Inflation Expectations Survey of Households; September 2012 (Round 29) *

The Inflation Expectations Survey of Households for the July-September 2012 quarter (29th round) captures the inflation expectations of 4,000 urban households across 12 cities, for the next three-month and for the next one-year period. These expectations are based on their individual consumption baskets and hence, these rates should not be considered as predictors of any official measure of inflation. The households' inflation expectations provide useful directional information on near-term inflationary pressures and also supplement other economic indicators to get a better indication of future inflation. The survey results are those of the respondents and are not necessarily shared by the Reserve Bank of India.

The proportion of respondents expecting increase in general prices by 'more than current rate' has decreased noticeably for three-month ahead period but has gone up for one-year ahead expectations as compared with the previous quarter. The perceived current inflation and three-month ahead inflation expectations based on median as well as mean inflation rate have also moved down as compared with the previous round. However, one-year ahead median inflation expectation has moved up and mean inflation expectation has moved down as compared with the previous round. Households expect inflation to rise further by 90 and 210 basis points during next three-month and next one-year respectively from their perceived current rate of 10.6 per cent. As in the past rounds, daily workers and housewives expect higher inflation rates compared with other categories.

I. Introduction

The Reserve Bank has been conducting Inflation Expectations Survey of Households (IESH) on a quarterly basis, since September 2005. The survey elicits qualitative and quantitative responses for three-month ahead and one-year ahead period on expected price changes and inflation. Inflation expectations of households (HHs) are subjective assessments and are based on their individual consumption baskets and therefore, may be different from the official inflation numbers released periodically by the government. These inflation expectations should not be treated as forecast of any official measure of inflation, though they provide useful inputs on directional movements of future inflation.

II. Sample Coverage and Information Sought

The survey is conducted simultaneously in 12 cities that cover adult respondents of 18 years and above. The major metropolitan cities, *viz.*, Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai are represented by 500 households each, while another eight cities, *viz.*, Jaipur, Lucknow, Bhopal, Ahmedabad, Patna, Guwahati, Bengaluru and Hyderabad are represented by 250 households each. The respondents having a view on perceived current inflation are well spread across the cities to provide a good geographical coverage. The male and female respondents in the group are approximately in the ratio of 3:2. The sample coverage in terms of occupational category-wise representation is nearly as per the target (Table 1).

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^{*} Prepared in the Division of Household Surveys, Department of Statistics and Information Management. The previous article on the subject was published in August 2012 issue of RBI Bulletin.

The survey schedule is organised into seven blocks covering the respondent profile (block 1), general and product-wise price expectations (block 2 and 3), feedback on RBI's action to control inflation (block 4), current and expected inflation rate (block 5), amount paid for the purchase of major food items during last one month (block 6) and the expectations on changes in income/wages (block 7).

The response options for price changes are (i) price increase more than current rate, (ii) price increase similar to current rate, (iii) price increase less than current rate, (iv) no change in prices and (v) decline in prices. The inflation rates are collected in intervals - the lowest being 'less than 1 per cent' and the highest being '16 per cent and above' with 100 basis points size for all intermediate classes.

III. Survey Results

III.1 General Price Expectations

- Almost all the respondents expect prices to go up three-month ahead and one-year ahead.
- However, the percentage of respondents expecting increase in general prices by 'more than current rate' for three-month ahead period has decreased noticeably to 78.9 from 83.6 per cent and that for one-year ahead has gone up to 86.8 from 84.4 per cent in the previous round. (Table 2)

III. 2 Product Group-wise Price Expectations

- The percentages of respondents expecting *price increase* in three-month ahead have decreased for household durables, housing and cost of services whereas it has gone up for non-food products. However, the percentages of respondents expecting *price increase* in one-year ahead period have moved down for all the product groups. (Table 2)
- The proportions of households expecting price increase three-month ahead by 'more than current rate' have decreased for all product groups except housing, whereas such proportions have risen in case of one-year ahead expectations for all product groups except household durables. (Table 2)

III.3 Coherence between General and Product Group-wise Price Expectations

- As in the past rounds, the general price expectations are more consistently aligned with food price expectations than with other product groups. More than 90 per cent of the respondents appeared to have been influenced by expected changes in food prices for arriving at general price expectations (Table 3).
- Further, sharp increase in coherence between general price expectations and housing price expectations are observed for one-year ahead period in the current survey round as compared with the previous round. (Table 3).

