



**OFFICIAL GAZETTE**

of the

**COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN  
AND SOUTHERN AFRICA (COMESA)**

*Volume 17 No. 11*

*20 November 2012*

**COMESA REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE  
PROCEDURES FOR THE COLLECTION OF PRICES  
IN THE HARMONISED PRICE INDICES**

**THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE COMMON  
MARKET OF EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA  
(COMESA),**

**Having regard to** Article 140 of the Treaty establishing COMESA through which Member States made an undertaking to cooperate in the field of statistics in order to create an enabling environment for up-to-date reliable, harmonized and comparable statistical data on various sectors of economic activity, through the harmonization and adoption of common methodologies concepts and definitions to be used in collecting and compiling statistics;

**Having regard to** COMESA Regulation No [xx] of [date] concerning the establishment of harmonized consumer price indices (HCPIs) in Member States;

**Having regard to** existing COMESA Member States' legislation on statistics and the confidentiality clauses therein;

**HEREBY ADOPTS THESE REGULATIONS:**

**Article 1  
Citation**

These Regulations shall be cited as the COMESA Regulations concerning the Procedures for the Collection of Prices in the Harmonized Consumer Price Indices (HCPI).

**Article 2  
Definitions**

In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:

**“Bargaining”** means that the transaction price is negotiated between buyer and seller, so that the final price is not known until the purchase has been made;

**“COICOP”** means the international Classification of Individual Consumption according to Purpose;

**“Harmonized Consumer Price Indices (HCPI)”** means the comparable consumer price indices compiled by each Member State;

**“Hyperinflation”** means that prices in general are rising at a monthly rate of 50% or more;

**“Member States”** means COMESA Member States;

**“Unit price”** means the price of a stated weight, volume or other measure of an item; and

**“Secretariat”** means the COMESA Secretariat.

### **Article 3 Objective**

The objective of these Regulations is to ensure a harmonized approach to the procedures used for the collection of prices in the HCPI.

### **Article 4 Timing of acquisition of products in the HCPI**

1. Prices in the HCPI shall be recorded as those which would be charged if the products concerned had been acquired during the month of price observation.
2. Goods priced in the HCPI shall be deemed to have been acquired at the time at which ownership is passed from the seller to the purchaser, regardless of the method of payment and whether or not the goods were wholly paid for or consumed during the relevant period.
3. Services priced in the HCPI shall be deemed to have been acquired at the time when the purchaser incurs a liability to the seller.

### **Article 5 Frequency and timing of price collection**

1. The prices of all items in the HCPI shall be collected at least once each month provided that in the event of hyperinflation, Member States shall

increase the frequency of collection to an extent to be agreed after consulting the Secretariat.

2. Member States shall record the prices of items in the HCPI within at least the two middle weeks of each month.
3. Regardless of the period during which prices are collected, the same period shall be used in every month of the year.

### **Article 6 Item specifications**

1. The minimum information to be provided on HCPI price collection forms, in order to allow precise identification of each item, shall be as follows:
  - (a) Item identification number within a stated COICOP class;
  - (b) Item name and specification;
  - (c) Name, address or location of outlet; and
  - (d) Price recorded in previous month.
2. The item specifications shall include, as a minimum, the following types of information, where relevant to the item concerned:
  - (a) Brand or make;
  - (b) Model name or number;
  - (c) Size of container; and

(d) Any other distinctive characteristics such as material, size and country of origin.

3. The minimum information to be recorded by HCPI price collectors shall be as follows:

- (a) Collection date;
- (b) Name of collector;
- (c) Price of item;
- (d) For loose products such as vegetables, the weight which has been priced;
- (e) Note or code if item unavailable, and the reason;
- (f) Comment or code relating to any unusual price change;
- (g) Note, if needed, concerning item specification; and
- (h) Note concerning item availability in the coming months.

4. Where prices are collected using handheld electronic devices, the minimum standards set out in this Article shall be applied mutatis mutandis.

