



# Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services

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## NEWSLETTER LIBERIA CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (LCPI) DECEMBER 2023

### THE INFLATION RATE FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER, 2023 WAS 10.01 PERCENT

Inflation is a decrease in the purchasing power of money, reflected in a general increase in the prices of goods and services in an economy. In the simplest term, Inflation means consumers can buy less with the same amount of money. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures the change over time in the general price level of goods and services households acquire for consumption. Liberia’s CPI Basket has a Weight Reference Period of 2016 while the Price is referenced to December 2018. The Index is chain-linked to December 2005.

#### December 2023 Rate of Inflation

The Year-on-Year Inflation Rate as measured by the CPI was 10.01 Percent. This rate of Inflation for December 2023 is the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) over the last twelve months, from December 2022 to December 2023. Simply put, the data shows that the general price level increased by about 10 percent on a Year-on-Year basis. The month recorded 0.82 percentage points increase from 9.19 in December 2022.

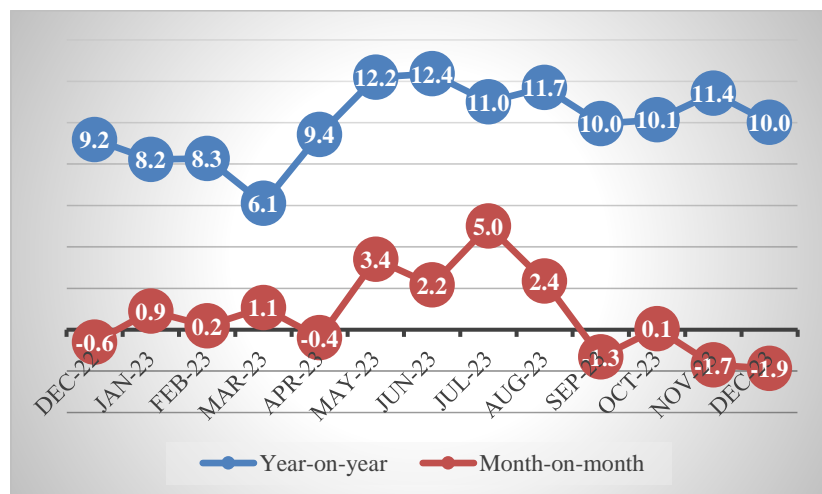
Table 1: Liberia Consumer Price Index (CPI), Dec. 2022 - Dec. 2023

Year / Month	Index Dec 2005= 100	Change rate (%)	
		Monthly (m/m)	Yearly(y/y) Inflation
Dec-22	624.84	-0.61	9.19
Jan-23	630.46	0.90	8.22
Feb-23	631.59	0.18	8.27
Mar-23	638.34	1.07	6.10
Apr-23	635.85	-0.39	9.43
May-23	657.50	3.40	12.2
Jun-23	671.67	2.16	12.36
Jul-23	705.29	5.01	11.01
Aug-23	721.85	2.35	11.70
Sep-23	712.33	-1.32	9.96
Oct-23	712.68	0.05	10.14
Nov-23	700.54	-1.70	11.43
<b>Dec-23</b>	<b>687.42</b>	<b>-1.87</b>	<b>10.01</b>

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The Month-on-Month Change was -1.87 percent. Meanwhile, the Year-on-Year Inflation Rate for the previous month (November 2023) was 11.43 Percent.

**Figure 1: Monthly and Annual Changes of CPI in Time Series - December 2022 to December 2023**



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**Food and Non-food Inflation for December 2023**

