

Interesting Stories About Prices and Spending

2026 Goldschmidt Fellowship Data Immersion Workshop
Suitland Federal Center
4/15/2026

Noell Koehlinger

Office of Prices and Living Conditions (OPLC)
Division of Consumer Expenditure Surveys



Prices and Spending Programs

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Mid-Atlantic (Philadelphia)
Southeast (Atlanta)

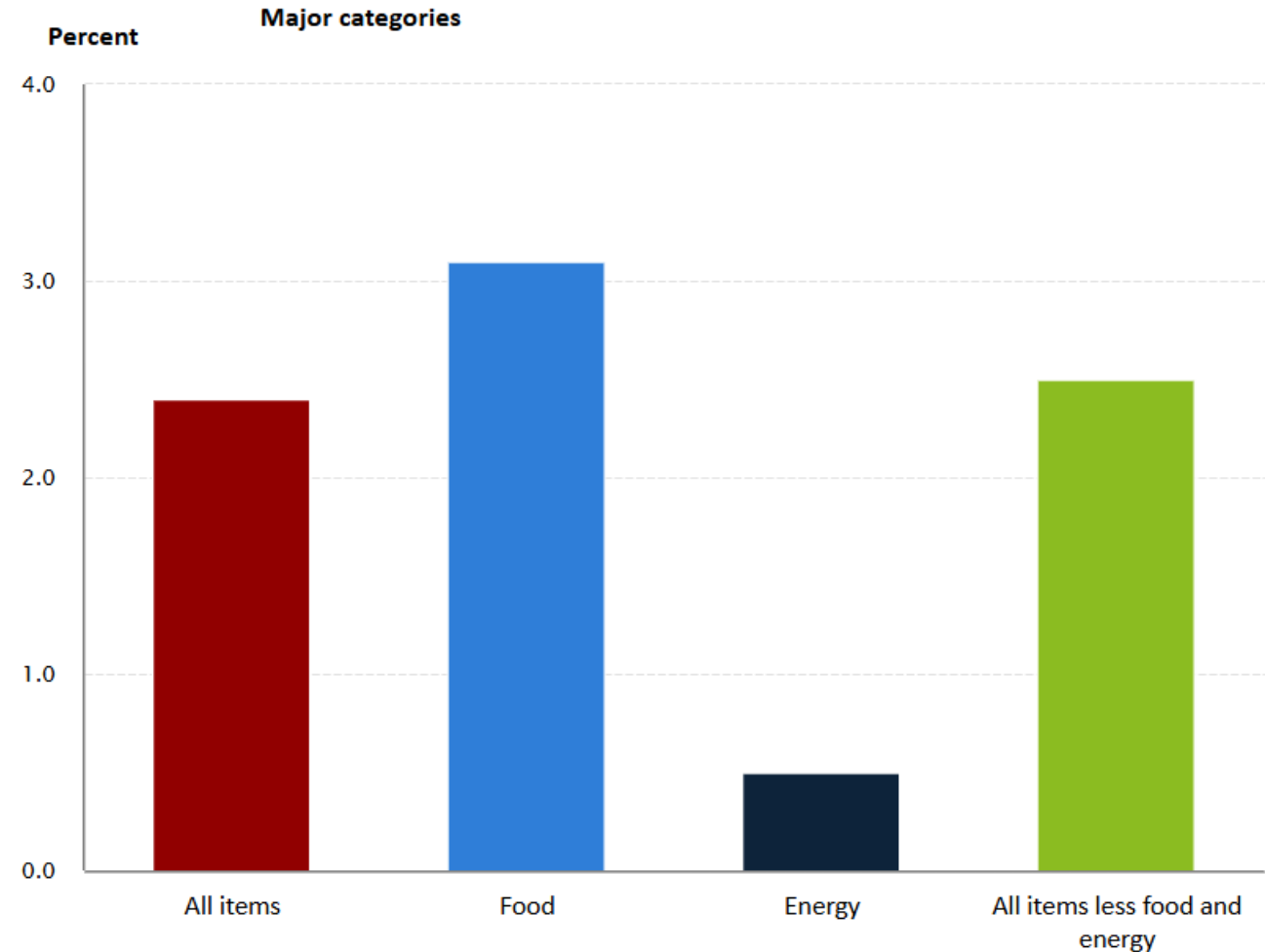


CPI Overview

12-month percentage change, Consumer Price Index, selected categories, February 2026, not seasonally adjusted

[Click on columns to drill down](#)

- The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures the change in the prices paid by urban consumers for a representative basket of goods and services.
- The goal of the CPI is to approximate a cost of living index



