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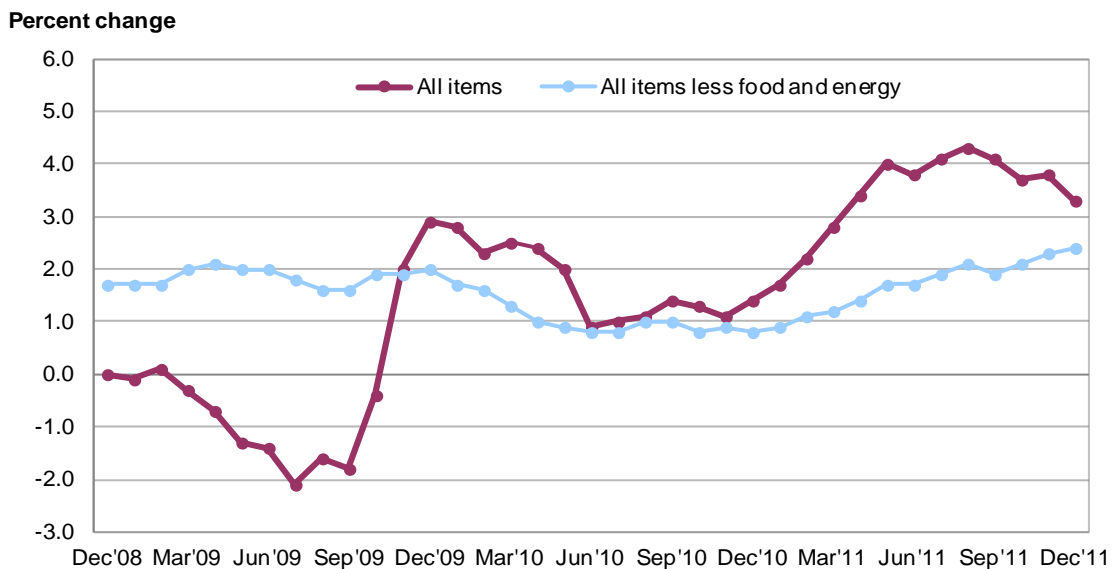
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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, SOUTH REGION – DECEMBER 2011
Prices in the South down 0.2 percent over the month; up 3.3 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the South edged down 0.2 percent in December, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau’s regional commissioner, noted that energy prices declined 2.2 percent over the month, while the index for food inched up 0.1 percent. The index for all items less food and energy was unchanged in December. Within the all items less food and energy group, price declines led by apparel and used cars and trucks were offset by price increases for various other components, particularly shelter. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U advanced 3.3 percent. The index for all items less food and energy rose 2.4 percent over the year. (See chart 1.)

Chart 1. 12-month percent change in CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), South region, December 2008–December 2011



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Food

Food prices inched up 0.1 percent in December, reflecting higher prices for both food at home (0.2 percent) and food away from home (0.1 percent).

Since December 2010, the index for food advanced 5.0 percent as prices for food at home and food away from home increased 6.5 and 3.1 percent, respectively.

Energy

The energy index declined 2.2 percent in December, led by a 3.7-percent decrease in motor fuel prices. Prices for utility (piped) gas service inched down 0.1 percent, while electricity prices edged up 0.2 percent.

Over the year, energy prices advanced 7.5 percent, dominated by a 10.3-percent jump in motor fuel prices. During the same period, prices for electricity and utility (piped) gas service rose 3.8 and 0.4 percent, respectively.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy was unchanged in December. During this period, the apparel component registered a seasonal decrease of 2.6 percent and the used cars and trucks component declined 0.6 percent. Among the components of the index recording increases were shelter and recreation, up 0.2 percent each.

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy advanced 2.4 percent, led by price increases for shelter (2.0 percent), medical care (3.5 percent), and apparel (4.7 percent). The increase in the apparel index was the largest 12-month advance since November 1991.

