



DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS (STAT)

For more information: 549-2151 or 0235 – fax 542-3022

Address: Juancho Yrausquin Boulevard 6 (units 7/8)

Email: statinfo@sintmaartengov.org

Press release

Philipsburg, April 5th 2013

Consumer prices Sint Maarten February 2013 ***Prices have increased compared to December 2012***

The consumer price index for Sint Maarten has increased in the month of February 2013 by 1.1 percent compared to that of December 2012.

When comparing average consumer prices over a twelve month period (Feb. 2012 to Feb. 2013), an increase of 3.5 percent was recorded compared to the same period one year earlier. The rate of inflation has continued to ease since June 2012; following an all-time high of 5.5 percent in April 2012. Inflation in Food has now eased to 9.9 percent, following 13 consecutive months of double digit percentage increases. However the food index continues to climb indicative of rising consumer prices within this category.

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

Price changes between December 2012 & February 2013

The consumer price index for Sint Maarten has increased in the month of February 2013 by 1.1 percent compared to that of December 2012. The price index recorded in February 2013 is 123.2.

Expenditure Category	WEIGHT	INDEX DECEMBER 2012	INDEX FEBRUARY 2013	% CHANGE
Food	10%	162.1	164.0	1.2
Beverages and tobacco	1%	139.9	141.6	1.2
Clothing & footwear	7%	113.7	113.7	0.0
Housing	39%	122.5	122.2	-0.2
Household furnishing & appliances	6%	123.3	136.8	10.9
Medical care	3%	104.8	104.8	0.0
Transport & communication	20%	110.4	112.3	1.7
Recreation & education	6%	106.8	107.2	0.4
Misc.	8%	114.4	116.1	1.5
TOTAL	100%	121.8	123.2	1.1

Expenditure Categories

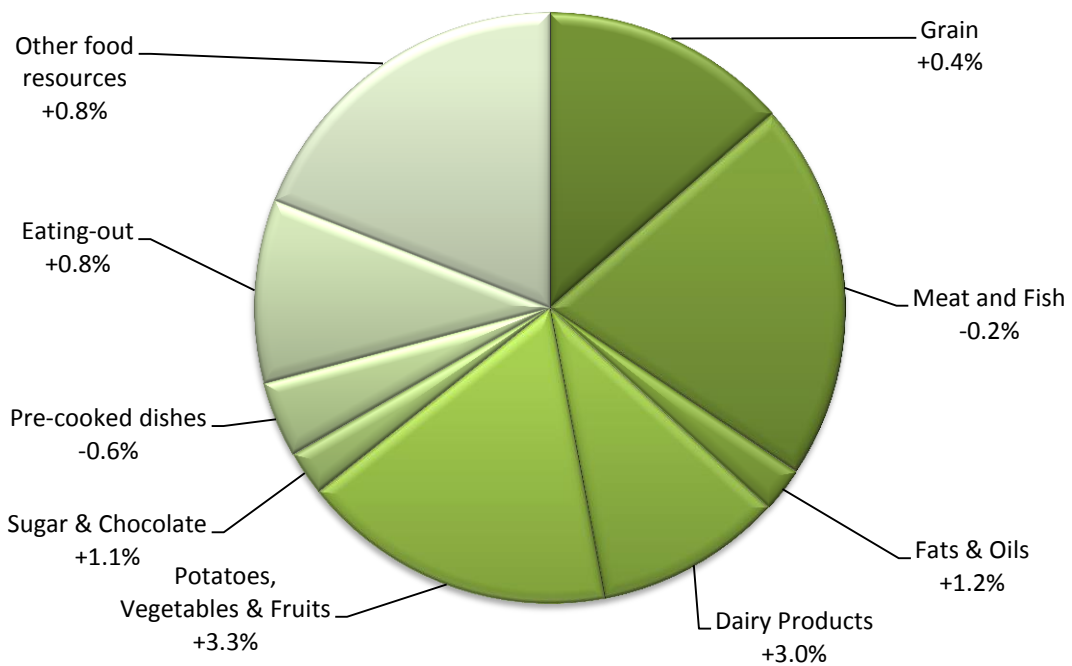
In February 2013, six of the nine expenditure categories have become more expensive, whilst one became cheaper and two remains unchanged. Amongst the more expensive were the categories; Food (+1.2%), Beverages and Tobacco (+1.2%), (+0.2%), Household Furnishing & Appliances (+10.9%), Transport & Communication (+1.7%), Recreation & Education(+0.4%) and Miscellaneous (+1.5%). Whereas, Housing (-0.2%) became cheaper; Clothing and Footwear and Medical Care remained stable.