III.4 Inflation Expectations

- The perceived current inflation and three-month ahead inflation expectations based on median as well as mean inflation rate have moved down as compared with the previous round. However, in case of one-year ahead period, median inflation expectation has moved up and mean inflation expectation has moved down as compared with the previous round (Table 4).
- Households expect inflation to rise further by 90 and 210 basis points during next three-month and next one-year respectively from their perceived current rate of 10.6 per cent (Table 4).
- Daily workers and housewives tend to have marginally higher level of inflation expectations based on mean inflation rate. City-wise, inflation expectations based on mean inflation rate were found to be the highest in Jaipur and Mumbai and the lowest in Kolkata (Table 5).
- For a large part of survey history, the households' perceived current inflation rate remained between the WPI and CPI-IW inflation rates. However, from quarter ended September 2010 round onwards, it is higher than those inflation rates (Chart-1)

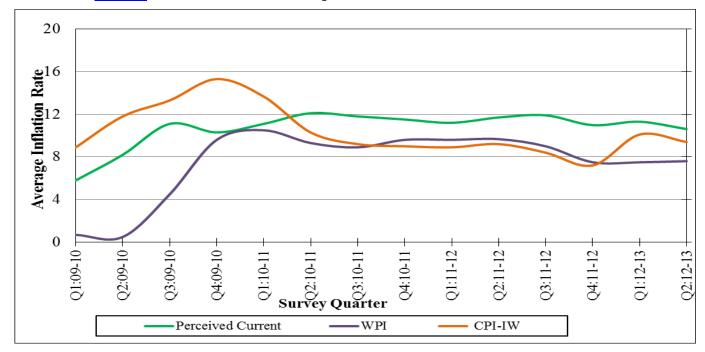


Chart 1: Households Inflation Expectations - vis-à-vis Official Inflation Numbers

III.5 Cross-classification of Current Inflation and Future Expectations

- The proportion of respondents perceiving current inflation, three-month ahead and one-year ahead inflation to be at double digit have declined as compared with those in the last round.
- In particular, 47.1 per cent (51.8 per cent in previous round) of respondents perceive double digit current inflation. Similarly, 59.3 per cent (65.0 per cent in previous round) and 73.1 per cent (76.5 per cent) of the respondents expect double digit inflation rates for three-month ahead and one-year ahead periods (Table 6 and Table 7).

III.6 Awareness on RBI Action to Control Inflation

- On the feedback of the RBI action to control inflation and its impact, 52 per cent of the respondents are aware of the role of RBI in controlling inflation, of which 29 per cent felt that Reserve Bank is taking *necessary* action. Among these 29 per cent, 48 per cent think that RBI's *action has an impact* on controlling inflation (Chart 2).
- While financial sector employees are mostly aware of Reserve Bank's role in controlling inflation, daily workers are largely unaware (Table 8).

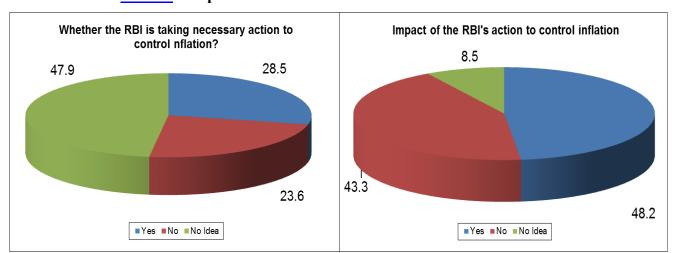


Chart 2: Respondents' view on RBI's Action to Control Inflation

III.7 Expectations in Change of Income/Wages

- Out of 2,244 respondents in the wage earners/self-employed/daily workers categories, 54 per cent reported increase in wages/income in the past one year and 80 per cent expected that their income/wages would increase in next one-year. About 72 per cent of respondents did not see any change in their incomes in next three-month period (Table 9).
- The share of respondents, reporting wage increase in past one year and/or expecting so during one year ahead, is highest in case of financial sector employees and lowest in case of Daily Workers (Table 9).

