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Press release

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Consumer prices Sint Maarten February 2011 ***Prices have increased compared to December 2010***

The consumer price index for Sint Maarten has increased in the month of February 2011 by 1,4 percent compared to that of December 2010.

When comparing average consumer prices over a twelve month period (Feb. 2010 to Feb. 2011), it can be noted that an increase of 2,6 percent was recorded compared to the same period one year earlier.

This is evident from the data that has been released by the Department of Statistics (STAT) today.

Price changes between December 2010 and February 2011

The consumer prices on Sint Maarten for the month of February 2011 has increased by 1,4 percent compared to that of December 2010. The price index recorded in February 2011 is 113,4.

Expenditure Categories

In February 2011, seven of the nine expenditure categories have become more expensive. Namely the categories; Food (+1,7%), Beverages and Tobacco (+3,8%), Housing (+1,3%), Household Furnishing & Appliances (+0,3%), Medical Care (+0,2%), Transport and Communication (+3,8%) and Miscellaneous (+0,5%). Whilst two expenditure categories recorded price reductions, namely the categories Clothing and Footwear (-1.1%) and Recreation & Education (-0,3%).

Expenditure Category	WEIGHT	INDEX DECEMBER 2010	INDEX FEBRUARY 2011	% CHANGE
Food	10%	131,4	133,6	1,7
Beverages and Tobacco	1%	117,5	122	3,8
Clothing & Footwear	7%	104,7	103,5	-1,1
Housing	39%	115,2	116,7	1,3
Household furnishing & Appliances	6%	110,2	110,5	0,3
Medical care	3%	102,2	102,4	0,2
Transport & Communication	20%	103,4	107,3	3,8
Recreation & Education	6%	101,2	100,9	-0,3
Misc.	8%	108,4	108,9	0,5
TOTAL	100%	111,8	113,4	1,4

A Closer Look

The categories which recorded the largest price change and influence on the total percent change are Food, Housing and Transport & Communication with an influence percentage of 10%, 39% and 20% respectively.

Food

Within the expenditure category Food it can be noted that five of the nine food groups became more expensive, while three food groups became cheaper and one remained unchanged. Amongst the more expensive were the food groups Grain (+0,6%), Dairy Products (+1,5%), Potatoes, Vegetables & Fruit (+7,4%), Sugar & Chocolate (+3,2%) and Other food resources (+1,0%). Whilst in the food groups Meat & Fish, Fats & Oils and Pre-cooked dishes a price reduction of -0,2%, -0,1% and -1,% respectively was recorded. The food group Eating-out remained unchanged

More specifically the following products largely influenced the total price change within the food category; Grains largely influenced by; White Rice (+4,9%). The food group Potatoes, Vegetables & Fruit largely influenced by; Cabbage (+19,4%), Carrots (+25,9%), Grapes & Plums (+26.9%), Leafy Vegetables (+11,1%), Tomatoes (+7,7%), Cucumbers (+21,8%) and Apples & Pears (+7,1%). The food group Meat & Fish largely influenced by; Corned Beef (+22,5%), Chicken (-3,2%) and Oxtail (-3,4%)

Housing

Within the expenditure category Housing it can be noted that four of the five product groups became more expensive whilst one remain unchanged. Amongst the more expensive were the product groups Living costs (+0,5%), Energy usage (4,1%), House maintenance (+3,1%) and Garden maintenance (+1,0%).

More specifically it must be noted that the products Electricity (+0,9%) and Cooking Gas (+23%) largely influenced the total price percentage change recorded in the product group Energy Usage. Whilst the products Paint (+5,2%) and Wood (-7,4%) largely influenced the total price percentage change recorded in the product group House maintenance.