A Closer Look

The categories with the largest influence in the basket are Housing (39%), Transport & Communication (20%) and Food (10%); In February 2013 the expenditure category Household Furnishing & Appliances impacted the overall index the most with a 10.9 percent increase in consumer prices of this category. The expenditure category Transport & Communication had the second largest impact upon the overall index with a 1.7 percent increase in consumer prices.

Food

FOOD EXPENDITURE CATEGORY 10% of CPI



1

Within the expenditure category Food it can be noted that seven of the nine food groups became more expensive whilst two became cheaper. The following increases were recorded in each food group; Grain (+0.4%), %, groups Fats & Oils (+1.2%), Dairy Products (+3.0%), Potatoes, Vegetables & Fruit (+3.3%), Sugar & Chocolate (+1.1%), Eating-out (+0.8%) and other food resources (+0.8%). Whilst the food groups Meat and Fish (-0.2%) and Pre-cooked dishes (-0.6%), became slightly cheaper.

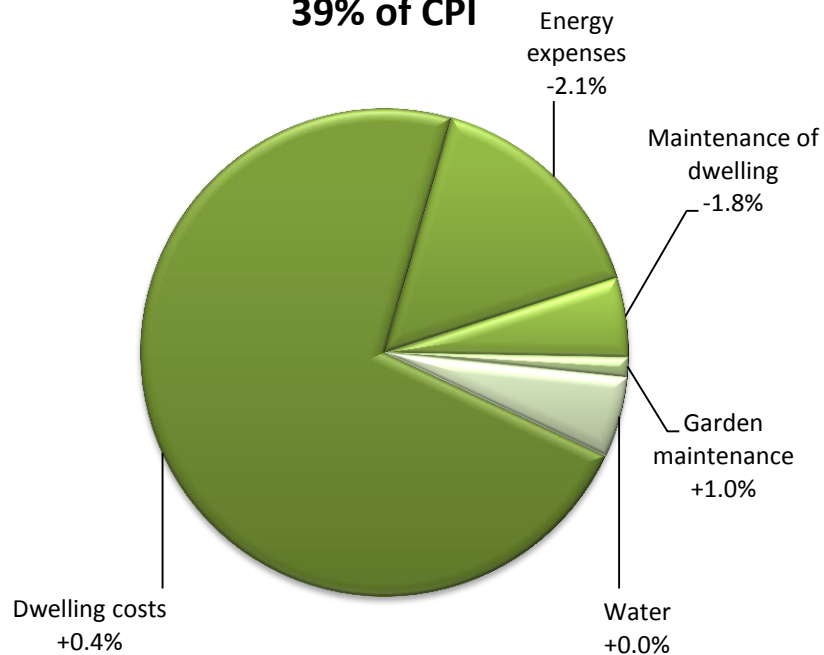
More specifically the following products largely influenced the total price change within the food groups: 'Meat & Fish', this was largely influenced by; Beef (-4.2%), pork chops (-4.1%), other pork meat (-3.3%) and sardines (+10.8%) and canned tuna (+7.4%). The food group 'Dairy Products' was largely influenced by; powdered milk (+2.2%). The food group 'Potatoes, Vegetables & Fruit' was largely influenced by; Leafy vegetables (+21.8%), Onions (+9.4%), Tomatoes (-10.6%), other fresh vegetables (-5.1%), frozen vegetables (+21.2%), grapes (+21.5%) and other fresh fruit (+4.3%).

1 Please note that the pie chart above depicts the share (*weight*) each food group carries toward the entire Food expenditure category, whilst the percentages indicate the price change within that food group.

