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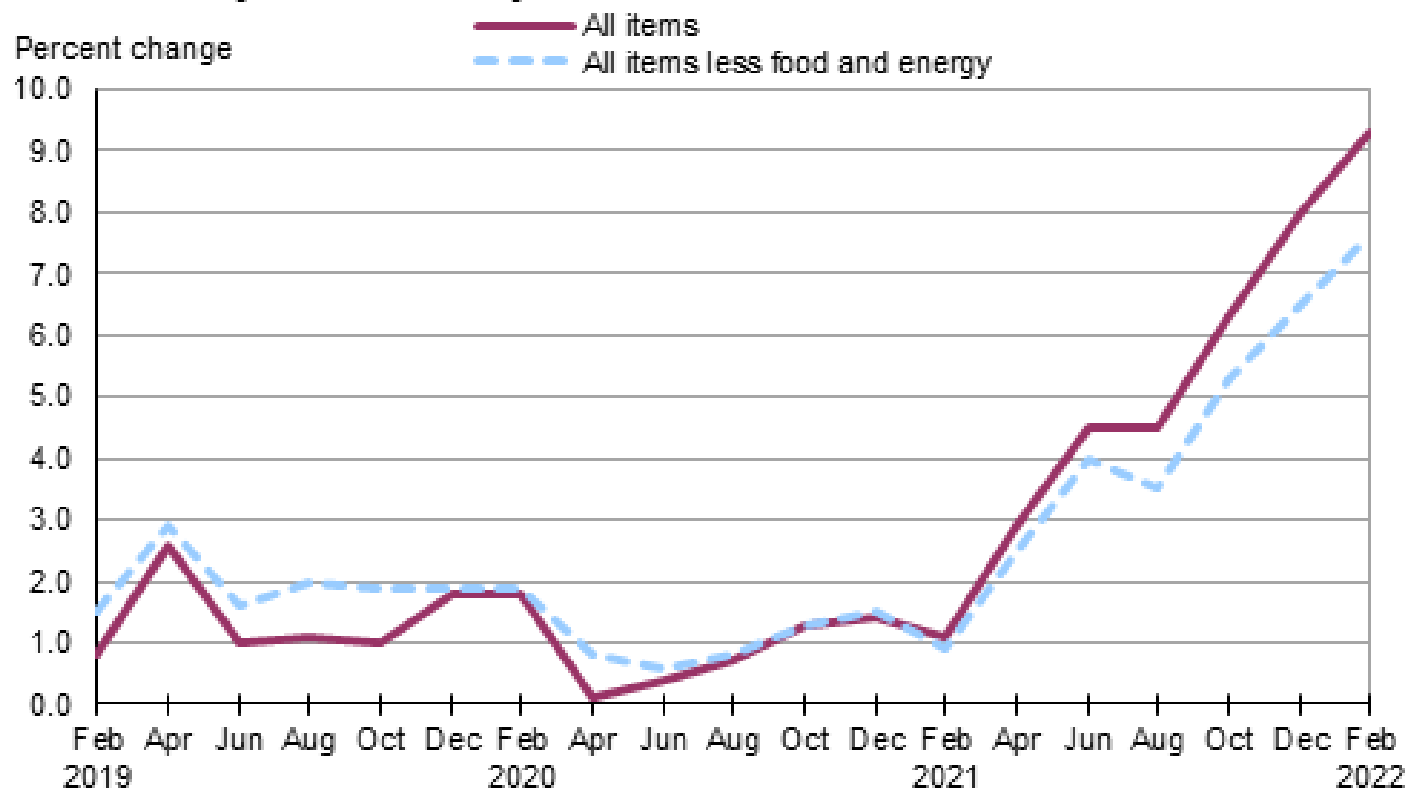
Consumer Price Index, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson – February 2022