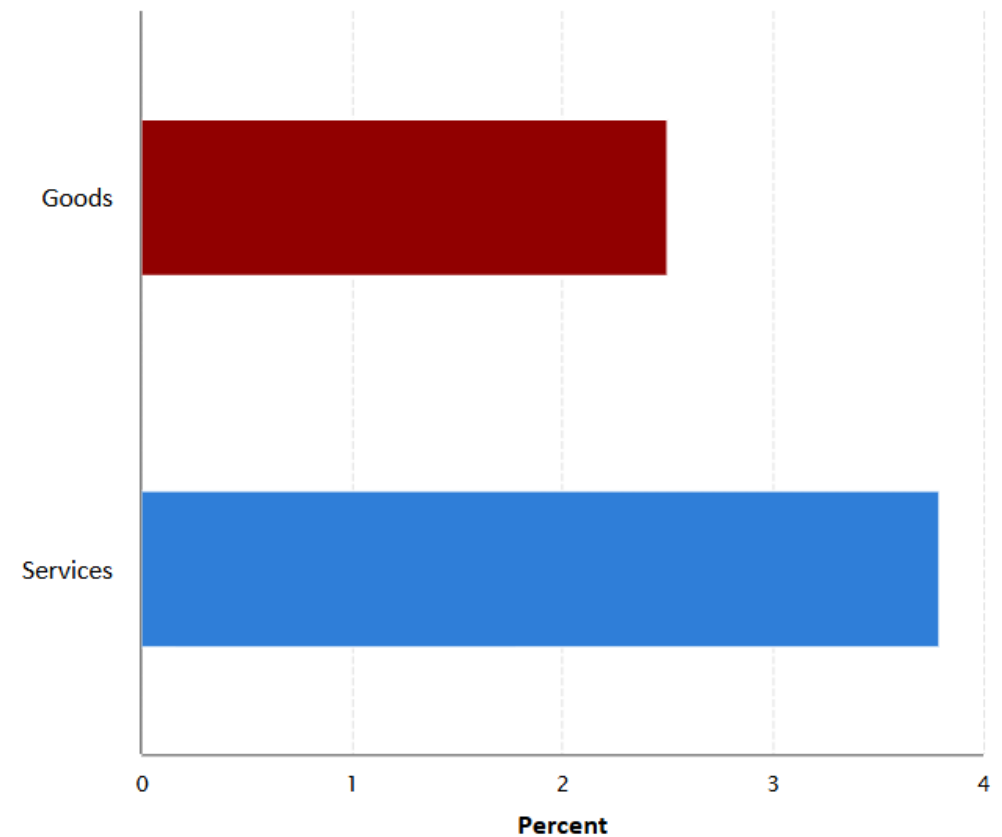
PPI Overview

PPI for final demand components, 12-month percent change, not seasonally adjusted, February 2026

Click on bars to drill down

- The Producer Price Index (PPI) is a family of indexes that measures the average change over time in selling prices received by domestic producers of goods and services.
- The PPI measures price changes from *domestic* producers.
- The PPI measures price change from the perspective of the *seller*.

Commodity



MXP Overview

- The Import and Export Price Indexes (MXP) produces data on changes in the prices of nonmilitary goods and services traded between the U.S. and the rest of the world.
- In effect, the indexes show how prices of a market basket of goods and/or services in international trade change from one period to the next.

IMPORTS

+1.3%	All Commodities: in Feb 2026
+3.8%	Fuels & Lubricants: in Feb 2026
+1.1%	All Imports Excluding Fuels: in Feb 2026

EXPORTS

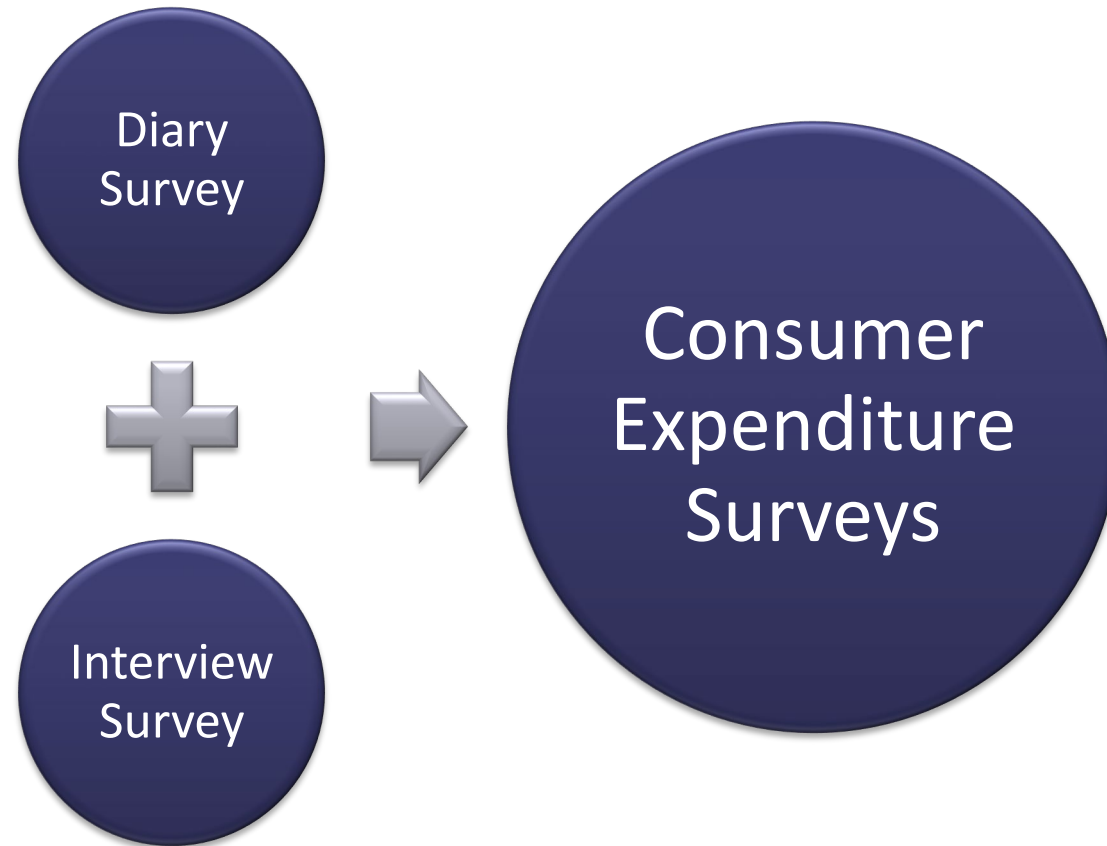
+1.5%	All Commodities: in Feb 2026
+0.7%	Agricultural Commodities: in Feb 2026
+1.7%	Nonagricultural Commodities: in Feb 2026

