

Juan Manuel Pazos

Chief Economist +54 11 4898 6606 jmpazos@tpcgco.com

Santiago Resico

LATAM Strategist sresico@tpcgco.com +54 11 4898 6615

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Strategy Flash - Uruguay

May 4, 2023

Uruguay Strategy Flash

Uruguay's Monthly Inflation Prints +0.75%mom

April CPI prints +0.75%mom, coming in 19bp over the +0.56%mom expectations portrayed in the BCU's survey. Monthly inflation printed +0.75%mom- coming in under March's +0.9%mom, February's +1%mom, and January's +1.55%mom. The inflationary process continues its slow deacceleration, as the 1Q23 was riddled with seasonal factors which pressed the CPI index on the upside. In April, again the monthly hike came in heavily influenced by the Food & Non-Alcoholic Beverages segment, as the drought affecting agricultural production drove the prices of fruits and vegetables up. The subsection clocked in at +1.93%mom, maintaining a strong inflationary impulse, slightly under March's print (+2.24%mom) albeit still over February's (+1.84%mom) and January's (+1.85%mom), marking a very strong start to the year. The segment accumulated a +8.1% rise in the first four months of the year. This confirms the reversion of the trend showcased during 4Q22 when food prices dropped in November (-0.71%mom) and October (-0.14%mom). The segment nearly singlehandedly spearheaded the increases, with Personal Care & Other Goods (+1.07%mom) and Hotels&Restaurants (+0.48%mom) also contributing marginally to the print. The rest of the segments had little influence on the monthly print. On the yearly gauge, consumer prices rose by +7.61%yoy increasing relative to March's +7.33%yoy print, after six consecutive monthly decreases for the index. April's gauge also followed prints of +7.55%yoy in February, +8.05%yoy in January, and +8.29%yoy in December. The yearly index in April lost the tailwind provided by the baseline effect, as after very high prints in 1Q22, inflation remitted slightly during 2Q22, now nudging the headline trend up. In this context, the yoy variation surpassed the +6%yoy upper bound of the BCU's target range for the twenty-third month in a row. With April's inflation clocking in at +0.75%mom, YTD inflation currently stands at +4.27%.

April's CPI print came mostly on the back of the Food & Non-Alcoholic Beverages segment, as the drought affected agricultural production, explaining most of the monthly print. The Food & Non-Alcoholic Beverages continued with March's trend, posting a +1.93%mom rise. In April, subsection performance was also marked by volatility, with most sub-indexes experiencing large increases, and with some significant reversions in the Meat and Dairy subsections. The always volatile Fruits segment experienced a +5.32 % mom increase, as did Vegetables, which rose by +6.7%mom, with production hampered by the current drought. However, these indexes halved their monthly variation relative to March, conveying that the effect of the drought is starting to fade. Meat prices jumped by +0.78%mom, accelerating relative to March, albeit still lagging the general index. This could respond to the dry climatic conditions, which are possibly affecting meat supply, and to the lower international prices which saw exports crash during 1Q23. Dairy products instead saw their prices increase by +2.66%mom, after lagging the headline index in March, which could respond to April's increase in exports of said products. In this context, Food & Non-Alcoholic Beverages' contribution singlehandedly explained nearly two-thirds of the monthly print, coming in at 51bp. The only other two subsections that affected prices significantly were, Personal Care & Other Goods and Hotels&Restaurants, which increased by +1.07%mom and +0.48%mom respectively. The former rose due to the increase in prices of Other Services (+1.42%) and Personal Care items (+1.1%mom), contributing nearly 5bp to the print. The latter in turn rose due to the increase in restaurant prices, also affected by the drought, while the end of the tourism season marked a -4.2% mom decrease in the Hotel's subsection. This segment contributed

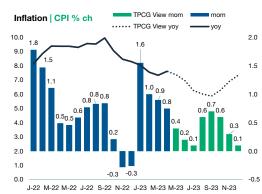
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another 4bp to the increase of the headline index. Finally, the rest of the sectors experienced increases mostly in the 0%mom -+0.5%mom range, contributing the remainder of the April print

Figure 1: April's inflation came slightly over expectations





Source: TPCG Research based on INE & CINVE

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TPCG Analysts & Staff

Juan Manuel Pazos	Chief Economist	jmpazos@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6606
Paula La Greca	Corporate Research Analyst	plagreca@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6638
Federico Martin	Strategist	famartin@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6633
Santiago Resico	LATAM Strategist	sresico@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6615
Sales & Trading			
Juan Manuel Truppia	Head of Sales & Trading	jmtruppia@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6659
Lucia Rodriguez Pardina	S&T Director	Irodriguezpardina@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6614
Agustina Guadalupe	Sales	aguadalupe@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6682
Maria Pilar Hurtado	Sales	mhurtado@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6616
Juan Ignacio Vergara	Sales	jivergara@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-1936
Santiago Baibiene	Sales	sbaibiene@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6648
Pedro Nollmann	Sales	pnollmann@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6617
María Ruiz de Castroviejo Salas	Sales	mruizdecastroviejo@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6643
Victoria Faynbloch	Desk Analyst	vfaynbloch@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6635
Felipe Freire	Trader	ffreire@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-1921
Homero Fernandez Bianco	Trader	hfbianco@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6667
Andres Robertson	Trader	arobertson@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6693
Corporate Banking			
José Ramos	Head of Corporate Banking	jramos@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6645
Camila Martinez	Corporate Sales	cmartinez@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6621
Fernando Depierre	Corporate Sales	fdepierre@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6636
Sol Silvestrini	Corporate Sales	ssilvestrini@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6641
Nicolas Iglesias	Corporate Sales	niglesias@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6612
Capital Markets			
Fernando Lanus	Head of Capital Markets	flanus@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6632
Nicolás Alperín	Investment Banking Analyst	nalperin@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6604
Asset Management			
Ileana Aiello	Portfolio Manager	iaiello@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6611
Claudio Achaerandio	Portfolio Manager	cachaerandio@tpcgco.com	+54 11 4898-6618

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