recommendations on organisation and management of quality given in the Code of Practice for European Statistics (CoP) and the implementation guidelines given in the Quality Assurance Framework of the European Statistical System (QAF). A Working Group on Quality and a central quality assurance function have been established to continuously carry through control of products and processes.

## 5.5 Quality assurance

Statistics Denmark follows the principles in the Code of Practice for European Statistics (CoP) and uses the Quality Assurance Framework of the European Statistical System (QAF) for the implementation of the principles. This involves continuous decentralized and central control of products and processes based on documentation following international standards. The central quality assurance function reports to the Working Group on Quality. Reports include suggestions for improvement that are assessed, decided and subsequently implemented.

## 5.6 Quality assessment

As it is not possible to interview all 1,500 persons, each completed interview is given a personal weight, which partly corrects the effects of non-sampling and non-response and partly ensures that if you sum up all completed interviews, you end up with a number of persons in tables and analyses corresponding to a number of persons of the age between 16 and 74 years. The questions asked to the persons are being enumerated with this weight, as well as weighted figures are being used at calculations of percentages.

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## 5.7 Data revision - policy

Statistics Denmark revises published figures in accordance with the [Revision Policy for Statistics Denmark](#). The common procedures and principles of the Revision Policy are for some statistics supplemented by a specific revision practice.

## 5.8 Data revision practice

Only final figures.

## 6 Timeliness and punctuality

There is no difference between planned and actual release time.

### 6.1 Timeliness and time lag - final results

The consumer expectations survey for a given month is published monthly and about 2-3 days after the reference period. Only final figures are published.

## 6.2 Punctuality

The reference period is the survey month, where the data collection takes place in the first two weeks of the month. The consumer expectations survey for a given month is published monthly and about 2-3 days after completing the collection of data. Announced the release date and deadlines to Eurostat are respected 100%.

## 7 Comparability

The questions asked in connection with these statistics in Denmark are also asked in the European Commission's Consumer confidence survey'. The European Commission publishes figures for all EU countries in its database. Eurostat's consumer confidence is based on a slightly different composition of questions than the current one in Denmark. Therefore, the overall consumer confidence indicators calculated in Denmark and in Eurostat are not directly comparable, whereas all sub-indicators are directly comparable. The questions shown in the section 2.01. Data description, have been asked in all the omnibus surveys since 1974. Due to minor changes in the calculation method, an immediate comparison is only possible from 2007 onwards.

### 7.1 Comparability - geographical

Statistics is comparable across the countries, since all national institutes use the same harmonized questionnaires in accordance with the principle of harmonization of the Commission's survey program, which aims to produce a set of comparable data for all countries. However, the European 'Consumer confidence indicator' is calculated as a simple arithmetic mean of the net figures for the questions: 1) The family's financial situation today compared to a year ago? 2) The family's financial situation in a year, compared with today 4) Denmark's financial situation in a year, compared with today  
9) How much will the family spend on larger consumer goods in the next 12 months compared to the last 12 months?

Statistics Denmark calculates the consumer confidence indicator as a simple arithmetic mean of the net figures for the questions: 1) The family's financial situation today, compared to a year ago 2) The family's financial situation in a year, compared to today 3) Denmark's economic situation today, compared with a year ago 4) Denmark's economic situation in a year, compared with today 5) Acquisition of major consumer goods, it is considered advantageous at the moment

Therefore, the European 'Consumer confidence indicator' and the Danish consumer confidence indicator are not directly comparable. The Danish consumer confidence indicator is a combination of the consumer's assessment of their own financial situation and Denmark's current financial situation, as well as the consumer's expectations for the future. In Denmark, consumer confidence indicator reflects the general economic situation, both for the family and Denmark in present and in the future, but with a little less focus on the future. Eurostat's indicator provides a better insight into the consumers' expectations about their own economic situation, with the purpose to follow the development in households final consumption expenditures. The consumer confidence indicators in Denmark and in Eurostat follow generally the same change of direction, however with minor deviations in levels, which become significantly higher during the world's major financial and economic crises such as the world's financial crisis in 2008 and in the aftermath of it, and persistent economic crisis triggered by COVID-19.

## 7.2 Comparability over time

The questions shown in the section 2.01. Data description, have been asked in all the omnibus surveys since 1974. Due to minor changes in the calculation method, an immediate comparison is only possible from 2007 onwards. Decimals: Until December 2004, the net figures for the various indicators of the consumer expectations survey have been calculated and published as integers. However, upon the request of the European Commission, the net figures in the consumer expectation survey and the consumer confidence indicator from January 2005 onwards are calculated and delivered with one decimal.

## 7.3 Coherence - cross domain

Not relevant for this statistics.

## 7.4 Coherence - internal

Not relevant for these statistics.

## 8 Accessibility and clarity

The results are published in [News from Statistics Denmark](#) and [Statbank Denmark](#). Further, there is a subject page for [Consumer Expectations](#).

After each survey, Statistics Denmark submits detailed tables giving a number of background variables as well as the consumer confidence indicator and net figures to the European Commission, which publishes monthly both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted indicator and the net figures for each members state (incl. Denmark), at European Commission database: [European Commission database](#). The access to the more detailed data and Micro-data can be granted through Statistics Denmark's agreement for researchers.

### 8.1 Release calendar

The publication date appears in the release calendar. The date is confirmed in the weeks before.

### 8.2 Release calendar access

The Release Calendar can be accessed on our English website: [Release Calendar](#).

### 8.3 User access

Statistics are always published at 8:00 a.m. at the day announced in the release calendar. No one outside of Statistics Denmark can access the statistics before they are published.

### 8.4 News release

[News from Statistics Denmark](#) (only in Danish)

## 8.5 Publications

There is a subject page for [Consumer Expectations](#).

## 8.6 On-line database

The statistics are published in the StatBank under the subject [Consumer expectations](#) in the following tables:

- [FORV1](#): Consumer confidence indicator by indicator and time

## 8.7 Micro-data access

Micro-data is regularly submitted to the European Commission by Statistics Denmark, but is not accessible to third party. The access to the more detailed data and Micro-data can be granted through Statistics Denmark's agreement for researchers. Micro-data is subject to the rule of anonymisation in order to protect personal information.

## 8.8 Other

After each survey, Statistics Denmark submits detailed tables giving a number of background variables as well as the consumer confidence indicator and net figures to the European Commission, which publishes monthly both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted indicator and the net figures for each members state (incl. Denmark), at European Commission database: [European Commission database](#).

## 8.9 Confidentiality - policy

[Statistics Denmark Confidentiality policy](#)

## 8.10 Confidentiality - data treatment

[Statistics Denmark Confidentiality policy](#)

## 8.11 Documentation on methodology

There is no other documentation available.

## 8.12 Quality documentation

Results from the quality evaluation of products and selected processes are available in detail for each statistics and in summary reports for the Working Group on Quality.

## 9 Contact

The administrative placement of these statistic are in the division of Consumption and Prices. The person responsible is Zdravka Bosanac, tel. +45 39 17 34 46, e-mail: [zbo@dst.dk](mailto:zbo@dst.dk)

## **9.1 Contact organisation**

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