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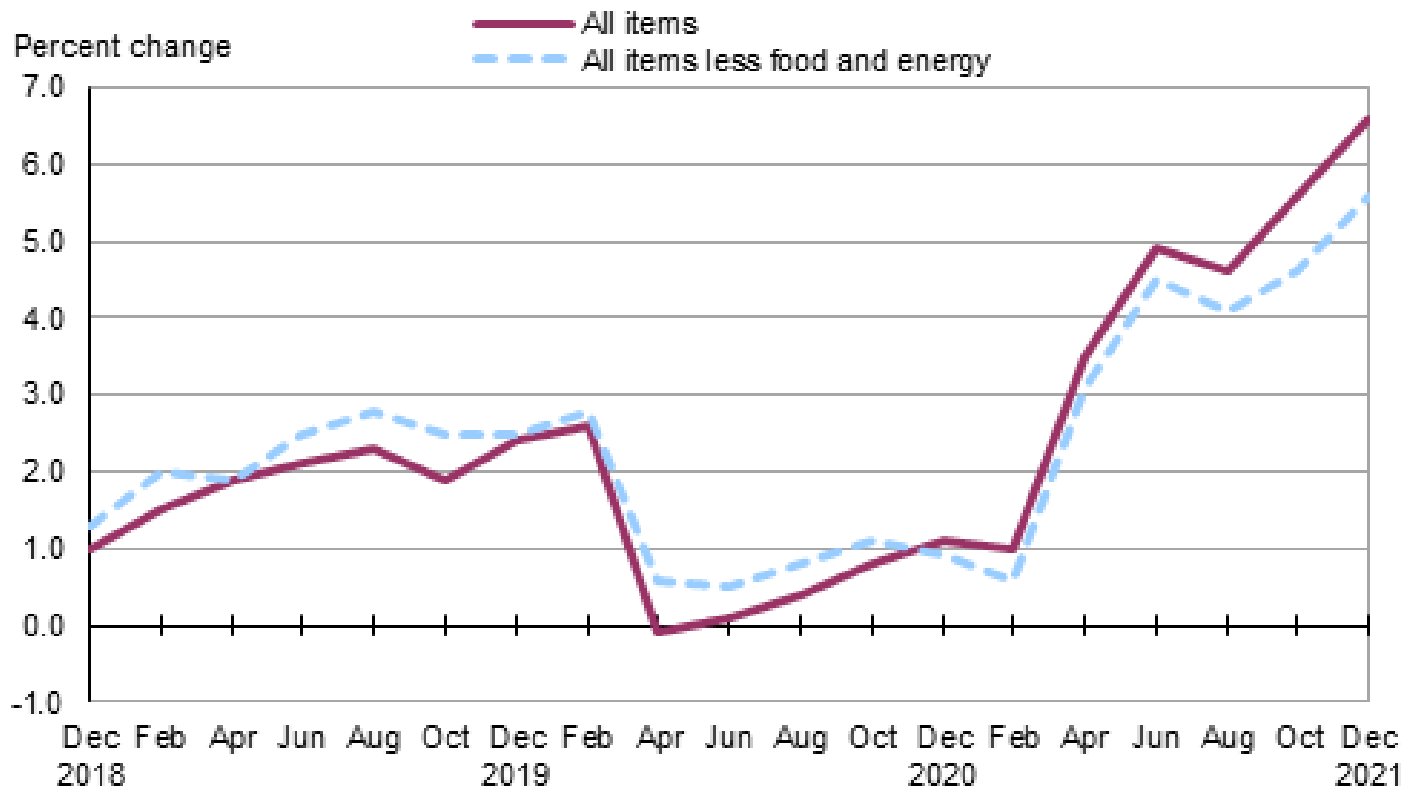
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Consumer Price Index, Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington – December 2021 **Area prices were up 0.9 percent over the past two months, up 6.6 percent from a year ago**

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington increased 0.9 percent from October to December, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Alexandra Hall Bovee noted that the December increase was largely due to higher prices for all items less food and energy, the 0.5 percent rise was in line with the increases in August and October and well below those of the first half of the year. (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 6.6 percent, the largest 12-month increase in local prices since 1991. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) The index for all items less food and energy increased 5.6 percent over the year, also the highest such advance since 1991. Energy prices were up 25.1 percent, largely the result of a 37.4 percent increase in the price of gasoline. Food prices increased 4.2 percent. (See [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD, December 2018–December 2021



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices increased 1.5 percent from October to December, mostly due to a 2.2-percent price increase for food away from home – the largest such increase since 1985. Prices for food at home increased over the 2-month period, up 0.8 percent, but moderated after reaching 2.3 percent in October. Within food at home, prices were higher due to increases in the other food at home category (up 4.1 percent, due in part to higher priced snacks which rose 5.2 percent) and fruits and vegetables (up 3.0 percent). The index for meats, poultry, fish, and eggs was up just 0.2 percent – the smallest 2-month rise after gains of 0.8 to 6.9 percent since April – as declines in fresh fish and seafood (-5.0 percent) and bacon, breakfast sausage, and related products (down 6.3 percent) offset much of the increase.

