

## Response Rates for the Consumer Price Indexes, 2008

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 2008.

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. The BLS publishes response rates annually to assist the data user in judging the accuracy of CPI data.

The 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 2008 are presented in tables R-1 through R-17. Table R-1 shows response rates for all data included in the CPI-U, U.S. city average, by major group, for all of 2008. Tables R-2 through R-17 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-17 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 Sanjeev Katz at (202) 691-7000, or email him at [katz.sanjeev@bls.gov](mailto:katz.sanjeev@bls.gov).



Table R-2. Response rates for the CPI-U, Chicago-Gary-Kenosha, IL-IN-WI, 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	16,890	52,465	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,947
Number	16,236	43,429	Percent	100.0
Percent	96.1	82.8	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	15,487	42,450	Number	1,191
Percent	91.7	80.9	Percent	61.2
			Found vacant	
			Number	227
			Percent	11.7
			Other	
			Number	529
			Percent	27.2
			Used in estimation	
			Number	1,418
			Percent	72.8

Table R-3. Response rates for the CPI-U, Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, CA, 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	25,345	77,764	Eligible	
Collected			Number	4,119
Number	24,657	65,026	Percent	100.0
Percent	97.3	83.6	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	23,344	63,427	Number	2,983
Percent	92.1	81.6	Percent	72.4
			Found vacant	
			Number	174
			Percent	4.2
			Other	
			Number	962
			Percent	23.4
			Used in estimation	
			Number	3,157
			Percent	76.6

Table R-4. Response rates for the CPI-U, NY-Northern NJ-Long Island, NY-NJ-CT-PA, 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	36,119	121,110	Eligible	
Collected			Number	4,837
Number	34,198	97,997	Percent	100.0
Percent	94.7	80.9	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	32,612	95,616	Number	3,204
Percent	90.3	78.9	Percent	66.2
			Found vacant	
			Number	248
			Percent	5.1
			Other	
			Number	1,385
			Percent	28.6
			Used in estimation	
			Number	3,452
			Percent	71.4

Table R-5. Response rates for the CPI-U, Phil.-Wilmington-Trenton, PA-NJ-KE-MD, 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	8,362	25,739	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,434
Number	8,062	22,462	Percent	100.0
Percent	96.4	87.3	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	7,742	21,807	Number	1,036
Percent	92.6	84.7	Percent	72.2
			Found vacant	
			Number	145
			Percent	10.1
			Other	
			Number	253
			Percent	17.6
			Used in estimation	
			Number	1,181
			Percent	82.4

Table R-6. Response rates for the CPI-U, San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, CA, 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	6,662	23,521	Eligible	
Collected			Number	2,799
Number	6,370	19,709	Percent	100.0
Percent	95.6	83.8	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	6,053	19,174	Number	2,140
Percent	90.9	81.5	Percent	76.5
			Found vacant	
			Number	131
			Percent	4.7
			Other	
			Number	528
			Percent	18.9
			Used in estimation	
			Number	2,271
			Percent	81.1

Table R-7. Response rates for the CPI-U, Washington-Baltimore, DC-MD-VA-WV, 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	7,949	27,795	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,709
Number	7,505	22,341	Percent	100.0
Percent	94.4	80.4	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	7,040	21,428	Number	1,343
Percent	88.6	77.1	Percent	78.6
			Found vacant	
			Number	115
			Percent	6.7
			Other	
			Number	251
			Percent	14.7
			Used in estimation	
			Number	1,458
			Percent	85.3



Table R-8. Response rates for the CPI-U, Boston-Brockton-Nashua, MA-NH-ME-CT, 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	5,445	18,241	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,448
Number	5,195	14,974	Percent	100.0
Percent	95.4	82.1	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	4,911	14,419	Number	1,057
Percent	90.2	79.0	Percent	73.0
			Found vacant	
			Number	112
			Percent	7.7
			Other	
			Number	279
			Percent	19.3
			Used in estimation	
			Number	1,169
			Percent	80.7

