

Response Rates for the Consumer Price Indexes, 2003

This article and the accompanying tables update articles previously published on response rates in the *CPI Detailed Report* for March 1991, and in the January issues of 1993 through 2003.

In an effort to measure the outcome of data collection for the CPI, the BLS calculates response rates. Response rates measure the proportion of completed surveys to those issued and help measure the accuracy of the CPI. Failure of a data unit to respond at either the data collection stage or estimation stage represents a loss of statistical information which dilutes the accuracy of the sample. BLS publishes response rates annually to assist the data user in judging the accuracy of CPI data.

BLS calculates response rates for the CPI-U at the data collection and data estimation phases for pricing. The response rate at the data collection phase is the number of responding sample units divided by the number of eligible sample units. A sample unit is eligible if it belongs to the defined target population and if it should provide information for one or more items. The response rate at estimation is defined as the number of sample units used in estimation divided by the number of eligible sample units.

Response rates for 2003 are presented in tables R-1 through R-16. Table R-1 shows response rates for all data included in the CPI-U, U.S. city average, by major group, for all of 2003. Tables R-2 through R-16 show rates for current data collection in selected areas for which indexes are published monthly and bimonthly.

The response rates in tables R-1 through R-16 are separated into commodities and services, and the shelter portion of housing. Commodities and services are further broken down into outlets and quotes. An "outlet" is a generic term that designates the place where prices are collected. A "quote" is a specific item to be priced in a specific outlet. There may be from 1 to more than 50 quotes priced in each outlet.

In table R-1, it is important to note the relatively low percentages of quotes reported, collected and used in estimation for apparel. Low rates for these items can be partially attributed to the design of the apparel sample. Because seasonal apparel items commonly are in stores only during certain times of the year, most of the apparel sample is doubled, with each half of the sample designated for pricing during part of the year. Thus, at any particular time of the year, a large number of apparel quotes, although eligible, are designated out of season and are not collected.

The response rates at the data collection phase for shelter are separated into three categories. If useable information is obtained, the unit is designated *data reported*. If the assigned unit is located but is unoccupied, the unit is designated *found vacant*. In instances where the unit is eligible but no data are available (for example, refusals or no one at home) the unit is designated *other*.

For additional information on response rates, write to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of Consumer Prices and Price Indexes, Room 3615, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE., Washington, DC 20212-0001, or call Doris L. Johnson at (202) 691-7000.

Table R-1. Response rates for the CPI-U, U.S. city average, by major group and shelter, 2003

Commodities and services	Outlets	Quotes								
		Total	Food	Housing (excluding shelter)	Apparel	Transportation	Medical care	Recreation	Education and communication	Other goods and services
Eligible	340,717	1,117,186	411,609	149,288	144,383	127,050	90,816	86,067	63,784	44,189
Collected										
Number	329,344	947,010	373,782	133,171	75,452	117,662	80,739	73,264	52,357	40,583
Percent	96.7	84.8	90.8	89.2	52.3	92.6	88.9	85.1	82.1	91.8
Used in estimation										
Number	316,773	926,775	368,186	130,107	71,581	115,338	79,480	70,702	51,337	40,044
Percent	93.0	83.0	89.5	87.2	49.6	90.8	87.5	82.1	80.5	90.6
Shelter	All Units									
Eligible										
Number	68,624									
Percent	100.0									
Collected										
Data reported										
Number	52,113									
Percent	75.9									
Found vacant										
Number	6,106									
Percent	8.9									
Other										
Number	10,405									
Percent	15.2									
Used in estimation										
Number	58,219									
Percent	84.8									

Table R-2. Response rates for the CPI-U, Chicago-Gary-Kenosha, IL-IN-WI, 2003

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	16,543	46,467	Eligible	
Collected			Number	2,218
Number	15,965	39,129	Percent	100.0
Percent	96.5	84.2	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	15,370	38,490	Number	1,423
Percent	92.9	82.8	Percent	64.2
			Found vacant	
			Number	178
			Percent	8.0
			Other	
			Number	617
			Percent	27.8
			Used in estimation	
			Number	1,601
			Percent	72.2

Table R-3. Response rates for the CPI-U, Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, CA, 2003

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	28,193	77,253	Eligible	
Collected			Number	4,644
Number	27,641	64,087	Percent	100.0
Percent	98.0	83.0	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	26,341	62,779	Number	3,857
Percent	93.4	81.3	Percent	83.1
			Found vacant	
			Number	189
			Percent	4.1
			Other	
			Number	598
			Percent	12.9
			Used in estimation	
			Number	4,046
			Percent	87.1

Table R-4. Response rates for the CPI-U, NY-Northern NJ-Long Island, NY-NJ-CT-PA, 2003

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	37,458	106,888	Eligible	
Collected			Number	5,147
Number	35,674	86,858	Percent	100.0
Percent	95.2	81.3	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	34,221	84,999	Number	3,285
Percent	91.4	79.5	Percent	63.8
			Found vacant	
			Number	215
			Percent	4.2
			Other	
			Number	1,647
			Percent	32.0
			Used in estimation	
			Number	3,500
			Percent	68.0

Table R-5. Response rates for the CPI-U, Phil.-Wilmington-Trenton, PA-NJ-KE-MD, 2003

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	8,932	24,469	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,679
Number	8,615	20,168	Percent	100.0
Percent	96.5	82.4	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	8,184	19,670	Number	1,197
Percent	91.6	80.4	Percent	71.3
			Found vacant	
			Number	111
			Percent	6.6
			Other	
			Number	371
			Percent	22.1
			Used in estimation	
			Number	1,308
			Percent	77.9