#### **Article 7 Unit prices**

- 1. Prices for goods in the HCPI, when related to weight, shall be measured in values for a given unit.
- 2. Where goods are sold on the basis of a locally defined quantity, such as a bunch, bundle, box,

sack or bottle, the weight of the quantity shall be determined and the unit price calculated in accordance with paragraph 1.

#### **Article 8 Associated costs**

- 1. The prices used in the HCPI shall be the prices payable by purchasers including any taxes, less any subsidies, on the products.
- 2. Where taxes are not included in the advertised price, the appropriate amounts shall be added to the prices collected so that the final tax-inclusive price is taken into account in the HCPI.
- 3. Where the price of an item includes delivery to the purchaser's home, or installation in the purchaser's home, the price recorded for the HCPI shall include the delivery or installation costs, in accordance with COICOP 05.1.1, 5.3.1 and 9.3.3
- 4. Tips and gratuities are regarded as part of the cost of the item concerned, but in practice shall be excluded from the price, though not the weights.

#### **Article 9 Bargaining**

- 1. The prices to be collected for the HCPI shall be the prices at which products are transacted.

2. In cases where bargaining occurs and the transaction price is not known until the purchase is completed, the following methods of pricing shall be used:
  - (a) Where a list or catalogue prices are available, the trend in list prices shall be used as a proxy for the probable trend in transaction prices;
  - (b) Using the trend in wholesale prices from suppliers to retail outlets as a proxy for the probable trend in retail prices;
  - (c) Obtaining the best estimates of transaction prices from the sellers, either by interview or by price collectors purchasing items as if they were normal customers; and
  - (d) Obtaining prices from customers.

#### **Article 10 Dual pricing**

Member States shall treat each type of sale condition as a separate item for price collection, where there is dual pricing.

#### **Article 11 Prices denominated in foreign currencies**

1. Where the prices of items included in the HCPI basket are advertised and payable in a foreign

currency in a particular outlet, they shall be converted to the equivalents in the national currency at the exchange rate applying on the date of price collection.

2. Where an item may be paid for either in national currency or in a foreign currency, the price shall be collected in the national currency unless it is known that the volume of transactions in the foreign currency is greater than the volume of transactions in the national currency in the outlet concerned, in which case the conversion procedure described in paragraph 1 shall apply.

#### **Article 12 Management of price collection**

1. Member States shall collect prices for the HCPI having due regard to accuracy, timeliness, efficiency and assured continuity.
2. For purposes of paragraph 1, Member States shall establish a quality management system for the HCPI, covering, as a minimum, the following:
  - (a) Framework of price collection;
  - (b) Documentation of the price collection system;
  - (c) Checking of prices by collectors and field supervisors;

- (d) Adequate training and provision of written instructions for price collection staff;
- (e) Contingency planning to cover temporary or permanent loss of key resources; and
- (f) Regular reviews of price collection procedures and problems.

### **Article 13 Quality Control**

Member States shall provide to the Secretariat information sufficient to evaluate compliance with the procedures laid down in Articles 4 to 12.

### **Article 14 Amendments**

1. Any proposals for the amendment of these Regulations shall be submitted to the Secretary General in writing who shall, within 30 days of its receipt, communicate it to the Member States.
2. The Member States which wish to comment on the proposals shall do so within 90 days from the date of the dispatch of the proposals by the Secretary General.

3. After the expiration of the period prescribed under paragraph 2 the Secretary General shall submit the proposals and any comments thereon received from the Member States to Council through the Committee on Legal Affairs.
4. Any amendment to these Regulations shall be adopted by Council and shall enter into force upon publication in the Official Gazette of the Common Market.

### **Article 15 Entry into force**

These Regulations shall enter into force on the date of publication in the Official Gazette of the Common Market.

Done and adopted at the Thirty First Meeting of the COMESA Council of Ministers held at Kampala, Uganda, on 20 November 2012.

[Signature]  
Chairperson  
COMESA Council of Ministers