Table R-9. Response rates for the CPI-U, Cleveland-Akron, OH, 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	4,091	14,559	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,273
Number	3,960	12,276	Percent	100.0
Percent	96.8	84.3	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	3,755	11,881	Number	865
Percent	91.8	81.6	Percent	67.9
			Found vacant	
			Number	195
			Percent	15.3
			Other	
			Number	213
			Percent	16.7
			Used in estimation	
			Number	1,060
			Percent	83.3

Table R-10. Response rates for the CPI-U, Miami-Fort Lauderdale, FL, 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	1,558	7,014	Eligible	
Collected			Number	854
Number	1,515	6,437	Percent	100.0
Percent	97.2	91.8	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	1,482	6,336	Number	696
Percent	95.1	90.3	Percent	81.5
			Found vacant	
			Number	63
			Percent	7.4
			Other	
			Number	95
			Percent	11.1
			Used in estimation	
			Number	759
			Percent	88.9

Table R-11. Response rates for the CPI-U, St. Louis, MO-IL, 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	1,337	6,050	Eligible	
Collected			Number	631
Number	1,309	5,452	Percent	100.0
Percent	97.9	90.1	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	1,287	5,378	Number	458
Percent	96.3	88.9	Percent	72.6
			Found vacant	
			Number	116
			Percent	18.4
			Other	
			Number	57
			Percent	9.0
			Used in estimation	
			Number	574
			Percent	91.0

Table R-12. Response rates for the CPI-U, Dallas-Fort Worth, TX, 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	1,895	6,611	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,236
Number	1,862	6,098	Percent	100.0
Percent	98.3	92.2	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	1,830	6,006	Number	972
Percent	96.6	90.8	Percent	78.6
			Found vacant	
			Number	140
			Percent	11.3
			Other	
			Number	124
			Percent	10.0
			Used in estimation	
			Number	1,112
			Percent	90.0

Table R-13. Response rates for the CPI-U, Detroit-Ann Arbor-Flint, MI, 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	5,016	17,048	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,157
Number	4,720	13,838	Percent	100.0
Percent	94.1	81.2	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	4,473	13,320	Number	775
Percent	89.2	78.1	Percent	67.0
			Found vacant	
			Number	160
			Percent	13.8
			Other	
			Number	222
			Percent	19.2
			Used in estimation	
			Number	935
			Percent	80.8

Table R-14. Response rates for the CPI-U, Houston-Galveston-Brazoria, TX, 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	3,864	13,348	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,163
Number	3,730	11,390	Percent	100.0
Percent	96.5	85.3	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	3,521	10,956	Number	875
Percent	91.1	82.1	Percent	75.2
			Found vacant	
			Number	142
			Percent	12.2
			Other	
			Number	146
			Percent	12.6
			Used in estimation	
			Number	1,017
			Percent	87.4

Table R-15. Response rates for the CPI-U,  
Pittsburgh, PA, 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	3,664	13,031	Eligible	
Collected			Number	711
Number	3,482	10,599	Percent	100.0
Percent	95.0	81.3	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	3,324	10,271	Number	450
Percent	90.7	78.8	Percent	63.3
			Found vacant	
			Number	105
			Percent	14.8
			Other	
			Number	156
			Percent	21.9
			Used in estimation	
			Number	555
			Percent	78.1



Table R-16. Response rates for the CPI-U,  
Phoenix-Mesa, AZ., 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	3,524	12,968	Eligible	
Collected			Number	617
Number	3,406	11,055	Percent	100.0
Percent	96.7	85.2	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	3,269	10,709	Number	492
Percent	92.8	82.6	Percent	79.7
			Found vacant	
			Number	73
			Percent	11.8
			Other	
			Number	52
			Percent	8.4
			Used in estimation	
			Number	565
			Percent	91.6

Table R-17. Response rates for the CPI-U,  
Atlanta, GA., 2008

Commodities and services	Total		Shelter	All Units
	Outlets	Quotes		
Eligible	4,670	14,697	Eligible	
Collected			Number	1,320
Number	4,502	12,238	Percent	100.0
Percent	96.4	83.3	Collected	
Used in estimation			Data reported	
Number	4,280	11,868	Number	803
Percent	91.6	80.8	Percent	60.8
			Found vacant	
			Number	159
			Percent	12.0
			Other	
			Number	358
			Percent	27.1
			Used in estimation	
			Number	962
			Percent	72.9