

Consumer Price Indices, October 2011



Coverage: UK

Date: **15 November 2011**

Geographical Area: UK

Theme: **Economy**

Consumer Price Indices

- CPI annual inflation stands at 5.0 per cent in October 2011.
- RPI annual inflation stands at 5.4 per cent in October 2011.

The headlines for the October 2011 consumer price indices are:

- CPI annual inflation stands at 5.0 per cent in October 2011, down from 5.2 per cent in September. The CPI stands at 121.0 in October 2011.
- The largest downward pressures to the change in CPI annual inflation between September and October came from falls in the cost of food (due to significant and widespread discounting by supermarkets and good harvests for certain produce), air fares and petrol.
- The largest upward pressures to the change in CPI annual inflation between September and October came from increases in the cost of clothing, electricity and gas.
- RPI annual inflation stands at 5.4 per cent in October, down from 5.6 per cent in September. The largest downward pressures came from falls in the cost of food and petrol. Partially offsetting these were upward pressures from clothing, furniture, electricity and gas. The RPI stands at 238.0 in October 2011.

CPI: Percentage change over 12 months

CPI: Percentage change over 12 months



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CPI indices, 1-month change and 12-month change: October 2010 to October 2011

Consumer Prices Index (CPI)

United Kingdom

		Index ¹ (UK, 2005 = 100)	% change over 1 month	% change over 12 months
2010	Oct	115.2	0.3	3.2
	Nov	115.6	0.4	3.3
	Dec	116.8	1.0	3.7
2011	Jan	116.9	0.1	4.0
	Feb	117.8	0.7	4.4
	Mar	118.1	0.3	4.0
	Apr	119.3	1.0	4.5
	May	119.5	0.2	4.5
	Jun	119.4	-0.1	4.2
	Jul	119.4	0.0	4.4
	Aug	120.1	0.6	4.5
	Sep	120.9	0.6	5.2
	Oct	121.0	0.1	5.0

Table notes:

1. All items Consumer Prices Index

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Briefing on the CPI monthly movement between September 2011 and October 2011

1-month change to October 2011

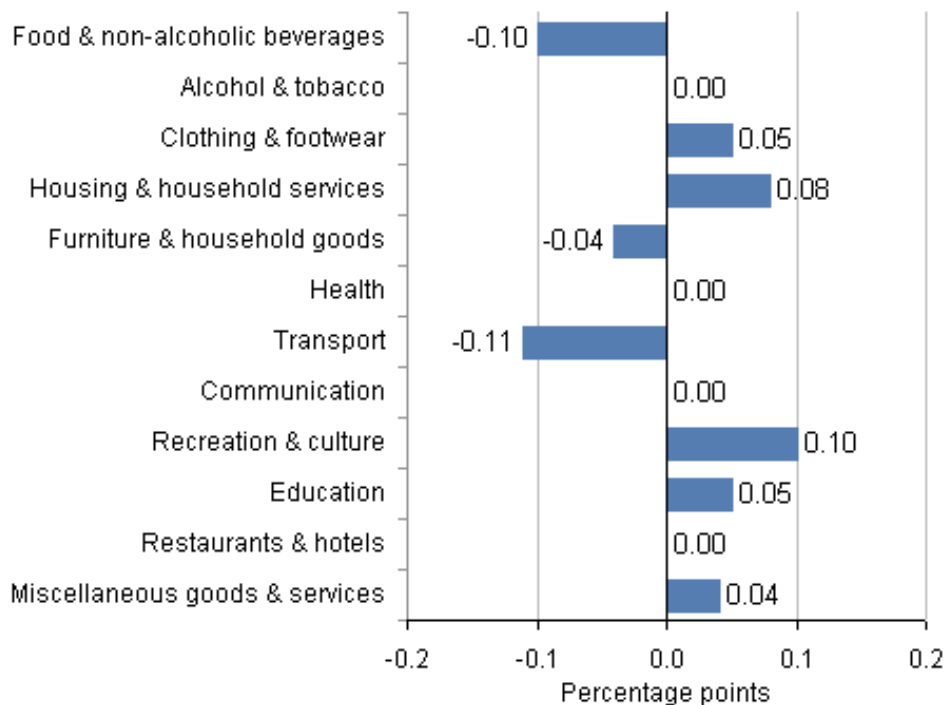
	% change
Food & non-alcoholic beverages	-0.9
Alcohol & tobacco	0.0
Clothing & footwear	0.8
Housing & household services	0.6
Furniture & household goods	-0.6
Health	0.1
Transport	-0.7
Communication	-0.1
Recreation & culture	0.7
Education	2.7
Restaurants & hotels	0.0
Miscellaneous goods & service	0.4
CPI All Items	0.1

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Contributions to 1-month percentage change

(total CPI 0.1 per cent)



Notes:

- Individual contributions may not sum to the total due to rounding.