CE Overview

- The Consumer Expenditure Surveys (CE) collect information from the Nation's households and families on their buying habits (expenditures), income, and household characteristics.
- The U.S. Census Bureau collects CE data on behalf of BLS from consumer units (CUs) - people living at one address who share living expenses. In most cases, CUs are the same as households.
- Survey participants report dollar amounts for all non-investment purchases. Business expenses and reimbursements are excluded.




CE Surveys



Consumer Spending on Transportation

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Consumer spending on public and other transportation in metro areas before and during COVID-19

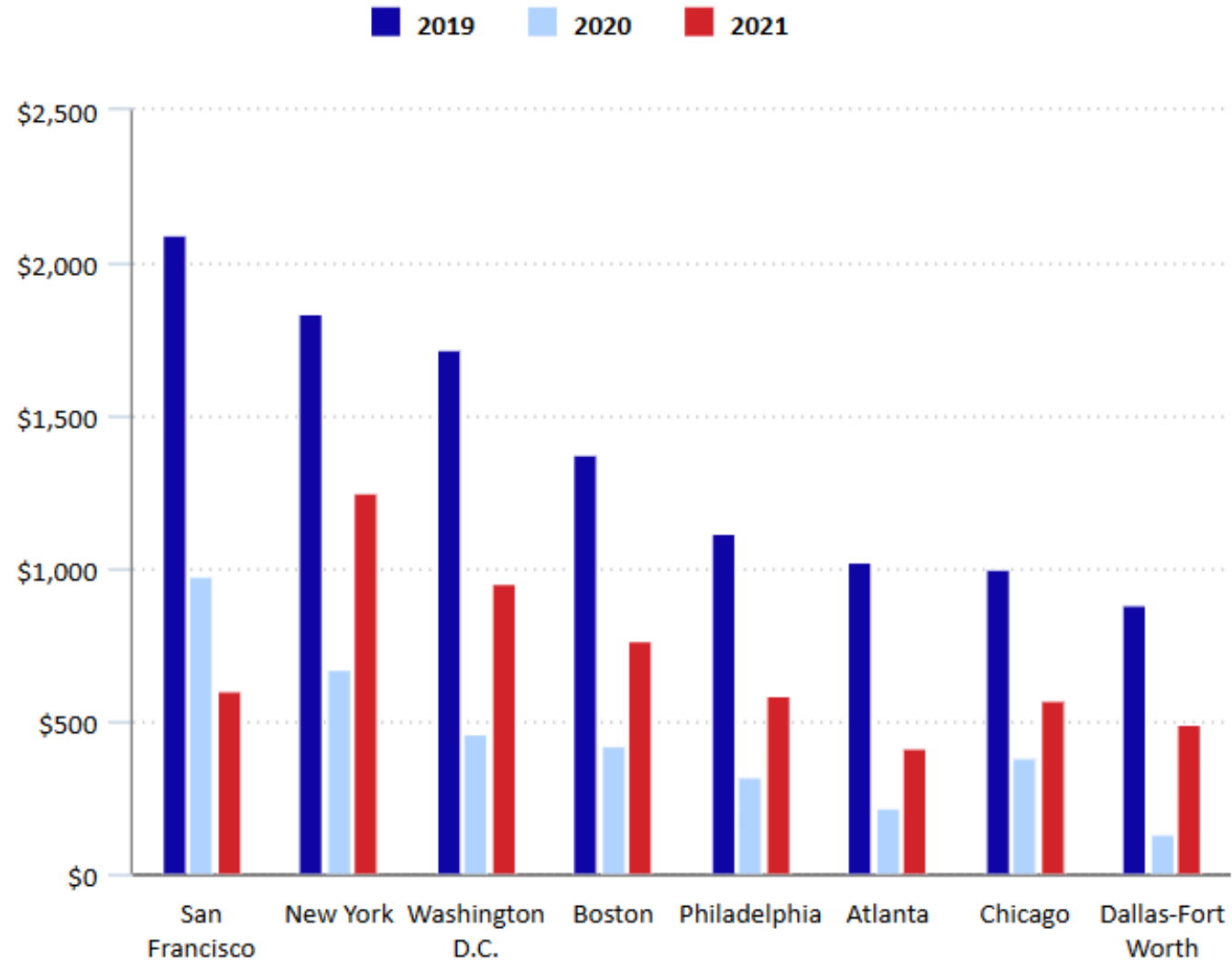
March 02, 2023

Consumer spending on public and other transportation rose sharply in 2021, after declining sharply in 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic began. Public and other transportation includes mass transit, buses, trains, airlines, taxis, boats, and school buses for which a fee is charged. Despite the increase in 2021, consumer