

CONSUMER SURVEY, JANUARY 2021

In January 2021, the total consumer confidence indicator increases by 4.1 percentage points in comparison with October 2020 (Annex, Figure 1). An increase of consumer confidence among both urban and rural inhabitants by 3.1 and 7.6 percentage points respectively is reported.

In comparison with 3 months earlier the consumers' opinions about changes in the financial situation of their households over the last 12 months (Annex, Figure 2) and their expectation about the next 12 months (Annex, Figure 3) are favourable. According to them, the general economic situation in the country over the last 12 months is deteriorated (Annex, Figure 4), while their expectations for the next 12 months (Annex, Figure 5) are less negative compared to the previous survey.

The assessments about the changes of the consumer prices over the last 12 months are more unfavourable (the balance indicator increases by 2.7 percentage points), as the inflation expectations are preserved for the next 12 months. As regards the unemployment in the country over the next 12 months, the forecasts are shifting towards preserving or slightly reduction, as a result of which the balance indicator decreases by 0.9 percentage points (Annex, Figure 6).

In January, the consumers point out that they have certain intentions about making expenditures for 'buying a car', 'buying or building a home (villa)' and 'home improvements' over the next 12 months. However the last inquiry reports slight drop of the total assessment of the present situation for making major purchases of durable goods¹, as the consumers' attitude to make such expenditures over the next 12 months are more reserved (Annex, Figure 7).

¹ When commenting the replies regarding the purchases (expenditures), one has to take into account that the questions are asked on a quarterly basis, although these purchases (expenditures) are to be made by the consumers in a longer period of time. That is why it is normal for the prevailing values of balances of opinions to be permanently situated in the negative zone of the graphs. However for the purpose of the economic analysis is important to consider the direction of development of balances of opinions as indicators of positive or negative change.

Methodological notes

The survey is a part of the harmonized program of European Union for business and consumer surveys and it is representative for the population of 16 years and older.

The persons of 16 years and older are the object of the survey; the sample method is random, clustered, proportional to the population by regions, incl. urban/rural inhabitants (154 clusters with 8 persons per cluster). The interviewing method is face to face. The questionnaire contains standardized questions about the financial situation of households, general economic situation, inflation, unemployment, saving, intentions of making major purchases on durable goods or purchasing/building a home or buying a car. The proposed variants of answers give an opportunity to arrange them from optimistic, through neutral to pessimistic. The balance of opinions is calculated as a difference between relative shares of positive opinions and relative shares of negative opinions, as there is one specification: the strong positive opinions and the strong negative opinions are given a coefficient of 1, and the more moderate positive and negative opinions - a coefficient of 0.5.

The survey results are used to capture the direction of change of surveyed variables incl. that of the consumer confidence level, which gives an opportunity to analyze the tendencies in the development of public opinions on significant economic phenomena.

The consumer confidence indicator is an arithmetic mean of the balances of the expectations about the development over the next 12 months of the financial situation of households, general economic situation, savings and unemployment, as the last is taken with a negative sign.