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The CPI rose by 0.1 per cent between September and October this year compared with an increase of 0.3 per cent between September and October 2010. These 1-month changes are within the normal range for a September to October period although the 0.3 per cent rise last year is towards the top end of the range. Between 1996 and 2009, the 1-month change between September and October has varied between a fall of 0.2 per cent and a rise of 0.5 per cent.

The most significant upward contributions to the 1-month change in the CPI between September and October 2011 came from:

- recreation & culture:** prices, overall, rose by 0.7 per cent, which is the largest increase for a September to October period since official records began in 1996. The largest upward effects came from price rises for games, toys & hobbies (3.1 per cent) and recording media (4.7 per cent) both of which are also record increases for a September to October period,
- housing & household services:** the upward effect was driven by rises in the average bills for gas (1.4 per cent) and electricity (1.5 per cent),
- clothing & footwear:** prices, overall, rose by 0.8 per cent, a record increase for a September to October period. There were upward effects from both women's and men's garments,

- **education:** fees, overall, increased by 2.7 per cent. The upward effects came from university tuition fees for students from the UK and overseas which, as usual, impact on the CPI in October,
- **miscellaneous goods & services:** prices, overall, increased by 0.4 per cent. There were small upward effects from services and products for personal care, jewellery, clocks & watches, insurance and financial services.

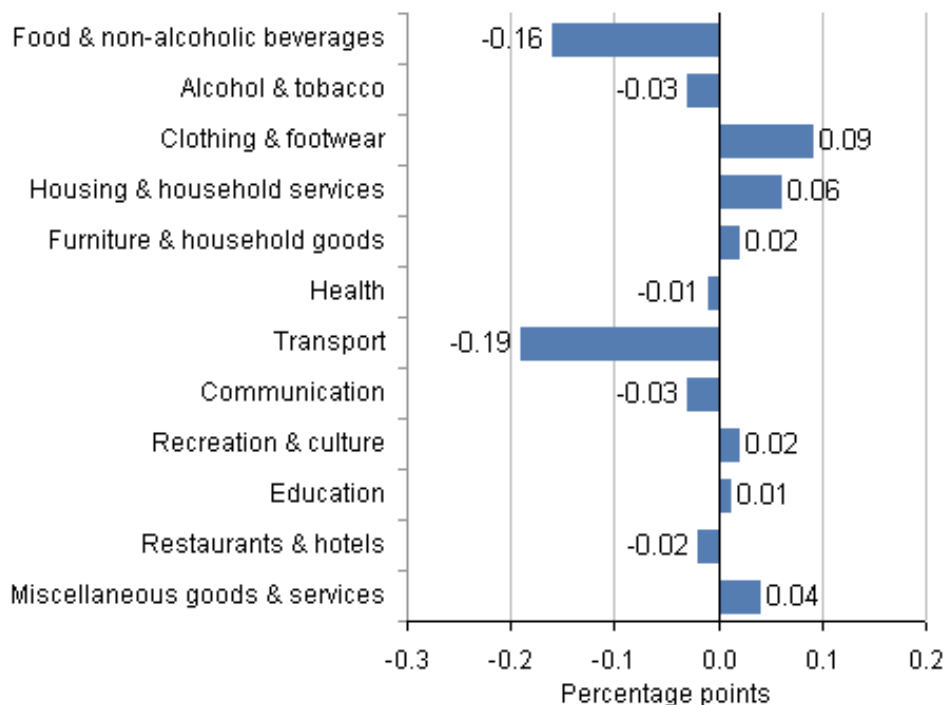
The most significant downward contributions to the 1-month change in the CPI between September and October 2011 came from:

- **transport:** prices, overall, decreased by 0.7 per cent. The largest downward effect came from a 6.0 per cent fall in air fares,
- **food:** prices, overall, fell by 0.9 per cent, the largest fall for a September to October period since 1996. Significant and widespread discounting by supermarkets and good harvests for certain produce led to a large number of downward effects; the largest came from price falls for vegetables (2.4 per cent), fruit (1.6 per cent), milk, cheese & eggs (1.2 per cent) and meat (0.7 per cent).

Briefing on the change to the CPI 12-month rate between September 2011 and October 2011

Contributions to the change in the 12-month rate

(total CPI -0.2 percentage points)



Notes:

1. Compared with the 12-month rate in September 2011.
2. Individual contributions may not sum to the total due to rounding.

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The change in the CPI 12-month rate is calculated by comparing the price changes between the latest two months and the same two months a year ago. This year the CPI rose by 0.1 per cent between September and October compared with a rise of 0.3 per cent between the same two months a year ago. The 1-month movement was therefore 0.2 percentage points lower this year and this led to the CPI 12-month rate falling from 5.2 per cent in September 2011 to 5.0 per cent in October 2011.