Table 1: Respondents' Profile (Category): Share in Total Sample

Category of Respondents	Share in Total (%)	Target Share (%)
Financial Sector Employees	9.4	10.0
Other Employees	16.3	15.0
Self-employed	21.5	20.0
Housewives	29.3	30.0
Retired Persons	9.0	10.0
Daily Workers	9.0	10.0
Others	5.6	5.0

Note: The above sample proportion is for the quarter ended **September 2012** survey

Table 2: Product-wise Expectations of Prices for Three-month ahead and One-year ahead

(percentage of respondents)

								(percer	itage of re	spondents
Round No./survey period	25	26	27	28	29	25	26	27	28	29
$(quarter\ ended) \rightarrow$	Sep-11	Dec-11	Mar-12	Jun-12	Sep-12	Sep-11	Dec-11	Mar-12	Jun-12	Sep-12
Options: For General		Three	-month a	head			Oı	ne-year al	nead	
Prices will increase	97.3	96.1	98.2	99.0	98.9	96.0	97.1	98.3	99.5	99.1
Price increase more than current rate	75.8	73.4	75.6	83.6	78.9	73.5	76.9	78.8	84.4	86.8
Price increase similar to current rate	15.4	13.2	15.9	11.2	14.5	16.7	12.6	14.0	10.5	7.6
Price increase less than current rate	6.0	9.6	6.7	4.2	5.5	5.9	7.6	5.5	4.6	4.8
No change in prices	2.2	3.0	1.6	1.0	1.1	3.3	2.5	1.6	0.4	0.8
Decline in price	0.6	0.9	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.7	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.1
Options: For Food Products		Thre	e-month	ahead			(One-year a	ahead	
Prices will increase	97.3	95.3	98.2	98.8	98.8	95.8	96.8	98.2	99.4	99.1
Price increase more than current rate	74.2	70.4	69.8	80.8	78.6	72.0	73.7	74.4	82.5	85.7
Price increase similar to current rate	17.2	16.7	21.2	14.3	15.5	19.0	15.8	18.6	12.6	9.9
Price increase less than current rate	5.9	8.2	7.2	3.7	4.7	4.8	7.4	5.2	4.3	3.5
No change in prices	1.9	3.4	1.6	1.1	1.1	3.3	2.7	1.7	0.5	0.9
Decline in price	0.9	1.3	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.9	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.1
Options: For Non Food Products		Thre	e-month	ahead			(One-year a	ahead	
Prices will increase	95.6	94.3	97.5	97.8	98.1	95.2	96.2	98.1	99.3	99.0
Price increase more than current rate	67.1	66.1	63.7	72.6	70.0	66.4	67.5	68.5	79.9	80.3
Price increase similar to current rate	21.5	18.3	24.3	20.3	20.5	22.7	20.8	22.6	15.2	13.8
Price increase less than current rate	7.0	9.9	9.5	4.9	7.6	6.1	8.0	7.0	4.2	4.9
No change in prices	3.8	4.9	2.4	2.2	1.9	4.1	3.3	1.9	0.6	1.0
Decline in price	0.7	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.8	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.1
Options: For Household Durables		Thre	e-month	ahead			(One-year a	ahead	
Prices will increase	91	86.9	90.0	94.3	86.9	91.5	90.6	91.9	96.3	94.9
Price increase more than current rate	50.5	53.6	50.7	63.5	49.9	52.2	54.6	52.4	66.9	60.9
Price increase similar to current rate	26.4	19.5	25.7	22.4	21.9	26.0	22.6	25.7	18.8	21.6
Price increase less than current rate	14.1	13.8	13.6	8.4	15.1	13.3	13.4	13.8	10.6	12.4
No change in prices	5.8	10.8	8.5	5.1	11.7	6.2	7.8	7.0	3.4	4.7
Decline in price	3.3	2.3	1.5	0.6	1.4	2.3	1.7	1.2	0.4	0.4
Options: For Housing Prices		Thre	e-month	ahead		One-year ahead				
	1					1				