Annex

Figure 1. Consumer confidence indicator

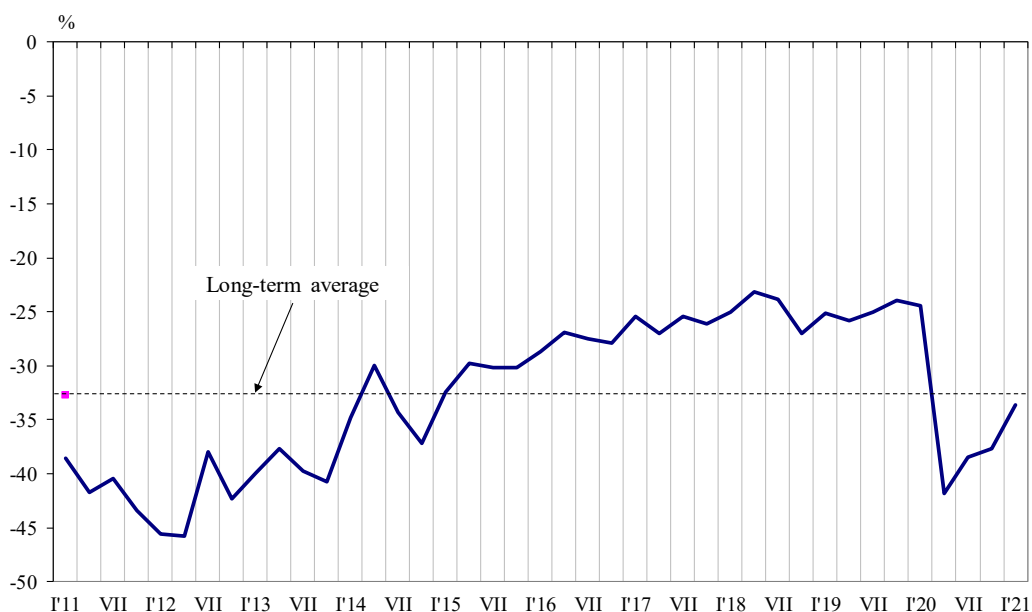


Figure 2. Assessment of the financial situation of households over the last 12 months

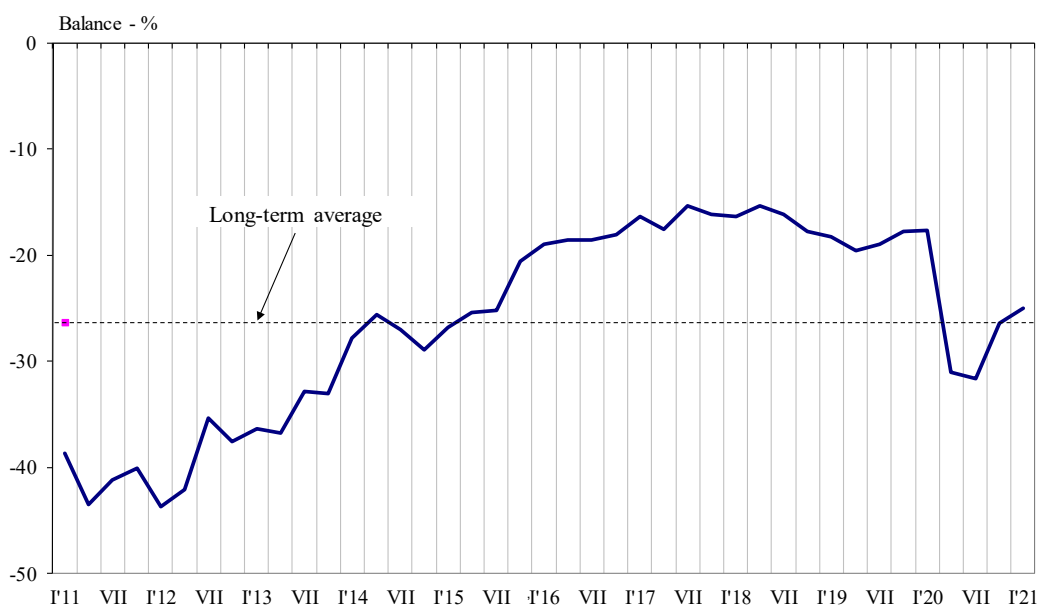


Figure 3. Expectations about the financial situation of households over the next 12 months