The most significant downward contributions to the change in the CPI 12-month rate between September and October 2011 came from:

- **transport:** the downward effect was driven by:
 - air transport: fares fell by 6.0 per cent between September and October this year compared with an increase of 2.7 per cent between the same two months a year ago. Air fares are notoriously volatile but both these 1-month changes are within the normal range for a September to October period (although the fall this year is towards the bottom end of the range). The downward contribution came from European and long haul routes,
 - fuels & lubricants: reflecting the price of oil there was, overall, a small fall in prices (0.2 per cent) between September and October this year compared to a 1.8 per cent rise a year ago (this rise also included the impact of an increase in road fuel duty),
- **food & non-alcoholic beverages:** the downward effect was driven by food. Food prices fell by 0.9 per cent this year, the largest fall for a September to October period since 1996 (when prices fell by 1.0 per cent). This compares with an increase of 0.4 per cent between September and October 2010. A combination of significant and widespread discounting in supermarkets and good harvests for produce such as grapes, apples, pears, potatoes and broccoli contributed to the sharp price falls between September 2011 and October 2011. The largest downward effects came from falls in the price of fruit (1.6 per cent), milk, cheese & eggs (1.2 per cent), vegetables (2.4 per cent), meat (0.7 per cent) and bread & cereals (0.4 per cent). In addition, there was also a small downward contribution from mineral water, soft drinks & juices where prices fell between September and October this year but rose a year ago.

The most significant upward contributions to the change in the CPI 12-month rate between September and October 2011 came from:

- **clothing & footwear:** prices, overall, rose by 0.8 per cent between September and October this year (a record between these two months) compared with a fall of 0.7 per cent a year ago. It is perhaps interesting to note that prices between August and October (broadly the autumn season) have increased by 5.3 per cent in 2011, which is similar to the 5.6 per cent rise over the same period in 2010. However, the pattern of prices over the three months has been different in 2011 compared with 2010:

- July to August 2011: prices increased by 3.7 per cent compared with a rise of 2.8 per cent between July and August 2010,
- August to September 2011: prices increased by 4.4 per cent compared with a rise of 6.4 per cent between August and September 2010,
- September to October 2011: prices increased by 0.8 per cent compared with a fall of 0.7 per cent between September and October 2010,

The most marked difference over this period was for women's outerwear where prices rose more sharply this year at the start of the autumn season and then rose by less in September (which included some small but unusual sales activity). In October 2011 prices then rose sharply for certain types of women's outerwear (including price recoveries from the sales activity in September). This, combined with price increases for menswear, contributed to the record price increase this year for clothing & footwear for a September to October period.

- **housing & household services:** the upward effect was driven by gas and electricity where average bills rose this year by 1.4 per cent and 1.5 per cent respectively between September and October. Between the same two months last year, average bills were unchanged for gas and fell by 0.3 per cent for electricity.
- **miscellaneous goods & services:** prices, overall, increased by 0.4 per cent between September and October this year compared with no change between the same two months a year ago. There were small upward effects from banking services, appliances, articles & products for personal care and jewellery, clocks & watches.

Briefing on the CPI 12-month rate to October 2011

12-month rate to October

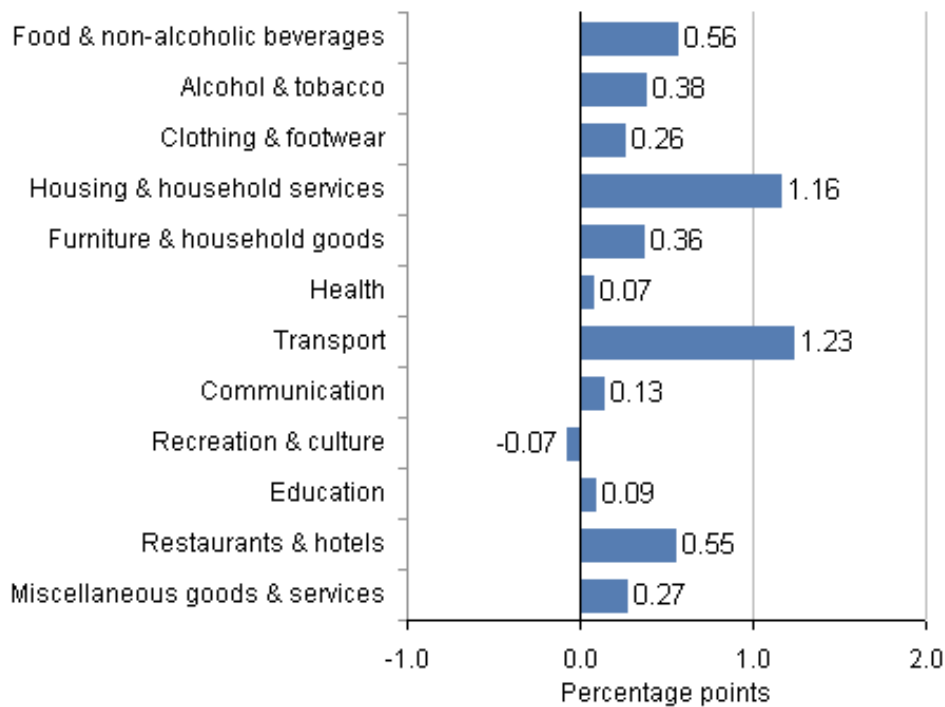
	% change
Food & non-alcoholic beverages	5.0
Alcohol & tobacco	9.1
Clothing & footwear	3.6
Housing & household services	9.1
Furniture & household goods	5.7
Health	3.0
Transport	7.7
Communication	4.8
Recreation & culture	-0.5
Education	5.1
Restaurants & hotels	4.5
Miscellaneous goods & services	2.8
CPI All Items	5.0

