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**Inflation increased to 2.0% in March 2021 (HICP: 2.0%)**

**Vienna**, 2021-04-16 – In March 2021, the **inflation rate** was 2.0%, as Statistics Austria reports (February 2021: 1.2%) reaching the highest value since February 2020 (+2.2%). Mainly responsible for this were fuel and heating oil prices, which turned out to be price drivers due to their significant low price levels in March 2020 (base effect). Housing, water and energy (+2.9% compared to March 2020) remained the most important price driver.

The CPI 2020 was at 101.9, while the average price level increased by 1.1% compared to February 2021.

"Crude oil prices on the world market caused the inflation rate to rise to the ECB target of 2% in March 2021, putting a stop to the phase of lowest inflation rates for the time being. The crash of oil prices at the beginning of 2020 had a strong dampening effect on price development last year, which is now gone as crude oil prices have largely returned to their previous level," says Statistics Austria Director General Tobias Thomas.

The measures to contain COVID-19 had a less but still significant impact on the **calculation** of the March inflation rate. In contrast to February in the supermarket and drugstore-sector the price surveys were changed from scanner data to in-store collection. The retail sector, personal services like hairdressers and museums and zoos were still open and prices there were also collected in-store. As in February the most affected sectors were: gastronomy, theatre, tourism, entertainment, leisure and sport. Where necessary, different imputation methods like seasonal imputation, all items imputation or carry-forward were applied. In total, this affected about 13.8% of the weight of the basket of goods and services. For further in-depth explanation of the general principles and applied computation methods, please refer to the [methodological information note](#) (PDF, 1 MB) on the compilation of the CPI in the context of COVID-19.

The index level of the **harmonised index of consumer prices (HICP 2015)** was 110.69 in March 2021 (February 2021: revised 109.40) with a harmonised inflation rate at 2.0%.

For more detailed information please refer to the [German version](#).