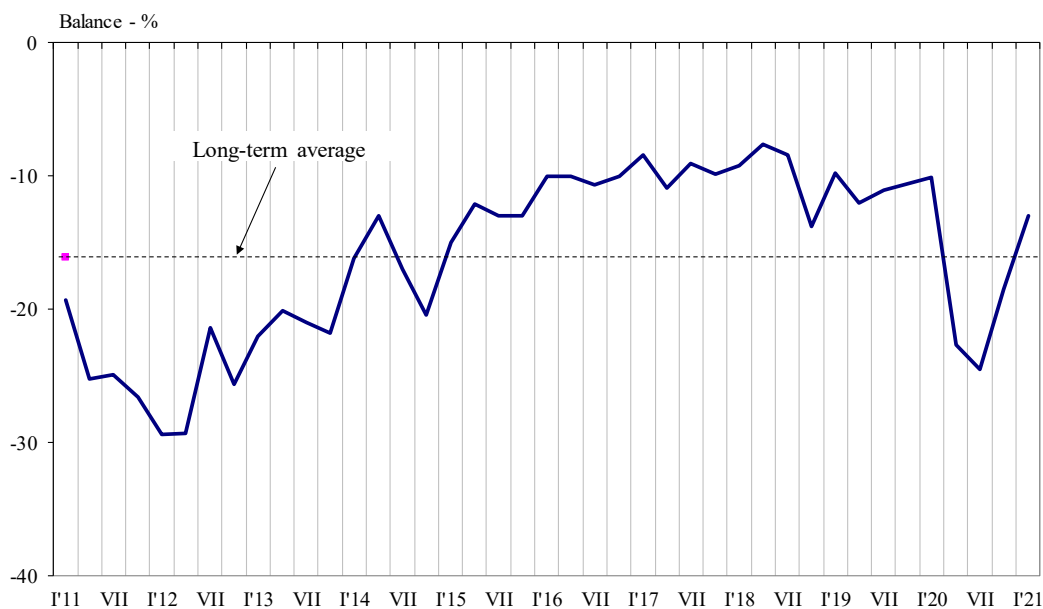


Figure 4. Assessment of the general economic situation in the country over the last 12 months

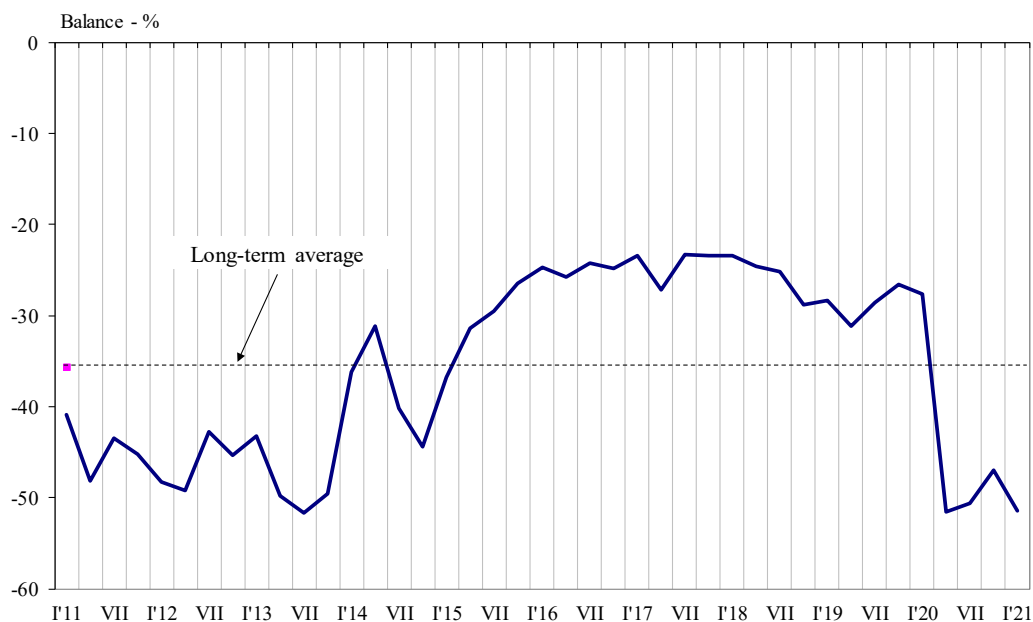


Figure 5. Expectations about the general economic situation in the country over the next 12 months