spending on public and other transportation remained below the levels of 2019, the last year before the pandemic. Average annual expenditures varied widely in 2021 among eight selected metropolitan areas, ranging from \$415 for the average consumer unit in Atlanta to \$1,252 for the average consumer unit in New York.



Transportation Spending in Cities

Public and other transportation expenditures in selected metropolitan areas, 2019–21



Food Spending

Spotlight on Statistics

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15



April 2020

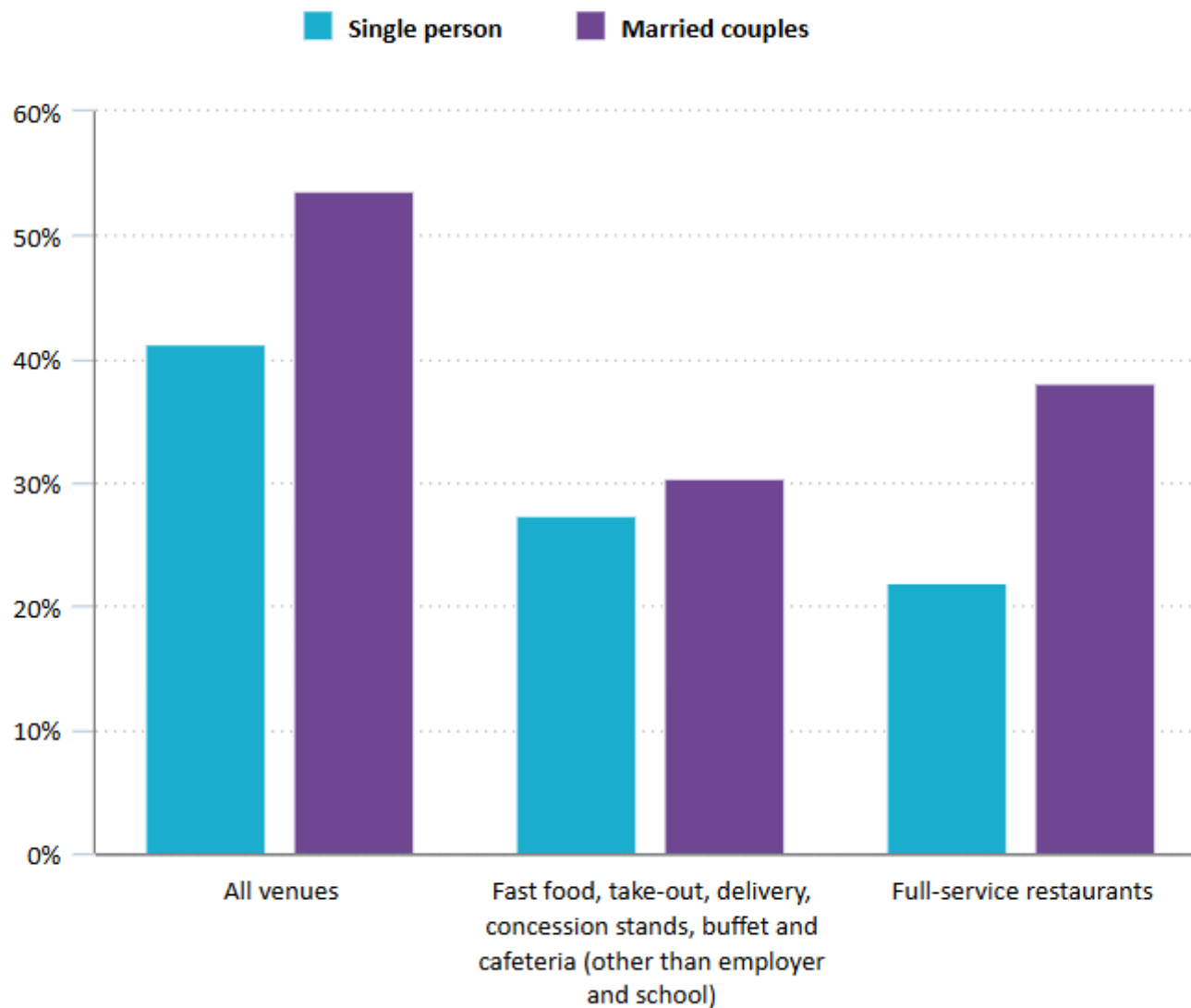
Meal Appeal: Patterns of Expenditures on Food away from Home

Geoffrey D. Paulin

Dining out is an activity many Americans enjoy. Whether for social contact or convenience, purchasing food away from home (such as meals or snacks from restaurants, vending machines, employer cafeterias, or other venues) is a routine and seemingly unremarkable occurrence. But, on closer examination, there are interesting patterns to these expenditures. This Spotlight on Statistics provides valuable data for you to digest.

