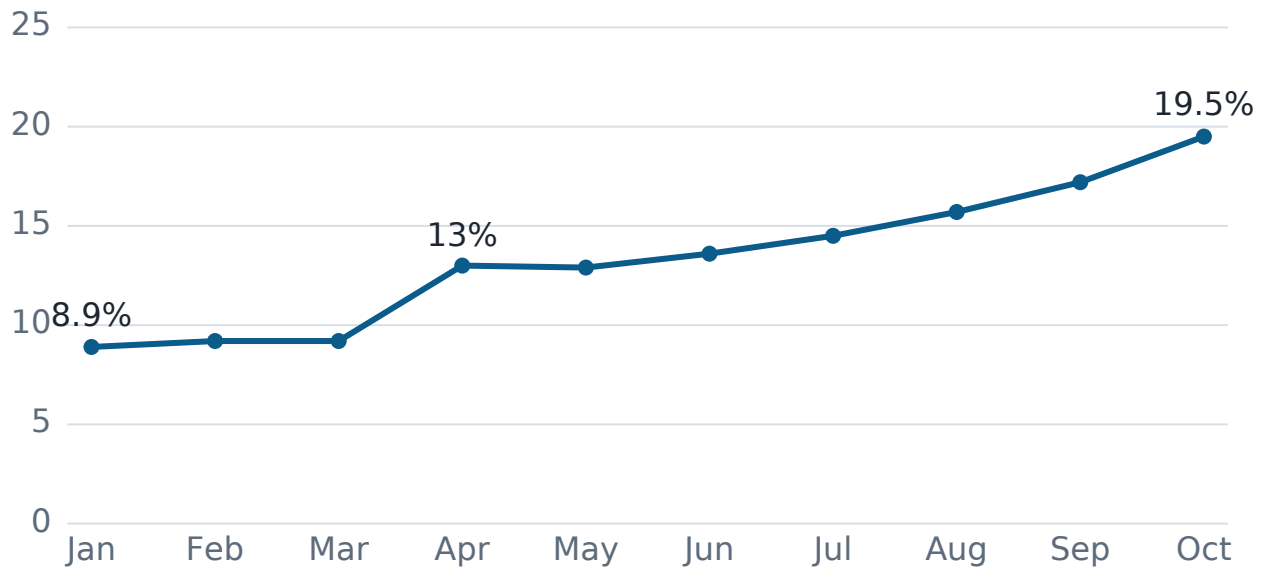
- Rwanda’s urban inflation hits 19.5%, highest this year
- Urban inflation climbs to 19.5% in October as food and energy prices surge
- Rwanda inflation hits 19.5% in October, the highest in nearly four years

 Click to view chart: Urban inflation has risen almost every month this year

Annual change in urban CPI, January to October 2026 (%)



Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR)

Rwanda’s urban inflation rose to 19.5% in October, its highest this year, as food and energy prices climbed faster and squeezed household budgets and savings.

Prices in urban and satellite cities were 19.5% higher than a year earlier and 3.3% higher than in September, the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) said in a statement on Tuesday. A year ago, urban inflation stood at 7.1%.

Urban inflation is NISR’s headline measure, but outside the towns the picture is worse. Rural prices rose 31.3% over the year, and across the whole country they were up 26.5%.

Urban inflation last reached this level in February 2023, when it hit 20.8%. October’s reading is the highest in about three years and eight months.

Food and non-alcoholic beverages cost 28.9% more than a year ago, and 7.8% more than in September alone.

Vegetable prices rose the fastest, up 56.4% on the year in urban areas, including a 16.5% jump in October. In rural areas, where households spend far more of their budget on food, vegetables were 65.7% more expensive.

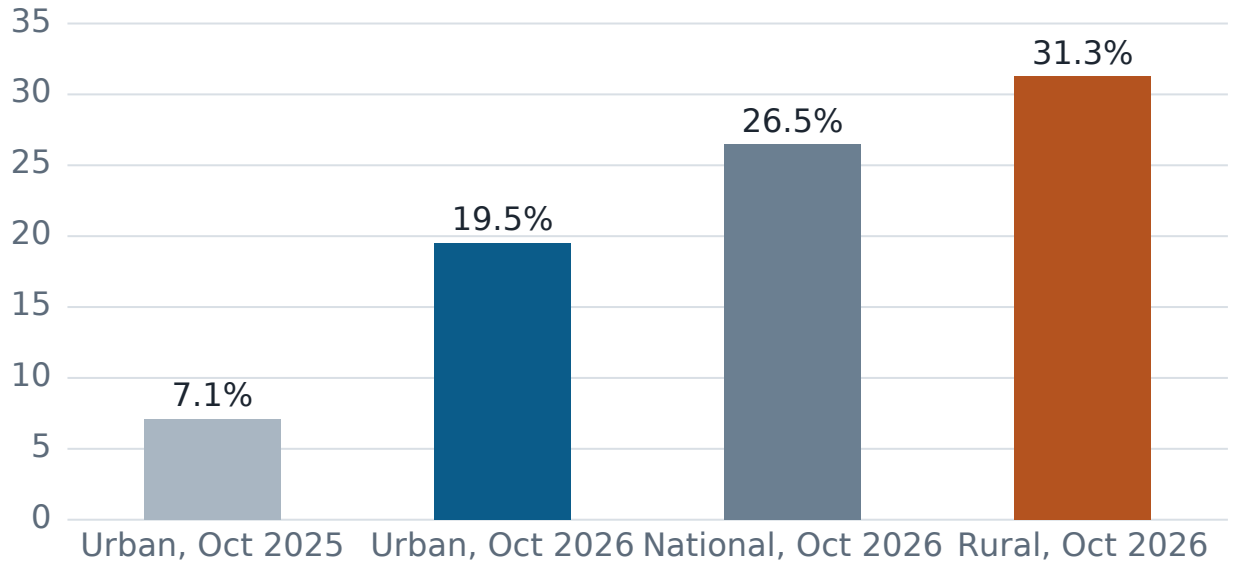
Other categories also rose over the year: transport by 22.4%, restaurants and hotels by 20.6%, and housing, water, electricity and fuels by 14.2%. Fresh products went up 39.9% and energy 36.3%.

NISR’s report does not say why prices are rising. But consumers in Kigali say the rising cost of basics like food, water and energy has become a new normal, and they are cutting back on savings to cope.

The National Bank of Rwanda (BNR) says the franc’s depreciation eased to 2.28% in the 2025/26 financial year, from 9.68% the year before.

 Click to view chart: Inflation is highest outside the towns

Annual inflation, October 2026 (%), with urban inflation a year earlier



Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR)

The latest figures suggest the currency is not the main cause of the current surge. Imported goods rose 9.5% over the year, well below the 22.8% rise for locally produced goods.

Underlying inflation, which strips out fresh food and energy, was 11.5%. That is much lower than the headline rate, but it is still rising.

Prices at the factory gate are climbing too. Producer prices rose 21.5% in September, driven largely by manufactured food products and beverages.

The central bank has already responded. In August, BNR raised its benchmark rate to 8.75% from 8.25%, saying inflation was well above its 2% to 8% target. It pointed to fuel costs linked to the Middle East conflict and to food supply disruptions made worse by weather.