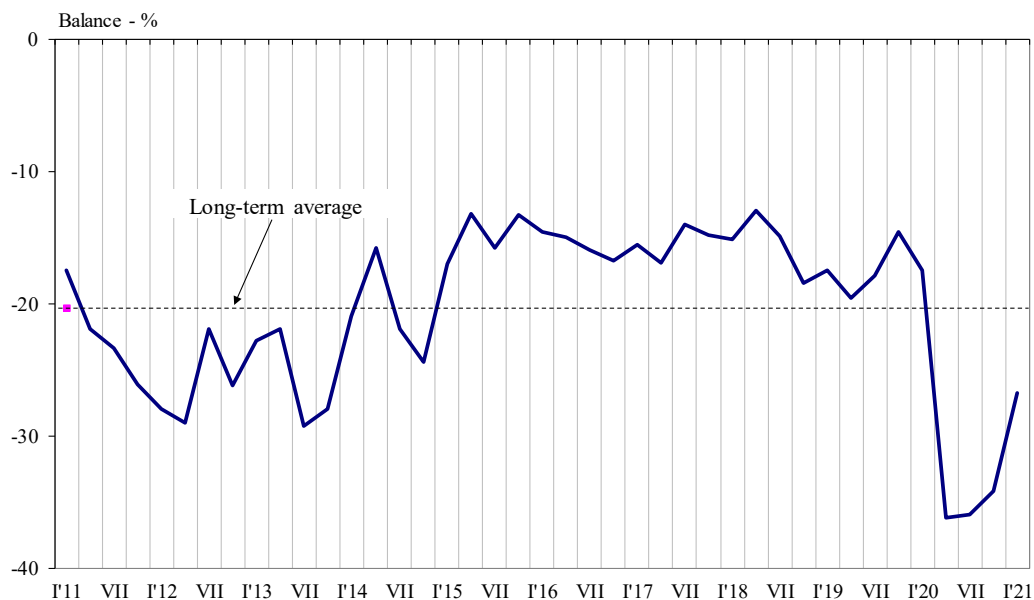


Figure 6. Unemployment expectations over the next 12 months

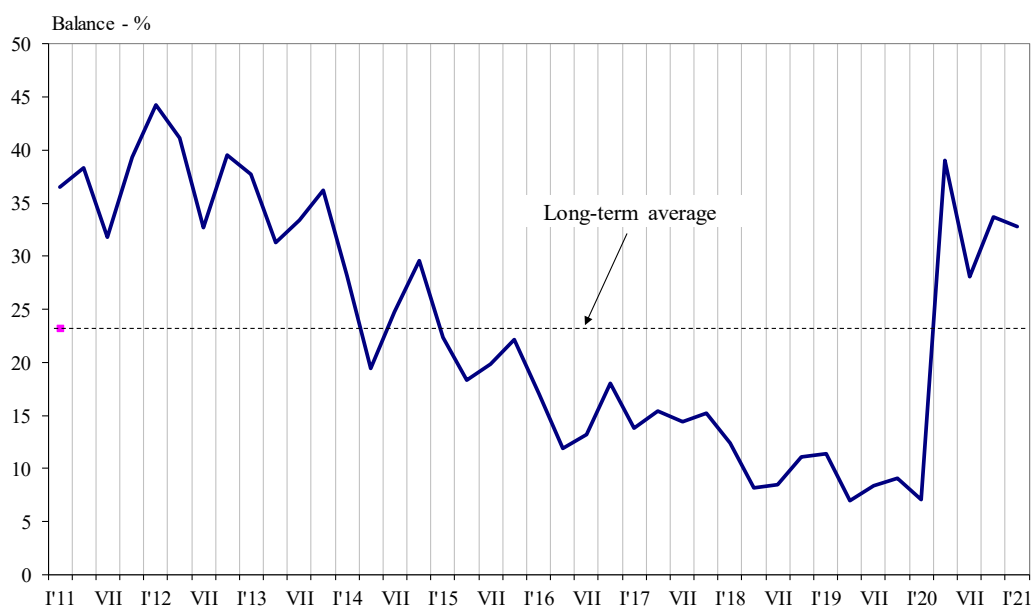


Figure 7. Intentions of making major purchases of durable goods over the next 12 months