Prices will increase	97	95.5	96.3	96.4	94.9	95.8	96.1	97.7	98.9	98.4
Price increase more than current rate	73.5	67.4	70.4	73.0	75.1	70.2	67.3	73.4	76.9	83.5
Price increase similar to current rate	18.2	18.2	19.5	18.3	14.8	20.0	20.6	19.3	16.8	10.7
Price increase less than current rate	5.4	10.0	6.4	5.1	5.0	5.6	8.2	5.0	5.2	4.2
No change in prices	2.2	3.8	3.3	3.2	3.5	3.3	3.5	2.1	0.9	1.5
Decline in price	0.8	0.7	0.4	0.5	1.7	0.9	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.1
Options: For Cost of Services		Thre	e-month	ahead			(ne-year a	ahead	
Prices will increase	95.3	91.9	95.8	96.4	93.6	95.2	93.6	97.1	98.1	97.4
Price increase more than current rate	68.1	58.7	67.3	73.0	69.1	66.3	65.3	69.6	74.0	76.5
Price increase similar to current rate	20.3	21.2	20.3	18.3	17.8	23.4	18.6	19.8	18.5	14.5
Price increase less than current rate	6.8	12.1	8.2	5.1	6.7	5.4	9.8	7.7	5.6	6.5
No change in prices	4.0	7.4	4.0	3.2	5.9	4.2	5.9	2.8	2.0	2.5
Decline in price	0.8	0.7	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.1

Table 3: Expecting General Price Movements in Coherence with Movements in Price Expectations of Various Product Groups: Three-month ahead and One-year ahead

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Survey Round	Survey Quarter ended	Food	Non-Food	Household durables	Housing	Cost of services							
Three-mo	nth Ahead period		percentage of respondents										
25	Sep-11	88.8	86.2	68.0	84.4	85.2							
26	Dec-11	87.9	82.4	67.6	74.4	74.7							
27	Mar-12	87.7	82.7	65.4	84.1	83.7							
28	Jun-12	90.5	84.5	73.2	82.8	82.6							
29	Sep-12	90.9	86.0	60.5	83.3	81.1							
One-yea	r Ahead period		percent	age of respo	ondents								
25	Sep-11	92.4	87.2	71.1	85.7	86.3							
26	Dec-11	92.3	84.5	68.0	78.1	81.2							
27	Mar-12	91.8	84.0	65.7	83.9	85.9							
28	Jun-12	92.5	88.0	77.1	85.1	87.1							
29	Sep-12	95.9	90.3	69.5	91.0	87.2							

Table 4: Household Inflation Expectations - Current, Three-month Ahead and One-year Ahead

		Inflation rate in Per cent												
Survey	Survey Quarter		Current		Т	hree-month	ahead	One-year ahead						
Round	ended	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.				
				Dev.			Dev.							
25	Sep-11	11.7	10.5	3.1	12.2	11.5	3.4	12.9	13.5	3.7				
26	Dec-11	11.9	11.5	3.5	12.4	12.5	3.4	13.3	13.5	3.4				
27	Mar-12	11.0	10.5	4.1	11.7	11.5	3.9	12.5	12.5	3.8				
28	Jun-12	11.3	10.5	3.9	12.0	11.5	3.7	12.8	12.5	3.4				
29	Sep-12	10.6	9.5	3.8	11.5	10.5	3.6	12.7	13.5	3.5				

Table 5: Various Group-wise Inflation Expectations for September 2012 Survey Round