Transport & Communication

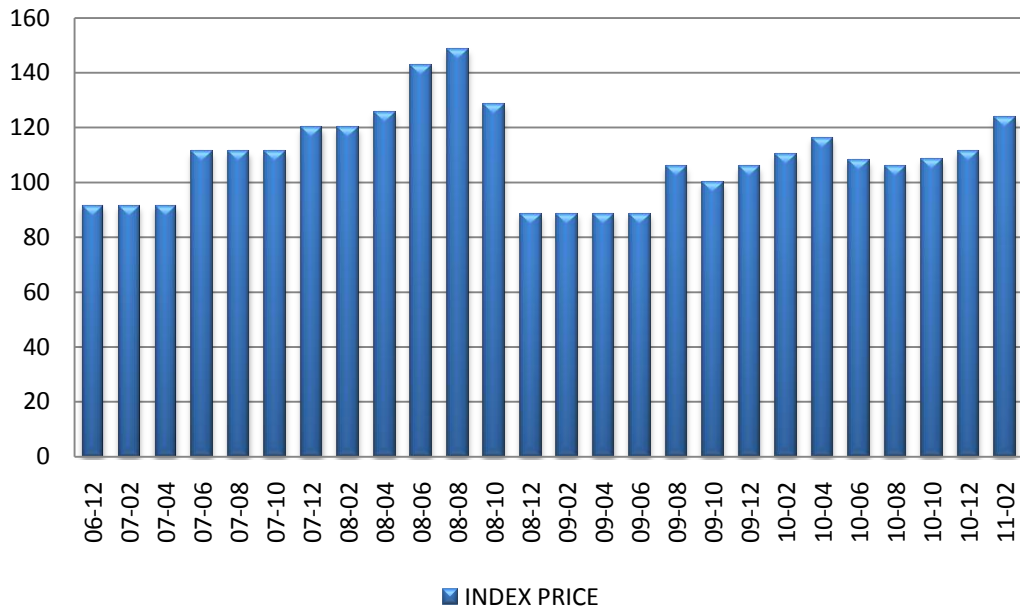
Within the expenditure category Transport & Communication two of the four product groups became more expensive whilst two remained stable. Amongst the more expensive were the product groups Vehicle Purchase (+10,5%) and Vehicle Expenses (+4,2%).

Note that the following products largely influenced the total price change within the product group Vehicle Purchase; Purchasing a New Car (+11,3%). Whilst the products Gasoline (+11.3%) and Diesel (+23%) largely influenced the product group Vehicle Expenses.