Over the year, food prices increased 4.2 percent, returning to a pace last seen a year ago. Prices for food at home advanced 4.1 percent since a year ago, and prices for food away from home increased 4.4 percent. The increase in grocery prices was largely due to a 12.8 percent jump in the meats, poultry, fish, and eggs category, the largest 12-month increase since that series began in 2018, following declines in the first half of 2021.

Energy

Just less than a third of the overall index increase was due to the energy index which increased 4.3 percent over the 2-month pricing period, largely due to higher prices for utility (piped) gas service (13.3 percent), the largest in 15 years. Prices for electricity increased 5.1 percent, the fastest rate in nearly 3 years, while price increases for gasoline moderated, up 2.4 percent the smallest increase in 2021.

Over the year, the energy index increased 25.1 percent, reflecting price increases across the main components. Gasoline prices somewhat slowed their rate of increase (37.4 percent after 41.0 percent in October). Conversely, increases accelerated for utility (piped) gas service (21.8 percent, the highest since 2006), and electricity was up 6.8 percent over the year, the highest since the start of 2020 (up 29.7 percent) which was followed by declines and some relatively small increases.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy advanced 0.5 percent from October to December. Higher prices for shelter (1.1 percent) were led by a 2.1 percent rise in the owners’ equivalent rent index – the largest 2-month increase since 1993. New and used motor vehicle prices increased 1.6 percent, entirely due to a 6.1-percent increase in used cars and trucks while new vehicles prices fell 1.4 percent – the first 2-month drop since April 2020. Medical care prices were up 1.4 percent, the fastest rate of increase since an identical increase in February 2019. The overall upward trend was partially offset by lower prices for apparel (-4.0 percent) which typically posts large declines in December.

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy increased 5.6 percent. Prices for new and used motor vehicles were up 28.4 percent over the year, the largest such increase since that series began in 2018 although the indexes for used cars and trucks and new vehicles, up 38.1 percent and 22.4 percent, respectively, moderated after large increases earlier in the year. Prices for shelter increased 4.3 percent since last December, the highest such increase since 2007. Apparel prices were down slightly over the year (0.2 percent), following much larger 12-month increases – 2.3 to 7.1 percent – from April through October.

Table A. Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD, CPI-U 2-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month
February	0.7	2.1	0.4	0.5	0.8	1.5	1.0	2.6	0.8	1.0
April	0.0	1.3	0.9	1.4	1.3	1.9	-1.3	-0.1	1.2	3.5
June.....	-0.3	0.7	0.2	1.9	0.5	2.1	0.6	0.1	1.9	4.9
August	0.5	1.4	0.3	1.7	0.5	2.3	0.8	0.4	0.6	4.6
October.....	0.0	0.8	0.0	1.6	-0.4	1.9	0.0	0.8	1.0	5.6
December.....	-0.1	0.8	-0.7	1.0	-0.3	2.4	0.0	1.1	0.9	6.6

The Consumer Price Index for February 2022 is scheduled to be released on Thursday, March 10, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. (ET).

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Impact on December 2021 Consumer Price Index Data

Data collection by personal visit for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) program has been suspended almost entirely since March 16, 2020. When possible, data normally collected by personal visit were collected either online or by phone. Additionally, data collection in December was affected by the temporary closing or limited operations of certain types of establishments. These factors resulted in an increase in the number of prices considered temporarily unavailable and imputed.

While the CPI program attempted to collect as much data as possible, many indexes are based on smaller amounts of collected prices than usual, and a small number of indexes that are normally published were not published this month.

For each month from March 2020 to December 2021, BLS has published a summary of the impact of the pandemic on the Consumer Price Index news release and data. The impact summary for December is available at www.bls.gov/covid19/consumer-price-index-covid19-impacts-december-2021.htm. Beginning with publication of January 2022 data in February 2022, this month-specific impact summary will be discontinued. However, information related to the impact of the pandemic will continue to be available at www.bls.gov/covid19/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-consumer-price-index.htm.