		Curren	t	Thr	ee-month A	Ahead	O	ne-year Ah	ead
	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.
Gender-wise							•		
Male	10.4	9.5	3.8	11.3	10.5	3.7	12.6	13.5	3.5
Female	10.9	10.5	3.8	11.8	11.5	3.7	12.9	13.5	3.6
Category-wise					•		-		
Financial Sector	9.7	8.5	3.7	10.6	9.5	3.5	11.9	11.5	3.3
Other Employees	10.6	9.5	3.7	11.3	10.5	3.7	12.6	13.5	3.5
Self-Employed	10.7	10.5	3.8	11.5	11.5	3.9	12.9	13.5	3.5
Housewives	10.9	10.5	3.8	11.7	11.5	3.6	12.9	13.5	3.6
Retired Persons	10.1	9.5	3.9	11.2	10.5	3.7	12.4	12.5	3.6
Daily Workers	11.1	9.5	3.9	12.0	11.5	3.7	13.1	14.5	3.5
Other category	10.5	9.5	3.9	11.3	10.5	3.6	12.8	13.5	3.5
Age-wise	I	I I					_1		
Up to 25 years	10.8	10.5	3.8	11.6	11.5	3.7	13.0	13.5	3.5
25 to 30 years	10.6	9.5	3.8	11.5	10.5	3.6	12.6	13.5	3.7
30 to 35 years	10.8	9.5	3.9	11.7	11.5	3.7	12.9	13.5	3.5
35 to 40 years	10.4	9.5	3.8	11.3	10.5	3.7	12.7	13.5	3.4
40 to 45 years	10.5	9.5	3.9	11.3	10.5	3.7	12.6	12.5	3.6
45 to 50 years	10.7	9.5	3.9	11.7	11.5	3.8	12.9	13.5	3.6
50 to 55 years	10.4	9.5	3.7	11.2	10.5	3.8	12.3	12.5	3.8
55 to 60 years	10.7	9.5	3.9	11.4	10.5	4.1	12.8	13.5	3.7
60 years and above	10.4	9.5	3.9	11.4	10.5	3.6	12.7	13.5	3.4
City-wise	I_	I I							
Mumbai	14.7	15.5	2.5	15.2	16.5	2.5	16.2	16.5	1.1
Delhi	10.6	9.5	3.4	11.3	10.5	3.5	12.3	11.5	3.2
Chennai	9.0	8.5	2.4	10.0	9.5	2.4	9.9	9.5	3.4
Kolkata	7.0	6.5	1.1	7.7	7.5	1.9	9.1	9.5	2.2
Bangalore	13.4	14.5	3.4	14.0	15.5	3.1	14.5	16.5	2.7
Hyderabad	11.1	11.5	4.2	11.5	12.5	4.2	12.5	13.5	3.6
Ahmedabad	8.6	8.5	1.1	10.3	9.5	1.6	15.0	15.5	1.7
Lucknow	11.3	11.5	3.6	12.6	13.5	3.2	14.2	15.5	2.7
Jaipur	15.5	16.5	3.2	15.6	16.5	2.9	15.8	16.5	2.3
Bhopal	8.8	8.5	2.9	10.1	9.5	3.0	11.9	11.5	2.8
Patna	10.6	10.5	3.1	11.8	11.5	2.9	13.8	14.5	2.5
Guwahati	8.1	8.5	1.7	9.2	9.5	2.6	11.1	10.5	2.3
All	10.6	9.5	3.8	11.5	10.5	3.6	12.7	13.5	3.5

Table 6: Cross-tabulation of Current and Three-month Ahead Inflation Expectations

(Number of respondents)

									Th	ree-m	onth al	nead infl	ation rat	e (per ce	ent)					
		<1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	>=16	No idea	Total
	<1	2				2		2				1						1		8
	1-2			1	2															3
	2-3				4	2														6
	3-4			1	2	6	3													12
	4-5					2	30	13	3	1	2						1			52
cent	5-6	1				1	29	98	12	7	1	1						1		151
per	6-7					1	30	87	325	75	52	10	3	2						585
ate (7-8	1						7	69	282	113	25	4					3	5	509
on r	8-9	2					1	0	6	60	177	116	14	6	2	1	1	1		387
Current inflation rate (per cent)	9-10							1		6	79	214	68	14	8	5	6	1		402
nt ir	10-11										2	32	174	79	11	8	8	4		318
urre	11-12	2									1	2	12	156	23	10	1	3		210
C	12-13													8	131	37	7	1		184
	13-14														6	76	22	2		106
	14-15	2									1	1		2	2	13	146	20		187
	15-16	2												2	1		13	115	1	134
	>=16	7								1	1	6	1		1	6	5	715	3	746
	Total	19		2	8	14	93	208	415	432	429	408	276	269	185	156	210	867	9	4000

Note: The shaded cells represent the number of respondents who expressed double digit current and three-month ahead inflations.