Area prices were up 1.3 percent over the past 2 months, up 9.3 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Baltimore-Columbia-Towson area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), advanced 1.3 percent for the 2 months ending in February 2022, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Alexandra Hall Bovee noted that the February change was smaller than those posted in October and December 2021 (2.3 and 1.8 percent, respectively). The all items less food and energy index accounted for more than half of the overall increase, up 0.9 percent, and it also moderated over the last 2 bi-monthly periods. The energy index and the food index also rose since December, up 5.5 and 2.2 percent, respectively. (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 increased 9.3 percent, the largest over-the-year increase since September 1981. The over-the-year rise was mostly due to a 7.6-percent increase in the all items less food and energy index, the largest over-the-year increase since the series started in January 1983, as the impact of significantly higher prices for new and used motor vehicles since April 2021 continued. The energy index, led by higher prices for gasoline, and the food index also rose over the year. The 28.9 percent increase for the energy index was the most recent of a full year of consecutive over-the-year increases which peaked in November 2021 with a historic increase of 30.5 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD, February 2019–February 2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

The food index rose from December to February, up 2.2 percent, reflecting an increase for food at home. The 2-month increase of 3.4 percent in the food at home index was the largest since May 2020. There were widespread increases across the items that make up food at home including the other food at home index (5.9 percent); meats, poultry, fish, and eggs (3.8 percent); and nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials (4.1 percent). Food away from home declined 0.1 percent in February, the first decline since February 2021.

Over the year, the food index increased 10.7 percent as prices rose for both food at home (10.5 percent), and food away from home (9.9 percent). Each of these three increases were the largest over-the-year increases for these indexes since they started in January 1999. The increase in the food at home index was led by an 18.1 percent rise in prices for meats, poultry, fish, and eggs - the highest since that series began publication in 2018.

Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, increased 5.5 percent since December, led by higher prices for gasoline (5.4 percent). Prices for electricity rose over the past 2 months, up 5.6 percent, while utility (piped) gas service prices increased 2.0 percent.

Over the year, the energy index increased 28.9 percent largely due to higher prices for gasoline (37.9 percent). While this was the 13th consecutive month of over-the-year gasoline price increases, it was still well below the peak of 57.9 percent in May 2021. Prices paid for electricity jumped 18.4 percent, the largest increase for electricity since May 2008. Utility (piped) gas service was up 21.2 percent, the largest increase in nearly 5 years.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy rose 0.9 percent from December to February. The rise was led by higher prices for shelter (1.2 percent) and recreation (2.0 percent). Within shelter, the index for owners' equivalent rent of residences increased 1.1 percent. The all items less food and energy index increase was partially offset by a drop in the new and used motor vehicles category, down 1.4 percent. Within that category, new vehicle prices declined 1.8 percent while used cars and trucks increased 2.6 percent. The education and communication index was lower (down 1.0 percent) due to the first decline (2.0 percent) in the tuition, other school fees, and childcare index since that index began in 2018.

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy increased 7.6 percent. Components contributing to the increase included new and used motor vehicles (37.9 percent), primarily due to price increases in new vehicles (38.9 percent) and used cars and trucks (42.7 percent), the new vehicles increase was the largest increase since that series began publication in 2018. Shelter increased by 3.8 percent over-the-year, driven in part by a 3.4 percent increase for owners' equivalent rent of residences.

The Consumer Price Index for April 2022 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, May 11, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. (ET).

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Baltimore-Columbia-Towson is published bi-monthly. 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 93 percent of the total U.S. population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 29 percent of the total U.S. 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 75 urban areas across the country from about 5,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 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 items are included in the index.











































The index measures price changes from a designated reference date; for most of the CPI-U the reference base is 1982-84 equals 100. An increase of 7 percent from the reference base, for example, is shown as 107.000. Alternatively, that relationship can also be expressed as the price of a base period market basket of goods and services rising from \$100 to \$107. For further details see the CPI home page on the internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the CPI section of the BLS Handbook of Methods available on the internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/cpi/. 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 **Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD, Core Based Statistical Area** includes Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, Howard, and Queen Anne's counties, as well as Baltimore City, in Maryland.