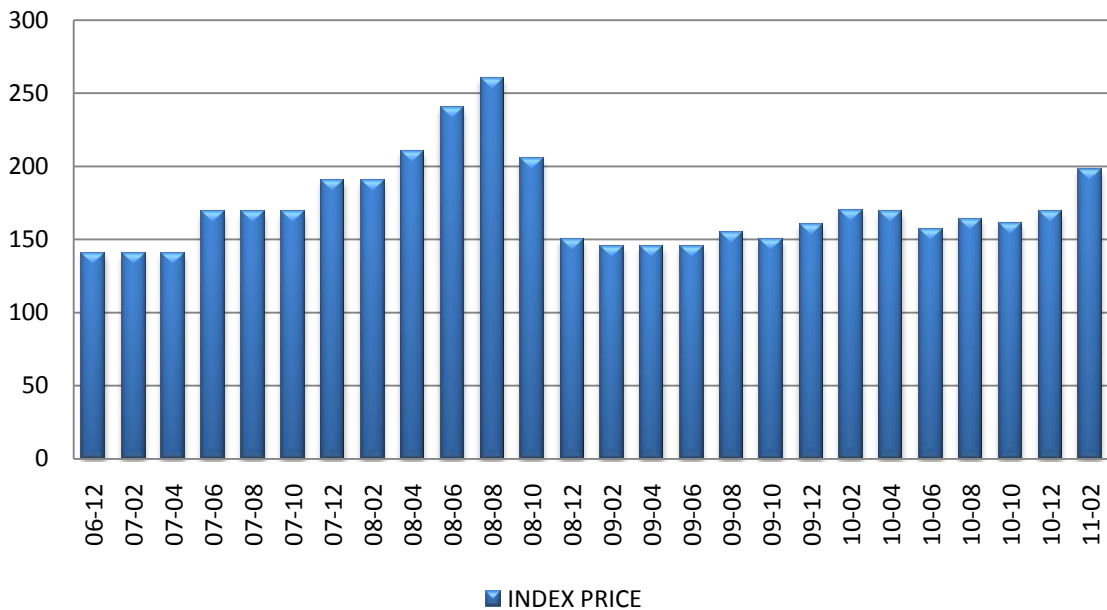
A Special Edition : Oil Market

There have been frequent price changes recorded for the products Gasoline and Diesel on Sint Maarten. In light of these developments a closer look at the World Crude Oil prices will help to explain the volatile trend. Note that the average price per barrel of crude oil has increased by approximately \$24,4 between February 2010 and 2011. This upward trend in the price per barrel is also noticeable in the Index figures depicted by the bar graphs of both Gasoline and Diesel on Sint Maarten.

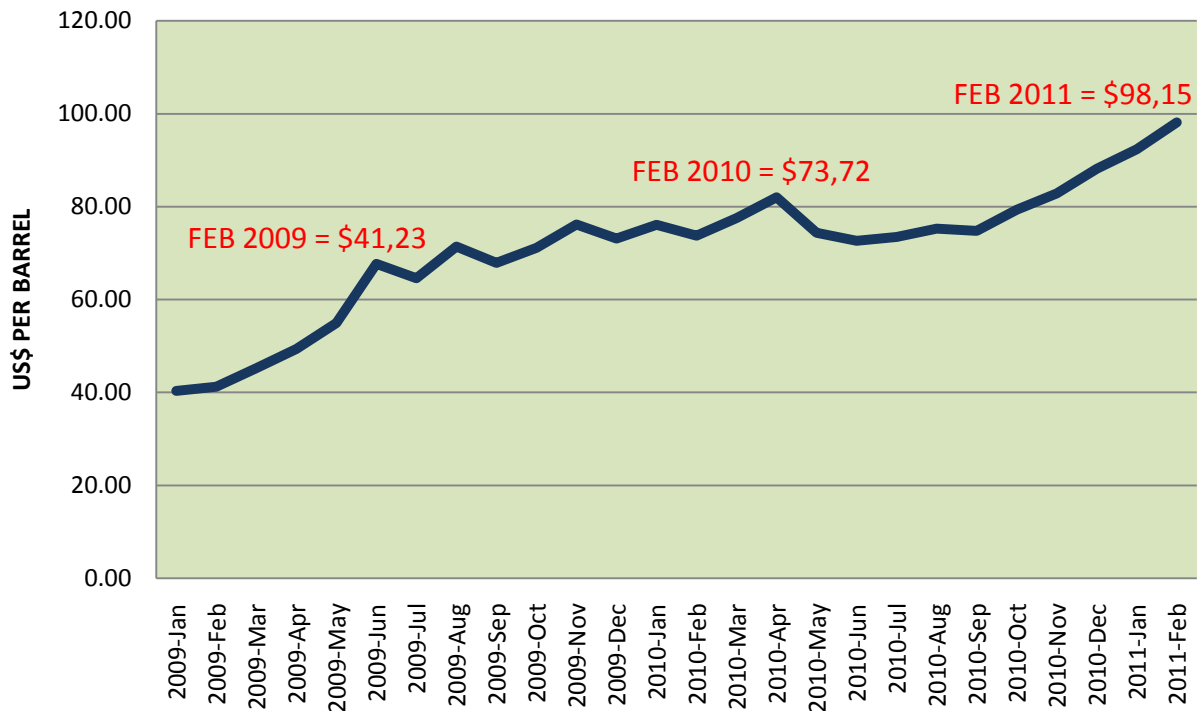
SINT MAARTEN GASOLINE INDEX OCT 2006 =100