Spending on Dinner

Percent who reported buying dinner in 2018, by marital status and type of venue



Pet Spending

BEYOND THE
NUMBERS

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ARCHIVE

ABOUT

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PRICES & SPENDING

We love our pets, and our spending proves it

By Kristen Thiel

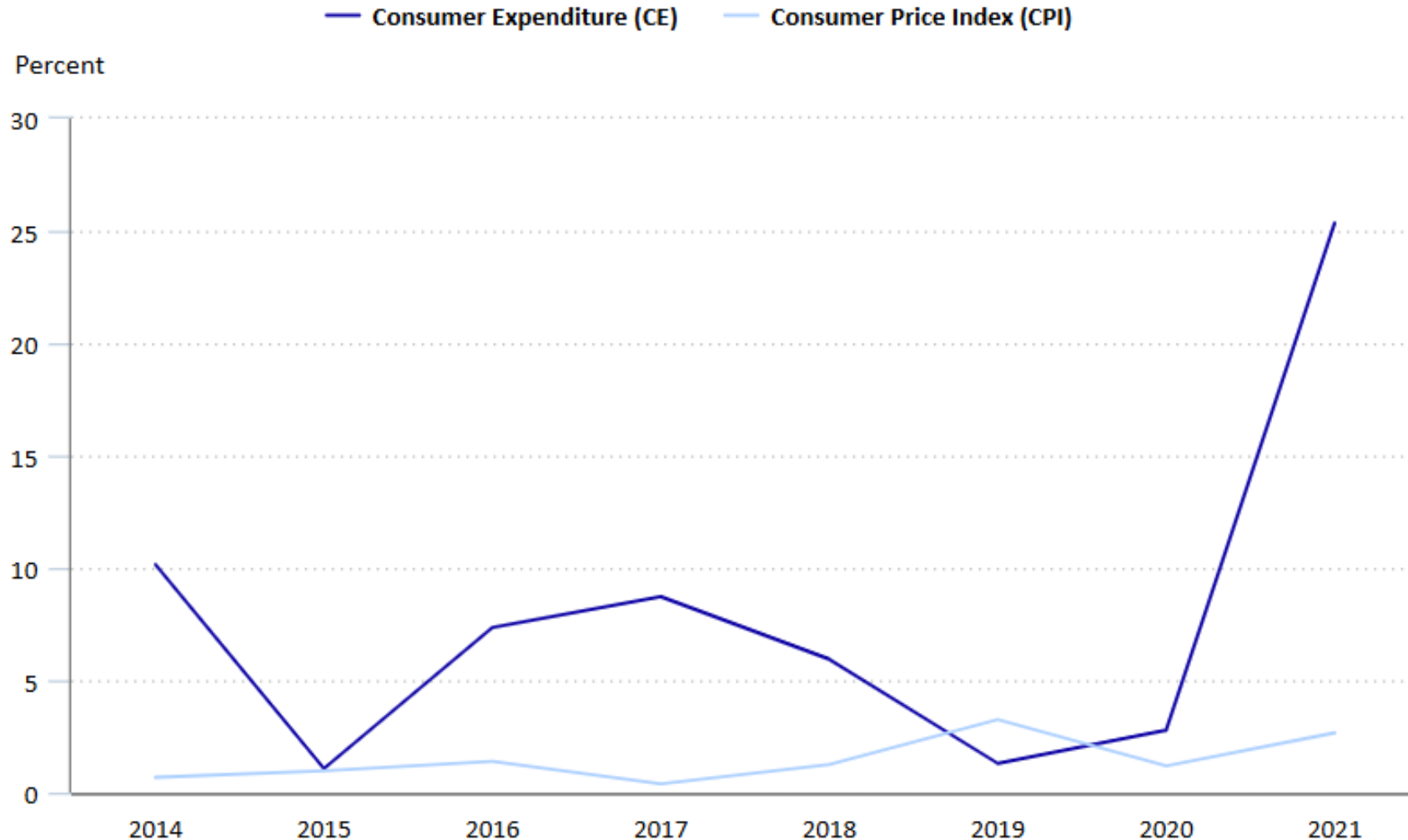
Pets are big business. Whether they are cats and dogs, or turtles and fish, there is no doubt that consumers love spoiling their pets. Pet owners often say that pets are important members of their families; they are great companions that provide their humans with many mental and physical health benefits. It is no surprise that pet-related expenses make up a growing part of consumers' budgets. In 2013, pet expenditures were \$57.8 billion. By the end of 2021, this figure had climbed to \$102.8 billion, an increase of 77.9 percent in just 8 years.