Information in this release will be made available to individuals with sensory impairments upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Telecommunications Relay Service: 7-1-1.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Dec. 2021	Jan. 2022	Feb. 2022	Feb. 2021	Dec. 2021	Jan. 2022
All items.....		282.455		286.243	9.3	1.3	
Food and beverages		295.121		301.349	10.2	2.1	
Food		295.268		301.625	10.7	2.2	
Food at home		259.556	263.042	268.414	10.5	3.4	2.0
Cereals and bakery products		311.596		320.957	10.2	3.0	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		275.278		285.709	18.1	3.8	
Dairy and related products		250.419		255.699	5.9	2.1	
Fruits and vegetables		311.205		311.853	4.9	0.2	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)		177.378		184.655	4.0	4.1	
Other food at home		229.796		243.247	12.2	5.9	
Food away from home.....		347.388		347.028	9.9	-0.1	
Alcoholic beverages		289.370		293.602	2.6	1.5	
Housing(1).....		275.692		280.154	5.4	1.6	
Shelter		324.395	326.747	328.315	3.8	1.2	0.5
Rent of primary residence		372.159	373.218	375.145	2.5	0.8	0.5
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2).....		343.442	345.113	347.138	3.4	1.1	0.6
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2)		343.442	345.113	347.138	3.4	1.1	0.6
Fuels and utilities.....		247.170		258.912	17.4	4.8	
Household energy		215.690	215.403	227.674	19.7	5.6	5.7
Energy services.....		230.171	229.235	241.682	18.8	5.0	5.4
Electricity		210.503	210.767	222.395	18.4	5.6	5.5
Utility (piped) gas service		231.899	225.177	236.463	21.2	2.0	5.0
Household furnishings and operations		130.417		132.889	8.6	1.9	
Apparel		124.046		129.711	4.1	4.6	
Transportation		259.072		260.670	30.6	0.6	
Private transportation		266.229		268.109	31.8	0.7	
New and used motor vehicles(3).....		136.715		134.755	37.9	-1.4	
New vehicles(1).....		269.897		264.932	38.9	-1.8	
Used cars and trucks(1)		361.331		370.791	42.7	2.6	
Motor fuel		288.458	283.422	304.295	37.8	5.5	7.4
Gasoline (all types).....		282.442	277.452	297.814	37.9	5.4	7.3
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....		286.455	281.130	302.527	39.1	5.6	7.6
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....		300.808	297.302	313.716	29.3	4.3	5.5
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....		284.443	281.449	296.286	29.8	4.2	5.3
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....		783.828					
Medical care		477.430		482.000	0.3	1.0	
Recreation		132.411		135.089	7.0	2.0	
Education and communication(3).....		160.542		158.998	2.8	-1.0	
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1)		1,320.520		1,294.357	2.1	-2.0	
Other goods and services		476.243		488.698	8.2	2.6	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		216.312		220.244	17.7	1.8	
Commodities less food and beverages		178.566		181.567	22.4	1.7	

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Dec. 2021	Jan. 2022	Feb. 2022	Feb. 2021	Dec. 2021	Jan. 2022
Nondurables less food and beverages...		213.703		220.622	14.2	3.2	
Durables		132.931		133.603	30.0	0.5	
Services.....		346.740		350.458	4.7	1.1	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter.....		267.552		271.331	12.4	1.4	
All items less medical care		272.792		276.543	10.2	1.4	
Commodities less food		182.258		185.310	21.7	1.7	
Nondurables		251.185		257.841	12.0	2.6	
Nondurables less food.....		217.927		224.740	13.3	3.1	
Services less rent of shelter(2).....		385.831		389.164	5.7	0.9	
Services less medical care services.....		333.508		337.205	5.2	1.1	
Energy(1).....		256.032	253.619	270.173	28.9	5.5	6.5
All items less energy		286.414		289.331	8.0	1.0	
All items less food and energy		284.908		287.384	7.6	0.9	

Footnotes

- (1) Indexes on a March 1978=100 base.
- (2) Indexes on a November 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.