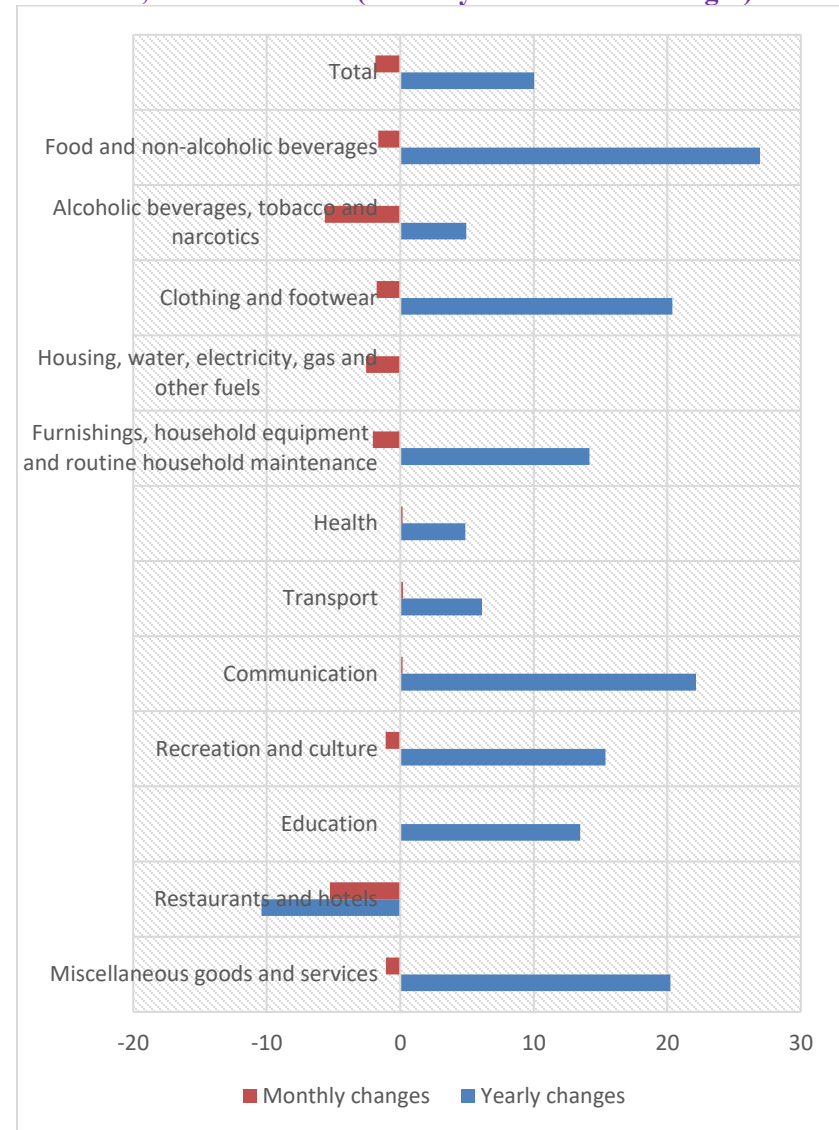
**The Food and Non-alcoholic Beverages Division:** Of the 12 COICOP Divisions, Food and Non-alcoholic Beverages Division recorded the inflation rate of 29.41 percent on a Year-on-Year basis, moving nearly 26 percentage points upward from the -2.47 percent recorded in December 2022. In the Food and Non-alcoholic Beverages

Division, the Bread and Cereal Class registered the highest inflation of 55.28 percent. with Imported rice recording the highest inflation (66.88 percent) within the Class. Okra at the elementary aggregate (product) level, recorded the highest inflation rate for the second month running. Okra recorded 94.42 percent. The Bread and Cereal Class was followed by the Mineral waters, soft drinks, fruit and vegetable juices Class at 38.13 percent. In the Food and Nonalcoholic Beverages Division, the Oil and fats Class registered the lowest inflation rate of negative 25.98 percent from which Palm oil recorded negative 29.27 percent. Five out of the 11 Classes within the Food and Nonalcoholic Beverages Division recorded y-o-y inflation rates higher than the Division’s average of 26.94 percent. The five Classes include: Bread and Cereal (55.28%), Mineral waters, soft drinks, fruit and vegetable juices (38.13%), Sugar, jam, honey, chocolate and confectionery (33.62%), Milk, cheese and eggs (29.51%) and Vegetable (29.4%).