This **Beyond the Numbers** article uses data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Expenditure Surveys (CE) to examine trends in pet spending from 2013 to 2021.¹ We compare pet expenditures to other consumer expenditure trends and further analyze trends in components of pet expenditures, specifically pet food and pet purchase, supplies, and medicine, during the COVID-19 pandemic.



CE and CPI – Pet Expenditures

Chart 4. Annual percentage changes in Consumer Expenditures and the Consumer Price Index, 2014–21



Veteran Spending

Article

February 2026

How veterans' benefits relate to their spending in the Consumer Expenditure Surveys

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) began collecting data on veteran status in the Consumer Expenditure Surveys (CE) in 2019. In this article, the expenditure patterns between veterans and nonveterans are considered to understand how veterans' benefits relate to spending. This article shows that veterans are more likely than nonveterans to own their homes at younger ages and to have lower mortgage costs. Also, veterans spend less than nonveterans on total healthcare and on almost every major healthcare component.



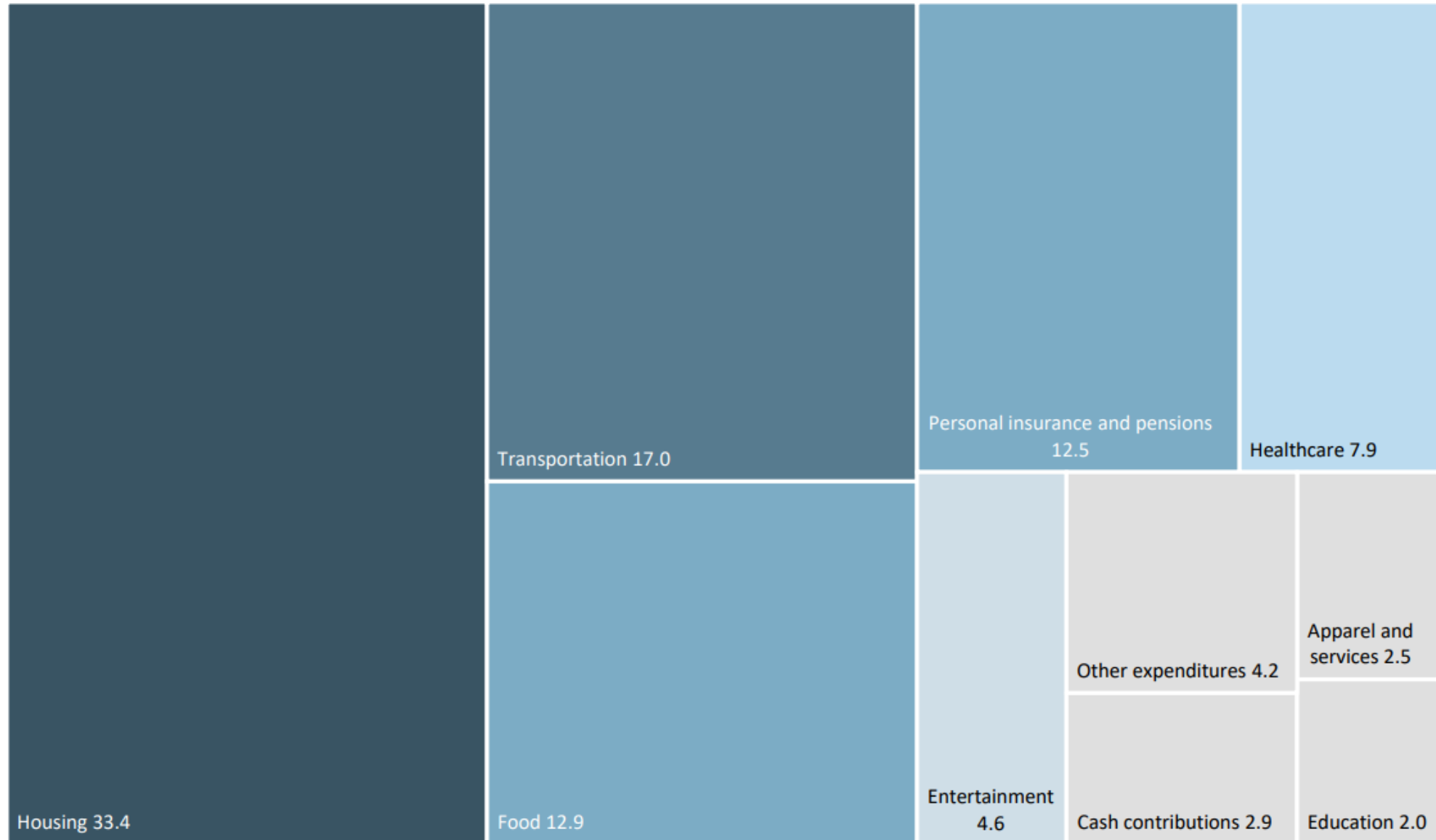
Renters vs Owners

Table 2. Housing tenure by veteran status and age, Consumer Expenditure Surveys, 2022

