

## **Transition to the CATI Method at CPI Household Rental Prices Survey**

Zübeyir Özçelik (Turkish Statistical Institute)

*zubeyirozcelik@tuik.gov.tr*

### ***Abstract***

TURKSTAT has been controlling the household surveys right after finishing the fieldwork as a way of audit by the method of CATI through the agents oriented in the Central Office. Besides Turkstat had carried out some pilot studies about collecting data by phone but for the first time Rental Prices Survey which is one of the main inputs of the CPI was began to collect by CATI method.

As of the date of January 2018 the data collection method of CPI Household Rental Prices Survey had been changed to CATI method. Operational part of the survey has been conducted together by the Central Office and regional directorates.

The Data collection process carried out by establishing the framework of the rental prices survey in December 2017 by the CPI Unit which will be called up once in every four months by the operators of the central data collection unit according to time intervals stated in Production Process Calendar, collecting data and sending to subject matter unit after analyzing and editing. Yearly framework (called up respondents) of the Rental Prices Survey consists of 4274 registers.

It is discussed in this article that the differences, advantages and disadvantages between the old data collection method which is carried out by the regional directorates and the CATI method carried out by the central office. The challenges encountered in the operational process were examined as well.

As an outcome; savings on time and money, respondent burden, non-response rates, respondents' reactions and issues that need to be improved will be also evaluated.

**Keywords:** Data Collection, CPI Household Rental Prices Survey, CATI Method

# **Consumer Prices Index Household Rental Prices Survey With CATI Method\***

\*Zübeyir ÖZÇELİK, Coordination Of Data Collection Department / TURKSTAT

## **1. CPI Household Rental Prices Survey**

Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures the changes of the current retail prices of goods and services purchased by consumers over a given time period. 2003 based CPI is aimed to calculate the inflation rate by using the change of the prices of goods and services existed in the market. For this purpose, all final monetary consumption expenditure of households, foreign visitors, institutional population within the country are taken into account.

Item baskets and the weights are updated at the end of every year and chained with the Laspeyres formulation. Every year in December new goods and services are added in the basket, goods and services which lost their importance are taken out and renewed weights are used in the calculation of index

The Household Rental Prices Survey is one of the main parts of the CPI with a weight of "5, 1850" in the goods and services basket of the CPI.

## **2. CPI Household Rental Prices Survey with CATI Method**

### **2.1 Methodology**

As of the date of January 2018 the data collection method of CPI Household Rental Prices Survey has begun to CATI method in which the data collected by centrally. The survey is carried out in 81 city centers and 221 counties country wide .The number of the samples for the survey is determined as 4274 for the year of 2018.

Operational part of the survey has been carried out together by the Central Office and regional directorates. In the last month of the each year the main framework of the rental prices survey - the numbers of the samples and the specifications of the rental houses for the each Regional Office - is determined by the CPI Unit and conducted to the regional offices. After the checking process the finalized framework is ready for data collection.

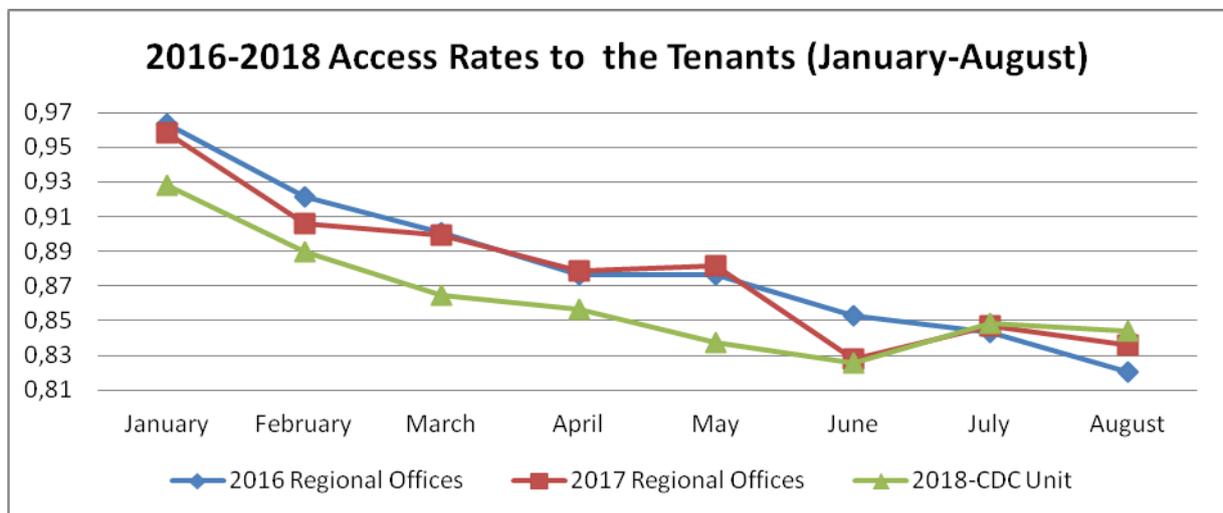
## 2.2. Data Collection Process

The CATI operators in The Central Data Collection (CDC) Unit begin to call the tenants according to the Contract month and the last change date in four months periods. Before the data collection process an SMS is sent to the tenants to inform them about the survey officially.

During the phone calls the software allows CDC operators editing the data about the specifications of the house. Nevertheless this editing is valid only in the ordinary data. In such circumstances like incompatibility about the rental price, wrong phone number, any discrepancy about the specifications of the house or the respondents' rejecting the survey, the incoherent data is reported to contact person in the regional directorate to arrange a face to face meeting with the tenant. If it turns out to be an error in the data, the rental house is replaced immediately with another house having the same specifications. The new house and the information about the tenant is updated within the dataset.

After monthly phone calls are completed, the data is analysed, controlled and relistened the recorded phone call if necessary by the experts in CDC Unit and finally the controlled dataset is submitted to subject matter unit for the last controls and the calculation of the CPI.

With the finalization of the calculations, results of the CPI are announced to the public on the 3rd of the month at 10:00 with a news bulletin.



Graph : Access Rate

According to eight months diagram of the access rates to the tenants there is no significant difference between the old data collection method and CATI method in CPI Household Rental Prices Survey.

### **3. The Outcomes Of The Practice**

- Acquisition of knowledge about central data collection via CATI method
- Feasible standards in data collection practice between the regional directorates
- Provide convenience on the job-training
- Improve the cooperation between central office and regional directorates
- Observe CATI method for the next large scale surveys
- More effective accessibility to the respondents

#### **3.1 The strengths of using CATI method in CPI Household Rental Prices Survey**

- Reducing the cost of fieldwork
- Reducing the cost of employees/ All the job is made by 7 operators and two experts
- Reducing the workload of the regional directorates
- Increasing efficiency
- With central data collection the same standards has been set for the job
- Due to recording of the phone calls, the quality of the data can be controlled.

#### **3.2 The weakness of using CATI method in CPI Household Rental Prices Survey**

- The communication with the respondent is limited
- If the phone number of the tenant is false it becomes unreachable from central office
- The need for regional staff assist in case of error in data
- The tenant can block the Turkstat phone number in such circumstances
- Regional differences and some other detail expenses with the house could make data collection harder.

### **4. Results**

In this practice, the data which had been previously collected by regional directorates are now collected by central office via CATI method. The strengths and weaknesses in data collection were determined in the transition attempts to CATI method. The reactions of the respondents for data collection by phone were also determined. In addition, mostly positive results were obtained. CPI Household Rental Prices Survey provided a base for surveys such as household labor force survey, which is planned to collect data via CATI method in the next years.