Table R-6. Response rates for the CPI-U, San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, CA, 2003

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	8,411	24,818	Eligible	
Collected			Number	3,144
Number	8,242	21,349	Percent	100.0
Percent	98.0	86.0	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	7,913	20,756	Number	2,430
Percent	94.1	83.6	Percent	77.3
			Found vacant	
			Number	261
			Percent	8.3
			Other	
			Number	453
			Percent	14.4
			Used in estimation	
			Number	2,691
			Percent	85.6

Table R-7. Response rates for the CPI-U, Washington-Baltimore, DC-MD-VA-WV, 2003

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	8,324	25,665	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,928
Number	7,970	21,058	Percent	100.0
Percent	95.7	82.0	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	7,635	20,394	Number	1,517
Percent	91.7	79.5	Percent	78.7
			Found vacant	
			Number	128
			Percent	6.6
			Other	
			Number	283
			Percent	14.7
			Used in estimation	
			Number	1,645
			Percent	85.3

Table R-8. Response rates for the CPI-U, Boston-Brockton-Nashua, MA-NH-ME-CT, 2003

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	5,957	16,381	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,655
Number	5,730	13,701	Percent	100.0
Percent	96.2	83.6	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	5,483	13,357	Number	1,153
Percent	92.0	81.5	Percent	69.7
			Found vacant	
			Number	111
			Percent	6.7
			Other	
			Number	391
			Percent	23.6
			Used in estimation	
			Number	1,264
			Percent	76.4

Table R-9. Response rates for the CPI-U, Cleveland-Akron, OH, 2003

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	4,080	12,506	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,390
Number	3,935	10,725	Percent	100.0
Percent	96.4	85.8	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	3,776	10,444	Number	1,092
Percent	92.5	83.5	Percent	78.6
			Found vacant	
			Number	145
			Percent	10.4
			Other	
			Number	153
			Percent	11.0
			Used in estimation	
			Number	1,237
			Percent	89.0

Table R-10. Response rates for the CPI-U, Miami-Fort Lauderdale, FL, 2003

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	1,471	4,621	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,110
Number	1,451	4,421	Percent	100.0
Percent	98.6	95.7	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	1,432	4,377	Number	958
Percent	97.3	94.7	Percent	86.3
			Found vacant	
			Number	92
			Percent	8.3
			Other	
			Number	60
			Percent	5.4
			Used in estimation	
			Number	1,050
			Percent	94.6

Table R-11. Response rates for the CPI-U, St. Louis, MO-IL, 2003

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	1,412	5,204	Eligible	
Collected			Number	699
Number	1,400	4,960	Percent	100.0
Percent	99.2	95.3	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	1,369	4,813	Number	505
Percent	97.0	92.5	Percent	72.2
			Found vacant	
			Number	54
			Percent	7.7
			Other	
			Number	140
			Percent	20.0
			Used in estimation	
			Number	559
			Percent	80.0

Table R-12. Response rates for the CPI-U, Dallas-Fort Worth, TX, 2003

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	1,703	5,651	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,214
Number	1,680	5,244	Percent	100.0
Percent	98.6	92.8	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	1,650	5,122	Number	918
Percent	96.9	90.6	Percent	75.6
			Found vacant	
			Number	106
			Percent	8.7
			Other	
			Number	190
			Percent	15.7
			Used in estimation	
			Number	1,024
			Percent	84.3

Table R-13. Response rates for the CPI-U, Detroit-Ann Arbor-Flint, MI, 2003

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	5,766	16,715	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,218
Number	5,556	14,041	Percent	100.0
Percent	96.4	84.0	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	5,312	13,677	Number	898
Percent	92.1	81.8	Percent	73.7
			Found vacant	
			Number	143
			Percent	11.7
			Other	
			Number	177
			Percent	14.5
			Used in estimation	
			Number	1,041
			Percent	85.5

Table R-14. Response rates for the CPI-U, Houston-Galveston-Brazoria, TX, 2003

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	4,594	12,694	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,175
Number	4,469	10,993	Percent	100.0
Percent	97.3	86.6	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	4,298	10,707	Number	868
Percent	93.6	84.3	Percent	73.9
			Found vacant	
			Number	108
			Percent	9.2
			Other	
			Number	199
			Percent	16.9
			Used in estimation	
			Number	976
			Percent	83.1

Table R-15. Response rates for the CPI-U,
Pittsburgh, PA, 2003

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	3,763	12,026	Eligible	
Collected			Number	774
Number	3,530	9,750	Percent	100.0
Percent	93.8	81.1	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	3,372	9,487	Number	539
Percent	89.6	78.9	Percent	69.6
			Found vacant	
			Number	74
			Percent	9.6
			Other	
			Number	161
			Percent	20.8
			Used in estimation	
			Number	613
			Percent	79.2

Table R-16. Response rates for the CPI-U,
Phoenix-Mesa, AZ., 2003

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	2,846	10,052	Eligible	
Collected			Number	656
Number	2,810	8,528	Percent	100.0
Percent	98.7	84.8	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	2,682	8,245	Number	565
Percent	94.2	82.0	Percent	86.1
			Found vacant	
			Number	73
			Percent	11.1
			Other	
			Number	18
			Percent	2.7
			Used in estimation	
			Number	638
			Percent	97.3