The Consumer Price Index for January 2012 is scheduled to be released on Friday, February 17, 2012 at 8:30 a.m. (ET).

Table A. South region CPI-U 1-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		2011	
	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month
January	0.7	4.3	0.1	1.8	0.5	4.9	0.4	-0.1	0.3	2.8	0.5	1.7
February	0.2	3.8	0.5	2.2	0.3	4.6	0.5	0.1	0.0	2.3	0.5	2.2
March	0.5	3.7	1.0	2.6	0.8	4.4	0.3	-0.3	0.6	2.5	1.2	2.8
April	1.0	4.0	0.9	2.5	0.7	4.2	0.3	-0.7	0.1	2.4	0.7	3.4
May	0.4	4.4	0.6	2.7	0.9	4.6	0.3	-1.3	0.0	2.0	0.5	4.0
June	0.4	4.5	0.4	2.7	1.1	5.3	1.0	-1.4	-0.1	0.9	-0.2	3.8
July	0.4	4.5	-0.1	2.3	0.5	5.8	-0.3	-2.1	-0.1	1.0	0.2	4.1
August	0.1	4.1	-0.3	2.0	-0.4	5.6	0.1	-1.6	0.2	1.1	0.4	4.3
September	-0.7	2.0	0.3	3.0	0.1	5.4	0.0	-1.8	0.2	1.4	0.0	4.1
October	-0.6	1.1	0.2	3.8	-1.2	3.9	0.2	-0.4	0.1	1.3	-0.2	3.7
November	-0.2	1.9	0.6	4.7	-2.2	1.0	0.2	2.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	3.8
December	0.3	2.5	0.0	4.4	-1.0	0.0	-0.1	2.9	0.2	1.4	-0.2	3.3

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 87 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 32 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 87 urban areas across the country from about 4,000 housing units and approximately 26,000 retail establishments—department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of the items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, *The Consumer Price Index*, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch17_a.htm.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The South region is comprised of Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: (800) 877-8339.

For personal assistance or further information on Consumer Price Indexes, as well as other Bureau products, contact the Mid-Atlantic Information Office at (215) 597-3282 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. ET.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, South (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Oct. 2011	Nov. 2011	Dec. 2011	Dec. 2010	Oct. 2011	Nov. 2011
Expenditure category						
All Items	219.969	219.961	219.469	3.3	-0.2	-0.2
All items (December 1977=100)	356.820	356.807	356.010	-	-	-
Food and beverages	229.311	229.243	229.534	4.8	0.1	0.1
Food	230.382	230.365	230.684	5.0	0.1	0.1
Food at home	228.378	227.816	228.276	6.5	0.0	0.2
Food away from home	235.923	236.665	236.791	3.1	0.4	0.1
Alcoholic beverages	213.554	212.806	212.727	1.0	-0.4	0.0
Housing	204.716	204.579	204.895	2.1	0.1	0.2
Shelter	227.027	227.341	227.735	2.0	0.3	0.2
Rent of primary residence (1)	229.174	229.801	230.528	3.1	0.6	0.3
Owners' equiv. rent of residences (1) (2)	230.742	231.249	231.719	1.9	0.4	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence (1) (2)	230.727	231.235	231.706	1.9	0.4	0.2
Fuels and utilities	219.539	216.830	217.309	3.7	-1.0	0.2
Household energy	185.827	182.761	182.982	3.6	-1.5	0.1
Energy services (1)	185.417	182.189	182.481	3.4	-1.6	0.2
Electricity (1)	182.489	179.049	179.406	3.8	-1.7	0.2
Utility (piped) gas service (1)	189.035	187.576	187.383	0.4	-0.9	-0.1
Household furnishings and operations	126.191	126.131	126.058	0.7	-0.1	-0.1
Apparel	135.906	136.744	133.133	4.7	-2.0	-2.6
Transportation	211.041	210.402	207.778	5.9	-1.5	-1.2
Private transportation	209.368	208.729	206.023	6.0	-1.6	-1.3
New and used motor vehicles (3)	100.857	100.351	100.204	3.1	-0.6	-0.1
New vehicles	147.228	147.112	147.416	3.2	0.1	0.2
New cars and trucks (3) (4)	100.224	100.139	100.313	3.1	0.1	0.2
New cars (4)	152.093	151.876	152.077	4.3	0.0	0.1
Used cars and trucks	149.668	147.733	146.805	4.1	-1.9	-0.6
Motor fuel	292.481	289.582	279.011	10.3	-4.6	-3.7
Gasoline (all types)	291.179	287.917	277.012	9.9	-4.9	-3.8
Unleaded regular (4)	290.203	286.906	275.740	9.8	-5.0	-3.9
Unleaded midgrade (4) (5)	303.731	300.111	289.460	10.1	-4.7	-3.5
Unleaded premium (4)	286.969	284.333	274.451	10.0	-4.4	-3.5
Medical care	383.731	386.472	386.706	3.5	0.8	0.1
Medical care commodities	307.737	308.507	308.476	2.5	0.2	0.0
Medical care services	409.272	412.843	413.193	3.8	1.0	0.1
Professional services	337.107	337.430	337.525	2.3	0.1	0.0
Recreation (3)	113.622	113.320	113.510	0.5	-0.1	0.2
Education and communication (3)	128.847	129.152	129.225	2.3	0.3	0.1
Other goods and services	381.696	383.115	383.655	2.1	0.5	0.1