SINT MAARTEN DIESEL INDEX OCT 2006 =100



WORLD CRUDE OIL AVE. PRICE PER BARREL 2-YEAR OVERVIEW



Long-term inflation

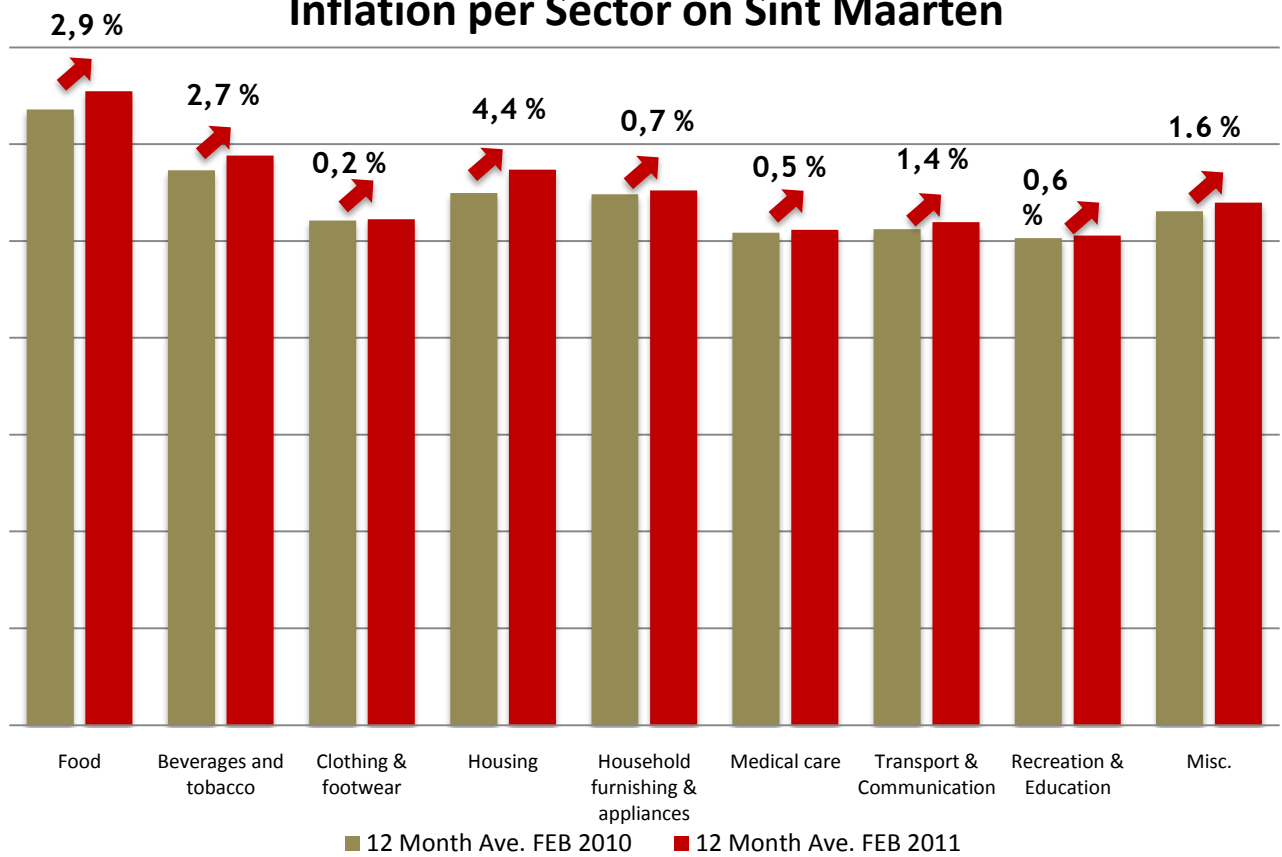
Inflation Sint Maarten February 2011

The 12-month average of consumer prices were 2,6 percent higher in February 2011 than in February 2010. The inflation rate of February 2011 (2,6%) has increased by 52.9 percent compared to that of February 2010 (1,7%).

Inflation per Expenditure Category

All nine expenditure categories recorded inflation in February 2011. Housing at a rate of 4,4 percent, which is the category with the largest influence (39%). Transportation and Communication at a rate of 1,4 percent, which is the second largest category (20%).

Inflation per Sector on Sint Maarten



2-year Overview

The bar chart below illustrates that inflation on Sint Maarten has begun to decline gradually. The inflation rate recorded in February 2011 (2,6%) is comparable to that recorded in April 2010 (2,4%).

Inflation Sint Maarten during the past 2 years