**The Non-Food Category** recorded a Year-on-Year Inflation Rate of 3.4 percent in December 2023, decreasing by 11.13 percentage points from the 14.53 percent recorded in December 2022. In the Non-Food Category, the **Communication Division** recorded the highest Inflation of 22.15 percent followed by the **Clothing and footwear** at 20.38 percent. The **Restaurants and hotels Division** recorded the lowest Inflation of negative 10.4 percent. Nine out of the 11 Divisions

within the Non-Food category recorded inflation rates higher than the average of the nonfood category of 3.4 percent. They are: **Alcoholic Beverages, Tobacco and Narcotics** (4.95 percent) **Clothing and Footwear Division** (20.38 percent), **Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance Division** (14.18 percent), **Health** (4.88), **Transport** (6.12 percent), **Communication Division** (22.15 percent), **Recreation and Culture Division** (15.37 percent), **Education Division** (13.48 percent) and **Miscellaneous Goods and Services** (20.22 percent).

**Figure 2: Inflation Rates (%) by the 12 major COICOP Functions, December 2023 (Monthly and Annual Changes)**

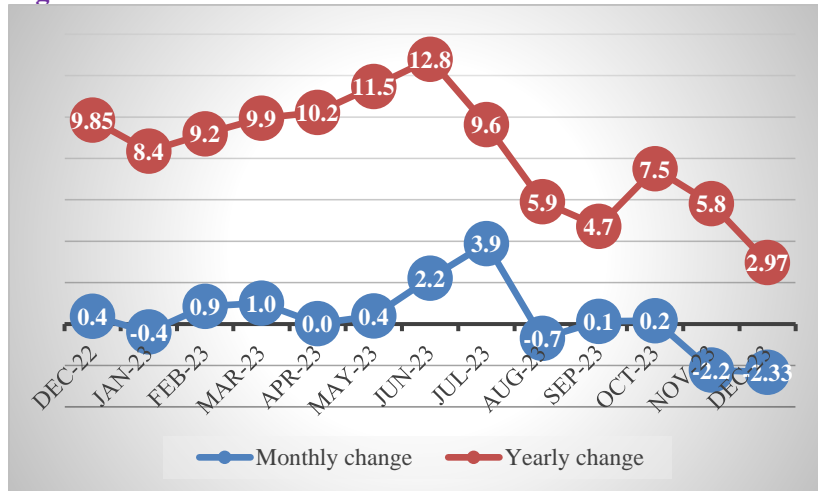


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### Core Inflation

As depicted in Figure 3 below, Core Inflation, that is, General Inflation less food and transport recorded an annual rate of 2.97 percent in December 2023, decreasing by 6.88 percentage points from 9.85 percent in December 2022. Month-on-month change was negative 2.33 percent.

**Figure 3: Core Inflation- December 2022 – December 2023**

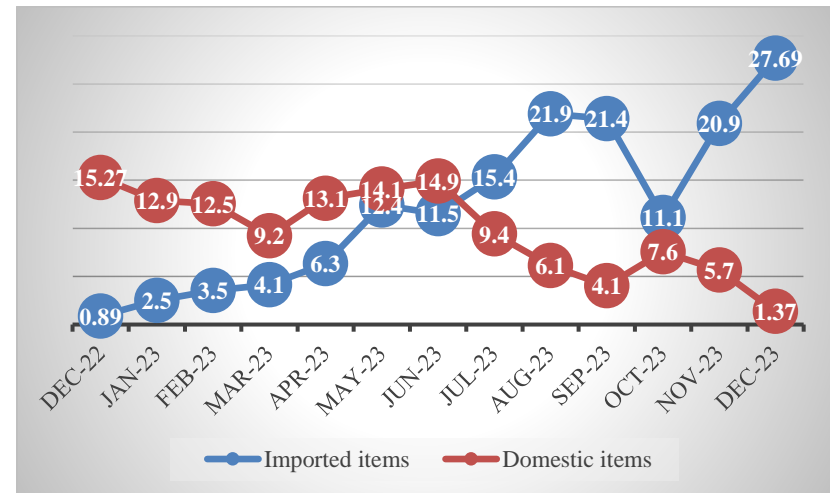


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Figure 4 presents data for all imported and domestically produced items respectively, covering the period December 2022 to December 2023. As seen, the month of December 2023 recorded a Year-on-Year change of 27.69 percent for all imported items combined within the Basket. In December 2022, the rate was 0.89 percent. All domestically

