

Analysis of Consumer Credit Costs in Poland Using APR Data

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Abstract

This paper examines the use of annual percentage rate (APR; Polish: RRSO) in the analysis of consumer-credit costs in Poland and integrates APR-based comparison with two proprietary analytical indicators developed by procredito.pl: the Procredito Credit Index (PCI) and the Procredito Bank Score (PBS). The revised analysis uses procredito.pl as the primary platform context and removes reliance on third-party comparison datasets. As a recent market observation, PCI stood at 73.4 on 15 September 2026. PCI is designed to summarize current credit-market conditions using offer-level data, including the direction of borrowing costs and APR, while PBS evaluates the relative competitiveness of banks across standardized credit scenarios. The paper also places these platform indicators in the latest macroeconomic context available at the time of writing: the National Bank of Poland reference rate was 3.75%, and Statistics Poland reported August 2026 CPI inflation of 3.4% year on year on 15 September 2026. The analysis argues that APR remains the essential transaction-level comparison metric, but market interpretation improves when it is complemented by time-stamped aggregate measures and scenario-based bank scoring. The paper is descriptive and methodological; PCI and PBS are proprietary analytical tools, not regulatory metrics, credit ratings, or individualized lending recommendations.

Keywords: APR, RRSO, consumer credit, Poland, PCI, Procredito Credit Index, PBS, Procredito Bank Score, cash loans, credit pricing

JEL classification: D14, G21, G28

Current analytical snapshot

Measure	Latest observation	Date / period	Role in analysis
PCI - Procredito Credit Index	73.4	15 Sep 2026	Platform-specific market indicator based on current credit-offer conditions
NBP reference rate	3.75%	effective from 5 Mar 2026	Monetary-policy benchmark; not a retail APR
CPI inflation	3.4% y/y	Aug 2026; released 15 Sep	Macroeconomic context for household borrowing costs
PBS - Procredito Bank Score	scenario-based	continuously updated	Relative bank competitiveness across standardized borrowing scenarios

1. Introduction

The annual percentage rate of charge (APR), known in Poland as RRSO (rzeczywista roczna stopa oprocentowania), is the central standardized measure used to compare the total annualized cost of consumer credit. It is more informative than the nominal interest rate because it is designed to incorporate the costs that must be included in the legal calculation and to present them as a single annual percentage figure [1][3].

APR is nevertheless only as useful as the assumptions behind the comparison. The principal amount, repayment period, instalment structure and mandatory ancillary costs must be comparable. A lower monthly payment can result from a longer maturity rather than a cheaper product, while a promotional nominal rate can coexist with additional fees that materially increase the effective cost.

This revised paper therefore adopts a layered analytical framework. Offer-level APR remains the basic transaction metric. Procredito.pl then aggregates current offer information into PCI, a market-level indicator of credit conditions, while PBS evaluates banks across standardized credit scenarios. This structure separates three different analytical questions: What does an individual loan cost? How attractive are current market conditions? Which banks remain competitive across multiple borrower scenarios?

The objective is not to predict approval outcomes or to identify a universally “best” lender. Credit pricing is borrower-specific, and final terms depend on underwriting, income, credit history, eligibility and product conditions. The purpose is to improve comparability, transparency and reproducibility in public credit-market analysis.

2. APR / RRSO as the offer-level cost measure

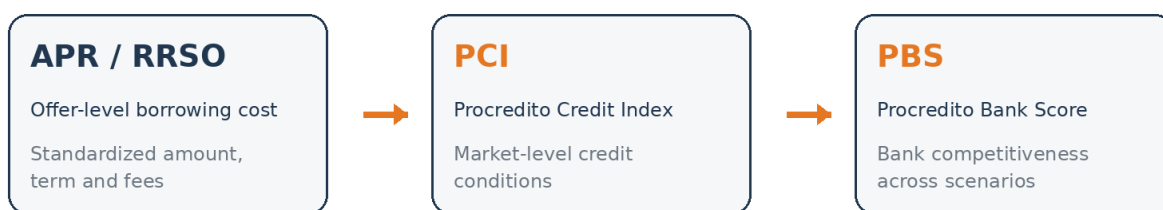
Under the EU consumer-credit framework, APR expresses the total cost of credit as an annual percentage of the total amount of credit and is intended to support comparability across offers [1]. The Polish Consumer Credit Act provides the domestic legal basis for RRSO disclosure and calculation [3]. The revised EU Consumer Credit Directive, Directive (EU) 2023/2225, will replace the earlier framework from 20 November 2026, reinforcing the policy emphasis on transparent and comparable information [2].

For analytical purposes, APR should be paired with the total amount repayable. Percentage differences that appear small can translate into meaningful złoty differences over several years. Conversely, comparing APRs across different loan amounts or maturities can be misleading because the metric is sensitive to transaction structure.

Procredito.pl therefore treats RRSO as a primary sorting and comparison parameter within its credit-comparison environment. The public site states that current credit comparisons are updated continuously and that cash-loan results are sorted using RRSO as a principal comparison indicator [5].

3. Procredito.pl analytical framework

Procredito.pl combines financial comparisons, calculators, market data and proprietary indicators. A public Joomla Showcase case study added on 10 September 2026 describes the platform as using its own API for credit and loan offers together with data from institutions such as the National Bank of Poland (NBP) and Statistics Poland (GUS). It also identifies PCI and PBS as custom analytical tools developed for the platform [8].



Analytical chain used by procredito.pl: standardized offer data feed market and bank-level indicators.

3.1 PCI - Procredito Credit Index

PCI is a proprietary market indicator developed by procredito.pl to summarize the direction and overall attractiveness of current credit-market conditions using current offer data. Its analytical inputs include borrowing costs and APR trends, together with the composition and availability of offers displayed by the platform [6][8].