Housing

HOUSING EXPENDITURE CATEGORY

39% of CPI

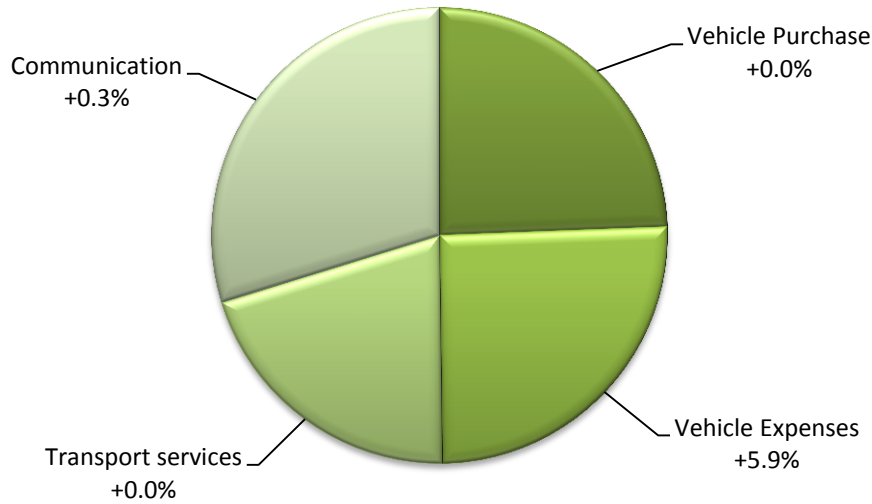


2

Within the expenditure category Housing it is noted that two of the five product groups became cheaper and two became more expensive. The product groups Energy expenses and Maintenance of dwelling both decreased by 2.1% and 1.8% respectively, whilst garden maintenance increased with 1 percent. A drop in the consumer price of the following products; paint (-2.5%), wood (-11.5%) and other materials (-4.1%) largely influenced the total price change within the product group Maintenance of dwelling. The 2.7 percent decline in prices of electricity, largely influenced the total price change within the product group 'Energy Expenses'.

2 Please note that the pie chart above depicts the share (*weight*) each food group carries toward the entire Housing expenditure category, whilst the percentages indicate the price change within that product group.

**TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION
EXPENDITURE CATEGORY
20% of CPI**



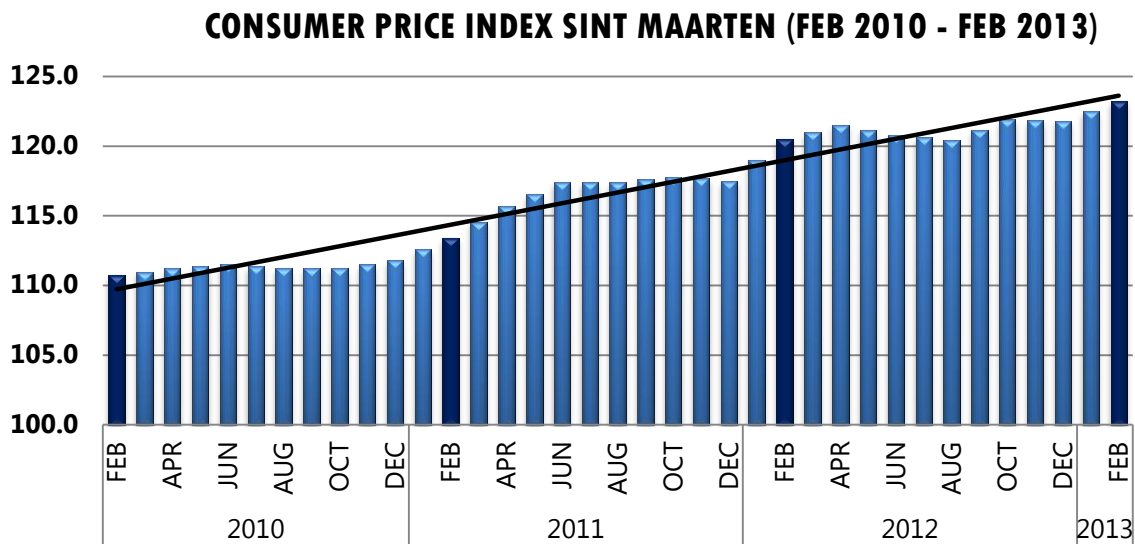
3

Within the expenditure category Transport & Communication two of the four product groups became more expensive, whilst two remained unchanged. The consumer prices within the product group 'Vehicle Expenses' increased by 5.9 percent. Noteworthy is that the product group 'Vehicle Expenses' was largely influenced by the following products; Gasoline (+14.4%), Diesel (+1.4%) and Motor oil (+2.7%). The 4.9 percent increase in prices of postal services, largely influenced the total price change in the product group communication.