Item	Under age 45		Age 45 to 64		Age 65 and older	
	Veteran	Nonveteran	Veteran	Nonveteran	Veteran	Non-Veteran
Number of CUs (in thousands)	286	12,332	1,118	10,640	2,459	14,740
Percent of total CUs in age group	7.4	32.7	28.9	28.2	63.7	39.1
Homeowner with mortgage (percent)	35.6	17.1	34.7	29.7	18.6	18.1
Homeowner without mortgage (percent)	10.7	6.1	21.6	28.2	51.3	47.5
Renter (percent)	53.8	76.7	43.7	42.0	30.1	34.5

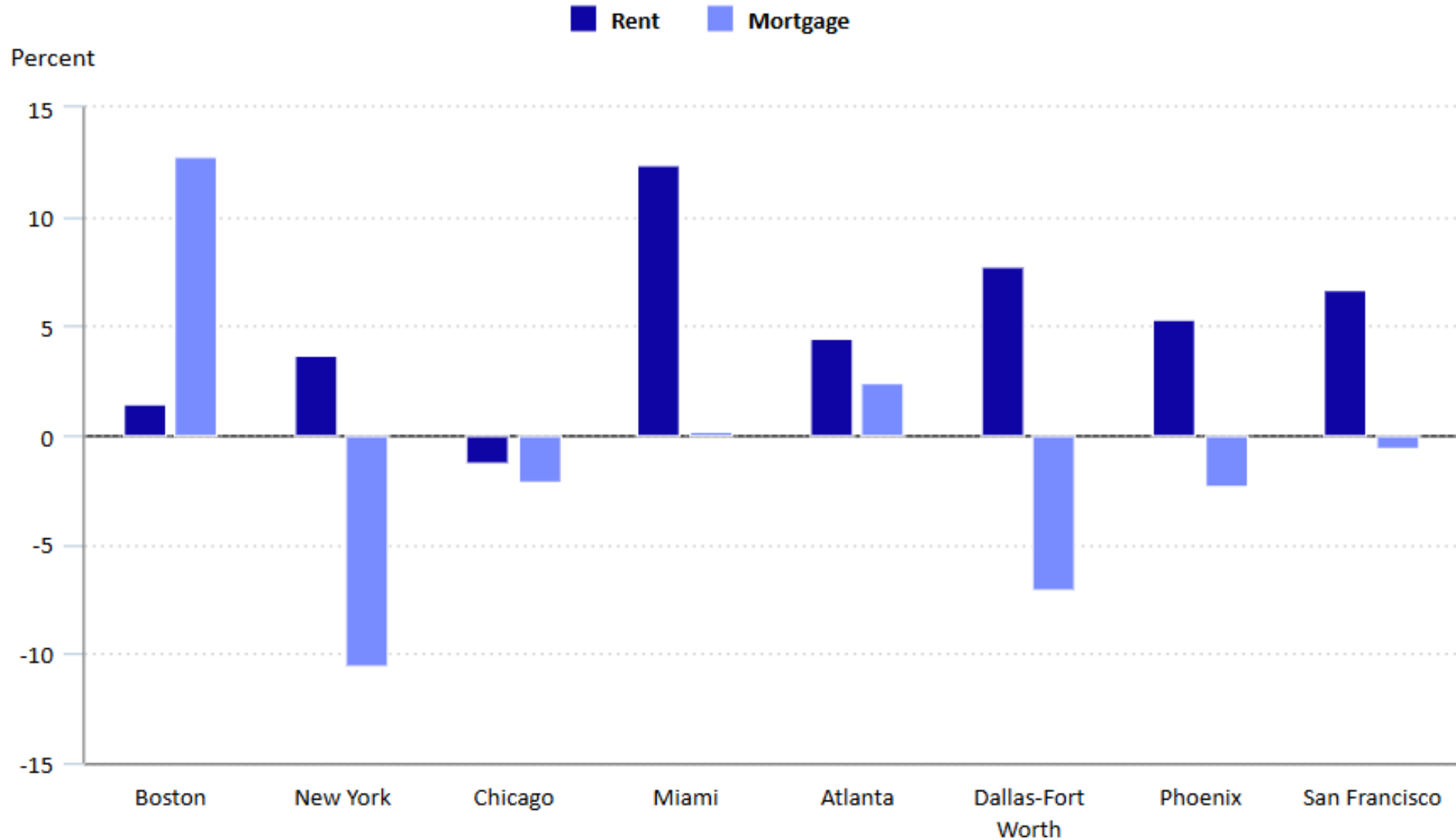


CE News Release - Annual expenditure shares by major components





CE Annual Report

Chart 6B. Percentage change in annual rent and mortgage expenditures by selected MSA, 2022–23



All BLS Publications

 An official website of the United States government [Here is how you know](#) 



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CE Library

CE Library

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Display records

Text search table:

Title	Author	Year	Gemini ¹	Venue/Publication
			All	All
Testing Self-Administration of the Consumer Expenditure Diary Survey in a Probability-Based Online Panel	Graf, N., G. Jones, and T. Miller	2025	N	CIPHER
Urban CU Spending on Produce Before and During COVID-19	Bahner, B.	2025	N	American Council on Consumer Interests
How the COVID-19 Pandemic Affected Data Quality in the Consumer Expenditure Surveys (CE)	Welsh, A.	2025	N	American Council on Consumer Interests
Indebted to COVID: How the Onset and Continuation of the COVID-19 Pandemic Affected Borrowing for Real Assets	Meyers, S.	2025	N	American Council on Consumer Interests
Veterans' Expenditures on Housing and Healthcare	Koehlinger, N.	2025	N	American Council on Consumer Interests
Introducing The Consumer Expenditure Surveys (CE): A Tool for Economic Analyses	Paulin, G.	2025	N	CE Microdata Users' Symposium
Sneak Peek: CE Now and in the Future	Creech, B.	2025	N	CE Microdata Users' Symposium
2024 Annual CE Data Quality Profile	Armstrong, G., G. Jones, T. Miller, and L. Petit	2025	N	CE Program Report Series
A consumption measure for automobiles	Cho, C., B. Matsumoto, and D. Smith	2024	N	BLS Monthly Labor Review
Consumption Inequality During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic	Garner, T., B. Matsumoto, and J. Schild	2024	N	Allied Social Science Associations



CE Data Products

Tables

LABSTAT
Database

Public Use
Microdata
(PUMD)

News Release

Reports

CE Data Tables

I'm interested in the highest level of detail!



All CU Detail Table

I'm interested in spending by demographics!



Calendar year means
Calendar year aggregate shares
2-year Cross-tabulated Tables

I'm interested in geographic spending data!



Geographic Tables

I'm interested in spending across multiple years!



Multiyear



CE LABSTAT Database

- The LABSTAT database allows data users to search for specific CE data by demographics, characteristics and item.
- Annual means, standard errors, relative standard errors, shares of total expenditures, percent reporting, aggregate expenditures, and aggregate share expenditures for detailed items
- Best for time series analysis



Tables Output

Table 1400. Size of consumer unit: Annual expenditure means, shares, standard errors, and relative standard errors, Consumer Expenditure Surveys, 2024


Item	All consumer units	One person	Two or more people				
			Total	Two people	Three people	Four people	Five or more people
Average annual expenditures							
Mean	\$78,535	\$48,794	\$91,324	\$80,830	\$92,205	\$109,002	\$103,472
SE	831.48	928.11	1,023.42	1,186.62	1,845.70	2,151.77	2,943.55
RSE	1.06	1.90	1.12	1.47	2.00	1.97	2.84
Food							
Mean	10,169	5,644	12,113	10,158	12,205	14,543	15,605
Share	12.9	11.6	13.3	12.6	13.2	13.3	15.1
SE	158.96	137.99	198.71	250.18	338.21	496.92	638.90
RSE	1.56	2.44	1.64	2.46	2.77	3.42	4.09
Food at home							
Mean	6,224	3,395	7,439	6,088	7,597	8,697	10,274
Share	7.9	7.0	8.1	7.5	8.2	8.0	9.9
SE	118.31	110.67	141.80	171.68	254.58	322.46	423.26
RSE	1.90	3.26	1.91	2.82	3.35	3.71	4.12



LABSTAT Output

Consumer Expenditure Survey

Series Id: CXUFOODHOMELB0507M
Category: Expenditures
Subcategory: Food
Item: Food at home
Demographics: Size of consumer unit
Characteristics: Five or more people in consumer unit

Download:  [xlsx](#)

Year	Period	Estimate	Standard Error	Relative Standard Error	Percent Reporting	Share of Total Expenditures	Aggregate Expenditure (in millions of dollars)	Share of Aggregate Expenditure
2014	Annual	6354	239.95	3.78	(5)	9.1	77611	15.4
2015	Annual	6180	258.01	4.18	(5)	8.7	76190	14.8
2016	Annual	6436	240.69	3.74	(5)	9.1	79178	15.1
2017	Annual	6738	281.27	4.17	(5)	9.2	88403	15.6
2018	Annual	7048	310.22	4.40	(5)	8.8	82334	14.1
2019	Annual	7230	365.57	5.06	(5)	8.9	86993	14.2
2020	Annual	7848	393.04	5.01	(5)	9.7	102194	15.8
2021	Annual	7615	344.45	4.52	(5)	8.6	97719	13.9
2022	Annual	9066	425.96	4.70	(5)	9.4	114984	15.0
2023	Annual	9713	283.36	2.92	(5)	9.4	130676	16.1
2024	Annual	10274	423.26	4.12	(5)	9.9	130404	15.5

5 : No data reported or available in LABSTAT.



CE PUMD

- CE PUMD provide the individual responses to the two surveys from respondents.
- The CE PUMD allow researchers to analyze expenditure, income, and demographic data beyond what is provided in published tabulations.
- PUMD are available in three formats: SAS, STATA, and Comma Delimited (ASCII).



CE Resources

- [Tables Getting Started Guide](#)
- [LABSTAT Database Getting Started Guide](#)
- [PUMD Getting Started Guide](#)
- [Handbook of Methods](#)
- [FAQ](#)



General Contact Information

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