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington 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 **Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD, Core Based Statistical Area** includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania; Burlington, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem Counties in New Jersey; New Castle County in Delaware; and Cecil County in Maryland.
















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

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Oct. 2021	Nov. 2021	Dec. 2021	Dec. 2020	Oct. 2021	Nov. 2021
All items.....		274.647		277.163	6.6	0.9	
All items (1967 = 100).....		793.441		800.707			
Food and beverages.....		255.959		259.113	4.0	1.2	
Food.....		256.795		260.566	4.2	1.5	
Food at home.....		256.523	259.870	258.670	4.1	0.8	-0.5
Cereals and bakery products.....		337.658		334.639	3.3	-0.9	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		302.992		303.740	12.8	0.2	
Dairy and related products.....		201.994		199.381	-3.8	-1.3	
Fruits and vegetables.....		262.586		270.517	-6.0	3.0	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1).....		178.532		170.578	4.3	-4.5	
Other food at home.....		233.072		242.716	7.8	4.1	
Food away from home.....		250.835		256.452	4.4	2.2	
Alcoholic beverages.....		241.147		234.779	0.2	-2.6	
Housing.....		283.187		286.668	5.2	1.2	
Shelter.....		349.586	349.285	353.428	4.3	1.1	1.2
Rent of primary residence.....		326.997	328.976	331.017	3.6	1.2	0.6
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2).....		357.920	360.114	365.373	4.1	2.1	1.5
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2).....		357.920	360.114	365.373	4.1	2.1	1.5
Fuels and utilities.....		221.643		232.186	12.5	4.8	
Household energy.....		179.839	183.218	190.769	15.3	6.1	4.1
Energy services.....		185.002	189.162	199.211	11.3	7.7	5.3
Electricity.....		181.921	186.709	191.216	6.8	5.1	2.4
Utility (piped) gas service.....		179.300	181.840	203.078	21.8	13.3	11.7
Household furnishings and operations.....		132.225		131.098	4.7	-0.9	
Apparel.....		108.967		104.635	-0.2	-4.0	
Transportation.....		243.516		245.890	21.0	1.0	
Private transportation.....		251.900		255.385	23.5	1.4	
New and used motor vehicles(3).....		126.106		128.159	28.4	1.6	
New vehicles(1).....		221.250		218.261	22.4	-1.4	
Used cars and trucks(1).....		363.981		386.010	38.1	6.1	
Motor fuel.....		310.673	320.684	318.304	37.4	2.5	-0.7
Gasoline (all types).....		306.881	316.788	314.358	37.4	2.4	-0.8
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....		303.779	313.681	311.011	38.1	2.4	-0.9
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....		311.056	320.831	319.808	31.8	2.8	-0.3
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....		304.774	314.026	313.158	32.7	2.8	-0.3
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....		672.254		664.807	2.3	-1.1	
Medical care.....		565.101		573.176	3.3	1.4	
Recreation(3).....		128.287		128.821	3.3	0.4	
Education and communication(3).....		136.184		135.760	1.9	-0.3	
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1).....		1,087.396		1,085.312	2.8	-0.2	
Other goods and services.....		596.330		608.168	5.6	2.0	
Commodity and service group							

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, Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Oct. 2021	Nov. 2021	Dec. 2021	Dec. 2020	Oct. 2021	Nov. 2021
Commodities		203.402		204.925	10.6	0.7	
Commodities less food and beverages		172.775		173.554	15.2	0.5	
Nondurables less food and beverages...		207.514		208.863	12.0	0.7	
Durables		129.302		129.603	19.0	0.2	
Services.....		346.283		349.802	4.3	1.0	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter.....		250.013		252.084	7.7	0.8	
All items less medical care		262.369		264.649	6.9	0.9	
Commodities less food		175.582		176.188	14.7	0.3	
Nondurables		232.957		235.204	7.5	1.0	
Nondurables less food.....		209.584		210.510	11.2	0.4	
Services less rent of shelter(2).....		350.450		353.660	4.3	0.9	
Services less medical care services.....		328.905		332.339	4.3	1.0	
Energy		227.131	232.914	236.853	25.1	4.3	1.7
All items less energy		282.376		284.266	5.4	0.7	
All items less food and energy		289.500		291.045	5.6	0.5	

Footnotes

- (1) Indexes on a December 1977=100 base
- (2) Indexes 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.