Table 7: Cross-tabulation of Current and One-year Ahead Inflation Expectations

(Number of respondents)

	•								0	ne-ye	ar ahea	ıd inflati	on rate (per cen	t)					
		<1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	>=16	No idea	Total
	<1											1						7		8
	1-2					1	1	1												3
	2-3					2	1	2			1									6
	3-4			1			4	2	0	1	2				1	1				12
	4-5				3	2	0	22	8	8	4	1		1			1	1	1	52
Current inflation rate (per cent)	5-6	3				1	20	8	68	23	10	6	2	3		2	1	4		151
per	6-7	3				2	15	64	62	202	86	76	42	16	4	5	7	0	1	585
ate (7-8	7						11	55	22	182	83	52	17	15	14	35	10	6	509
on r	8-9	4							6	26	37	119	44	62	12	17	34	26		387
flati	9-10	2								7	24	35	120	36	43	46	28	59	2	402
nt in	10-11	3									4	14	29	86	36	60	55	30	1	318
urre	11-12	1											8	10	123	11	42	13	2	210
Ú	12-13	4											2	4	1	76	67	28	2	184
	13-14	1											1		4	2	54	44		106
	14-15													4	1	8	26	147	1	187
	15-16											1			1			126	6	134
	>=16	1			1			2	4	4		2	1	4			9	703	15	746
	Total	29		1	4	8	41	112	203	293	350	338	301	243	241	242	359	1198	37	4000

Note: The shaded cells represent the number of respondents who expressed double digit current and one-year ahead inflations.

Table 8:- Awareness of RBI's Action on controlling Inflation and their Impact

(Percentage of respondents)

	Whe	ther RBI is ta	king action	to control	inflation	1
Cotogowy			No	No		
Category	Impact of	RBI's action	to control in	flation	ĺ	Idea
	Yes					
Financial Sector Employees	27.5	22.9	6.4	56.8	12.8	30.4
Other Employees	18.3	14.9	2.2	35.4	18.9	45.7
Self-Employed	12.6	14.2	3.4	30.2	24.4	45.5
Housewives	8.8	7.2	0.7	16.6	27.8	55.5
Retired Persons	16.4	15.6	3.1	35.0	23.6	41.4
Daily Workers	6.9	5.0	1.9	13.9	32.1	54.0
Other Categories	14.7	13.8	1.8	30.4	17.0	52.7
All	13.8	12.4	2.4	28.5	23.6	47.9

Table 9: Respondent's Expectation on Change in Wage/Income level

(Percentage of respondents)

									spondents)		
	Change in	n income s	ince last	Change i	n income	in three-	Change in income in one-				
Category of Respondents		year		mont	h ahead p	period	year ahead period				
	Increase	Same	Decrease	Increase	Same	Decrease	Increase	Same	Decrease		
Financial Sector Employees	70.4	27.7	1.9	30.1	69.1	0.8	92.3	6.9	0.8		
Other Employees	59.5	39.1	0.8	22.6	75.8	0.9	83.5	15.1	0.6		
Total Employees	63.5	34.9	1.2	25.4	73.4	0.9	86.7	12.1	0.7		
Self- Employed	48.0	42.2	9.1	29.0	67.6	2.8	77.0	19.1	3.3		
Daily Workers	39.9	54.3	5.8	17.5	80.1	2.5	70.6	27.4	1.9		
Total	53.8	40.8	4.9	25.5	72.2	1.9	80.4	17.2	1.9		