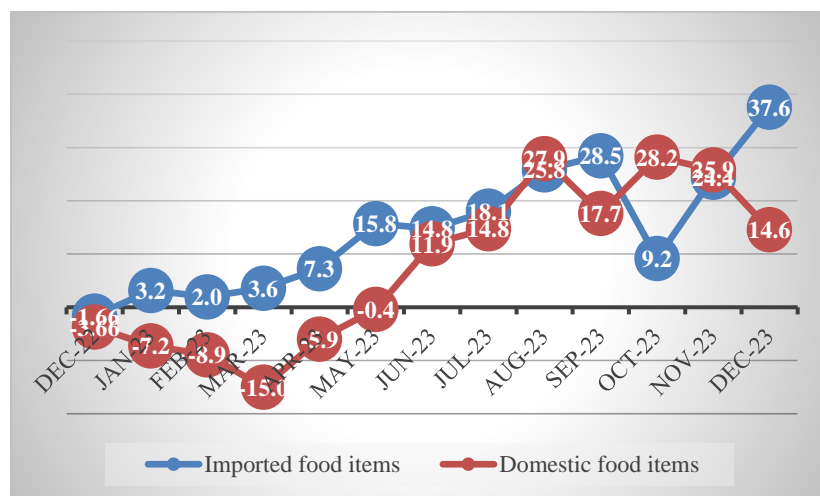
produced items within the Basket grouped as a unit reported 1.37 percent in December 2023, a decline from the 15.27 percent recorded in December 2022.

**Figure 4: Inflation Rate: All Imported and Domestic Items (December 2022 – December 2023)**



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**Figure 5: Inflation Rate: Imported and Domestic Food Items (December 2022 to December 2023)**



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Figure 5 above presents data for imported and domestically produced food items, respectively. The data narrates that imported food items (as a group) reported a rate of 37.59 percent while domestically produced food items (as a group) recorded y-o-y inflation rate of 14.63 percent for the month of December 2023. In December 2022, imported and domestically produced food items were at negative 1.66 percent and negative 3.66 percent, respectively.

**Key factors contributing to Inflation for December 2023**

On a Year-on-Year basis, Liberia’s general price level increased by 10.01 percent in December 2023. The 12 COICOP Division are weighted (expenditure share) with Food and non-alcoholic beverages having the highest (34.1%) and Alcoholic beverages, tobacco and narcotics having the lowest (0.65%). With this, a small change in prices of products in a division with a high expenditure share (weight) has a huge impact on the total inflation whereas a big change in the prices of products in a division with low expenditure share (weight) has slight impact on the total inflation. Exchange rate variations have revealed significant impact on imported items including food. On a year-on-year basis, the Liberian Dollar has depreciated by about 22 percent, that is, from 154.3352LRD - 1USD in December 2022 to 188.2564LRD - 1USD in December 2023, as published by the Central Bank of Liberia). This shows that compared to the same time last year, there’s a higher demand for United States Dollars which has a trigger down effect on household purchasing power given the more import-reliant nature the Liberian economy is.

**Method of Calculating Indices**

For the computation of indices, two methods are used: For Elementary Indexes, Modified Jevons (Geometric Average) Index Formula is used while the Modified Young Index Formula is used to compute higher-level Indexes.

All items within the Basket are grouped according to the **Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose (COICOP)**, an international hierarchical classificatory scheme developed by the United Nations Statistics Division to classify and analyze individual consumption expenditures incurred by households. The 12 functions are being used for Liberia's CPI Compilation.

### **Composition of the CPI Basket**

The current basket contains 161 items while the discarded basket contained 157. There are 317 products in the new basket whereas the old basket contained 306 and the number of quotations for market data items is 4 and 3-9 for services items. There are 114 items in the services category and 47 items in the market category of the new basket. Market data are being collected from four markets only: Red Light, Duala, Rally Time, and General Market (Waterside).

### **Limitations of the CPI**

Liberia's CPI Data for market items are only collected in the four major markets of Monrovia and its immediate environs of Paynesville and Bushrod Island. For services items, data are collected in all major supermarkets, shops, stores, restaurants and hotels in Monrovia and its immediate environs.

### **Dissemination**

A bulletin on the December 2023 CPI and more detailed data in Excel format have been posted on the LISGIS website [www.lisgis.gov.lr](http://www.lisgis.gov.lr). The target publication date of the monthly CPI Report is the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month for the previous month's report.

For comments/inquiries, please contact the followings:

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