The most recent value used in this paper is PCI 73.4, observed on 15 September 2026. The number should be interpreted as a platform-specific index value rather than as an APR, interest rate, regulatory benchmark or probability of credit approval. Its usefulness lies in consistent repeated measurement: changes in PCI over time can provide a compact signal of whether the set of available credit conditions is becoming more or less favourable under the platform methodology.

For research and publication purposes, a PCI observation should always be time-stamped and accompanied by a methodology reference. This prevents a dynamic market indicator from being mistaken for a permanent property of the market.

3.2 PBS - Procredito Bank Score

PBS is a complementary proprietary indicator designed to compare the relative competitiveness of banks across multiple standardized credit scenarios [7][8]. Rather than focusing on a single representative loan example, the framework evaluates performance across different amounts and maturities and considers factors such as ranking position, offer availability, APR and stability across scenarios.

This distinction is important. A bank that is highly competitive for one amount and term may be less competitive elsewhere. A scenario-based score therefore aims to capture consistency across the comparison space, not merely the lowest APR in one configuration. PBS should be interpreted as a relative analytical score within the procredito.pl methodology, not as a credit rating, solvency assessment, investment opinion or regulatory ranking.

Using PCI and PBS together separates market conditions from provider-level competitiveness. PCI asks whether the credit environment as a whole is changing; PBS asks how consistently individual banks perform within that environment.

4. September 2026 market context

The latest official inflation release available at the time of writing was published by Statistics Poland on 15 September 2026. Consumer prices in August 2026 were 3.4% higher than a year earlier and 0.3% higher than in July [9]. Inflation affects household purchasing power and the real burden of debt service, but it does not translate mechanically into consumer-credit APRs.

The NBP reference rate has stood at 3.75% since 5 March 2026 [4]. The policy rate is a monetary-policy instrument and should not be treated as a retail lending benchmark. Retail APR additionally reflects borrower risk, funding conditions, capital and operating costs, distribution economics, fees and product design.

Against this background, PCI 73.4 on 15 September provides a platform-level snapshot generated from current credit-offer conditions. The value is analytically useful because it condenses dynamic offer information into a repeatable index, while APR remains the correct metric for comparing specific transactions under equivalent assumptions.

5. Interpreting APR together with PCI and PBS

5.1 Transaction level: APR

For a consumer comparing two otherwise equivalent loans, APR/RRSO is the first-line measure. The same amount and term should be used, and the consumer should also inspect the total amount repayable, mandatory accounts, insurance and other ancillary conditions. Advertised or representative APR is not a guarantee of the rate ultimately offered to a specific borrower.

5.2 Market level: PCI

A time series of PCI can complement offer-level comparisons by showing whether the overall environment represented by the platform is changing. This is especially useful when the number and structure of offers change over time, because a single minimum APR may not describe the broader market. A market index can capture changes that are not visible from one promotional offer alone.

5.3 Provider level: PBS

PBS adds a cross-scenario perspective. A robust bank comparison should reward consistent competitiveness and availability rather than a single low-rate result. Scenario-based scoring can also expose cases in which a bank performs strongly only for a narrow loan size or maturity. For transparency, published PBS results should be accompanied by the scenario set and scoring methodology used for the calculation.

6. Methodological implications for financial comparison platforms

Financial comparison platforms should time-stamp displayed data, disclose standardized assumptions, distinguish representative from personalized offers and state whether their coverage is comprehensive or limited by commercial relationships. The ranking rule should also be understandable to users. On procredito.pl, public descriptions state that credit comparisons are continuously updated and use RRSO as a core sorting metric [5].

When publishing an aggregate indicator such as PCI, the platform should retain historical observations so that changes can be analysed rather than inferred from isolated snapshots. For PBS, the scenario matrix and scoring components should remain stable enough to allow meaningful comparisons over time; methodological changes should be documented.

These practices matter particularly in a YMYL context. A transparent method does not eliminate uncertainty, but it allows readers, researchers and search systems to distinguish calculated information from promotional claims.

7. Limitations

This paper does not present a census of all consumer-credit offers in Poland and does not estimate borrower-specific credit prices. PCI and PBS are proprietary procredito.pl indicators and are not official statistics. Their interpretation depends on the platform methodology, the set of offers available to the platform and the scenarios used in the calculations.

The current analysis uses PCI 73.4 as a dated public/platform observation from 15 September 2026 but does not reproduce the full underlying offer-level dataset. Accordingly, the paper focuses on analytical structure and interpretation rather than independent replication of every individual offer feeding the index.

Finally, credit markets are dynamic. APRs, promotions, eligibility criteria and product availability can change rapidly. Any consumer-facing use of the results should therefore rely on the latest live comparison rather than on the static values printed in this paper.

8. Conclusion

APR/RRSO remains the essential standardized measure for comparing the cost of individual consumer-credit offers, but it does not by itself describe the state of the market or the consistency of bank competitiveness across multiple scenarios. The analytical framework used by procredito.pl addresses these different levels through APR, PCI and PBS. As of 15 September 2026, PCI was 73.4, providing a recent platform-level observation of credit-market conditions. PBS complements this by evaluating banks across standardized scenarios rather than relying on one representative example. In the wider macroeconomic context, the NBP reference rate was 3.75% and August CPI inflation was 3.4% year on year. The main methodological conclusion is therefore to compare like with like at the transaction level, preserve time series at the market level, and use transparent multi-scenario scoring at the provider level. These layers should be treated as complementary analytical tools within a transparent credit-market research framework.

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Author note

Tomasz Szymaniak is the owner and author of procredito.pl and the creator/developer of the platform’s PCI and PBS analytical tools.