

Press release

23 July 2021

Results of the ECB Survey of Professional Forecasters in the third quarter of 2021

- HICP inflation expectations revised up for all horizons
- Real GDP growth expectations revised upwards for shorter and medium-term horizons
- Unemployment rate expectations revised down for all horizons

In the ECB Survey of Professional Forecasters (SPF) for the third quarter of 2021, HICP inflation expectations stood at 1.9%, 1.5% and 1.5% for 2021, 2022 and 2023, respectively. Compared with the previous round for the second quarter of 2021, these were revised upward by 0.3 percentage points for 2021, 0.2 percentage points for 2022 and 0.05 percentage points for 2023 (unchanged rounded to the first decimal point). Respondents once again confirmed that they considered some of the factors behind the expected increase in inflation in 2021 to be temporary but believed that underlying inflation pressure would gradually rise as economic activity recovers. Longer-term inflation expectations for 2026 stood at 1.8%, revised up from 1.7% for 2025 in the previous round.

Regarding GDP growth, SPF respondents revised up their expectations for 2021-2023. These expectations imply that economic activity will surpass its pre-pandemic level (fourth quarter of 2019) in the fourth quarter of 2021, one quarter earlier than previously expected. Average longer-term expectations for real GDP growth were unchanged at 1.4%.

The profile of unemployment has been revised down for all horizons.

Indicators of the uncertainty surrounding expectations for the main macroeconomic variables mostly eased further but remained relatively elevated by historical standards.

European Central Bank

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Table: Results of the ECB Survey of Professional Forecasters for the third quarter of 2021

(annual percentage changes, unless otherwise indicated)

Survey horizon	2021	2022	2023	Longer term ⁽¹⁾
HICP inflation				
Q3 2021 SPF	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.8
<i>Previous SPF (Q2 2021)</i>	1.6	1.3	1.5	1.7
HICP inflation excluding energy, food, alcohol and tobacco				
Q3 2021 SPF	1.2	1.3	1.5	1.7
<i>Previous SPF (Q2 2021)</i>	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.6
Real GDP growth				
Q3 2021 SPF	4.7	4.6	2.1	1.4
<i>Previous SPF (Q2 2021)</i>	4.2	4.1	1.9	1.4
Unemployment rate ⁽²⁾				
Q3 2021 SPF	8.1	7.8	7.5	7.2
<i>Previous SPF (Q2 2021)</i>	8.5	8.1	7.7	7.4

1) In the third quarter of 2021, SPF longer-term expectations refer to 2026 (in the previous round for the second quarter of 2021, they referred to 2025).

2) As a percentage of the labour force.

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Notes

- The SPF is conducted on a quarterly basis and gathers expectations for the rates of inflation, real GDP growth and unemployment in the euro area for several horizons, together with a quantitative assessment of the uncertainty surrounding them. The participants in the survey are experts affiliated with financial or non-financial institutions based within the European Union. The survey results do not represent the views of the ECB's decision-making bodies or its staff. The next Eurosystem staff macroeconomic projections will be published on 9 September 2021.
- Since 2015 the results of the SPF have been published on the ECB's website. For surveys prior to the first quarter of 2015, see the ECB's Monthly Bulletin (2002-2014: Q1 – February, Q2 – May, Q3 – August, Q4 – November).
- The survey was conducted between 30 June and 5 July 2021 with 57 responses received. The survey was conducted before the ECB press conference on 8 July reporting the outcome of the strategy review.
- The SPF report and data are available via the [SPF webpage](#) and via the ECB's [Statistical Data Warehouse](#).

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