3 Please note that the pie chart above depicts the share (*weight*) each food group carries toward the entire Transport & Communication expenditure category, whilst the percentages indicate the price change within that product group.

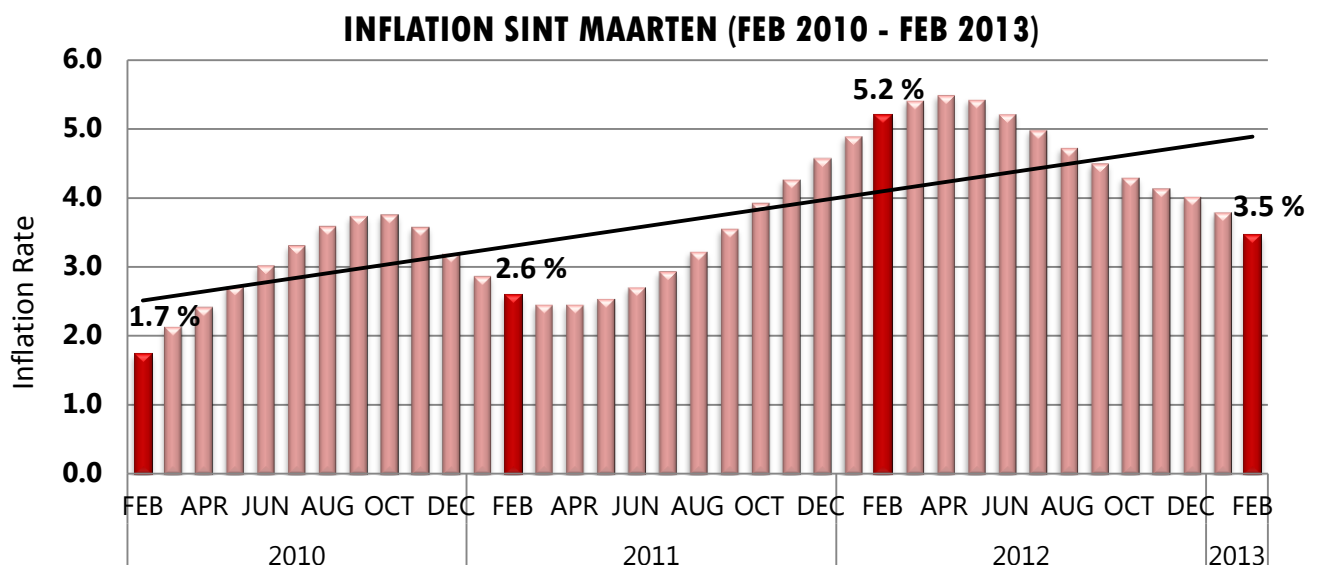
Sint Maarten Consumer Price Index a Broader Perspective

The consumer prices over the past three years have recorded steady increases depicted in the bar chart of Sint Maarten's index figures. Noteworthy are slight contractions recorded during the months August, September and December; indicative of easing consumer prices during these months. Yet the trend illustrates a steady upward movement in consumer prices by 13 index points over the 3-year period (Feb'10 to Feb'13).



3-year Overview

The trend line depicted on the bar chart below indicates that inflation on Sint Maarten over the prior 3-year period has been climbing. The rate of inflation has shown steady growth since April 2011; reaching an all-time high of 5.5 percent in April of 2012. However as of June 2012, the rate of inflation has begun to ease. Inflation of 3.5 percent for February 2013 is comparable to that of September 2011 (3.6%); it is the lowest recorded inflation rate since the second quarter of 2011.



Inflation Sint Maarten February 2013

The 12-month average of consumer prices was 3.5 percent higher in February 2013 than a year earlier. This represents a decrease in the inflation rate of 32.69 percent within this period mentioned.

Inflation per Expenditure Category

All nine expenditure categories recorded inflation in February 2013. Housing at a rate of 1.6 percent, Transportation and Communication at a rate of 1.8 percent and Food prices inflated at a rate of 9.9 percent.