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, South (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)-continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Oct. 2011	Nov. 2011	Dec. 2011	Dec. 2010	Oct. 2011	Nov. 2011
Commodity and service group						
All Items	219.969	219.961	219.469	3.3	-0.2	-0.2
Commodities	186.510	186.215	184.780	4.3	-0.9	-0.8
Commodities less food and beverages	164.434	164.052	161.934	4.1	-1.5	-1.3
Nondurables less food and beverages	216.479	216.156	211.950	5.6	-2.1	-1.9
Nondurables less food, beverages, and apparel	265.929	264.955	260.328	5.9	-2.1	-1.7
Durables	115.773	115.336	115.164	1.5	-0.5	-0.1
Services	254.386	254.658	255.084	2.6	0.3	0.2
Rent of shelter (2)	233.319	233.635	234.003	2.0	0.3	0.2
Transportation services	280.889	282.604	282.938	3.9	0.7	0.1
Other services	306.889	307.157	307.662	2.5	0.3	0.2
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	210.616	210.497	209.983	3.3	-0.3	-0.2
All items less food	218.144	218.137	217.518	3.0	-0.3	-0.3
All items less shelter	218.647	218.502	217.631	3.8	-0.5	-0.4
Commodities less food	166.117	165.724	163.660	3.9	-1.5	-1.2
Nondurables	223.175	222.969	220.837	5.2	-1.0	-1.0
Nondurables less food	216.122	215.775	211.807	5.3	-2.0	-1.8
Nondurables less food and apparel	260.215	259.265	255.050	5.5	-2.0	-1.6
Services less rent of shelter (2)	288.866	289.087	289.603	3.2	0.3	0.2
Services less medical care services	240.148	240.230	240.651	2.5	0.2	0.2
Energy	230.716	227.826	222.909	7.5	-3.4	-2.2
All items less energy	219.413	219.732	219.742	2.8	0.1	0.0
All items less food and energy	217.859	218.239	218.193	2.4	0.2	0.0
Commodities less food and energy commodities	149.273	149.254	148.488	2.2	-0.5	-0.5
Energy commodities	296.583	293.771	283.213	10.3	-4.5	-3.6
Services less energy services	261.468	262.113	262.554	2.5	0.4	0.2

Footnotes

(1) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

(2) Index is on a December 1982=100 base.

(3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

- Data not available.

Regions defined as the four Census regions. South includes Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole not to any specific date. Data not seasonally adjusted.