Download table

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Contributions to 12-month rate

(total CPI 5.0 per cent)



Notes:

- Individual contributions may not sum to the total due to rounding.

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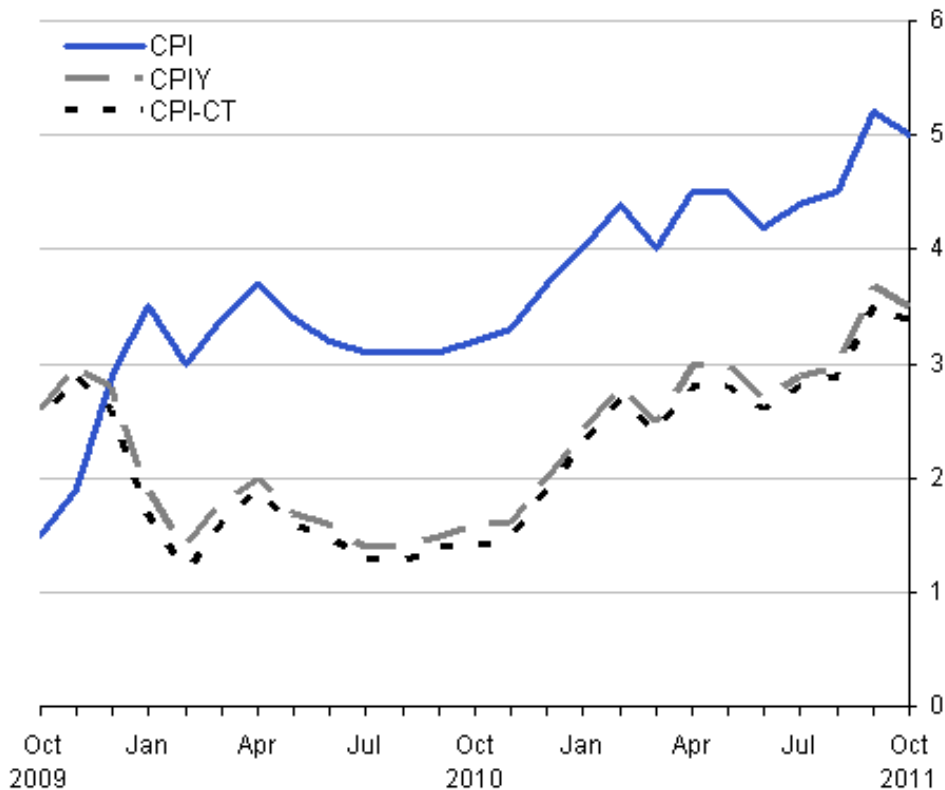
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The most significant upward contributions to the CPI 12-month rate to October 2011 came from:

- **transport** which contributed 1.2 percentage points. The largest effects came from fuels & lubricants where prices, overall, rose by 15.4 per cent over the 12 months to October and air transport where fares rose by 7.6 per cent over the same period,
- **housing & household services** which also contributed 1.2 percentage points. The largest effects came from gas where charges, overall, rose by 24.1 per cent over the 12 months to October and electricity where charges rose by 14.9 per cent over the same period,
- **food & non-alcoholic beverages** which contributed 0.6 percentage points with prices, overall, rising by 5.0 per cent over the year. The upward contributions were widespread with almost all categories having upward effects; the largest came from meat where prices rose by 5.8 per cent over the 12 months to October, bread & cereals where there was a 6.2 per cent rise and sugar, jam, syrups, chocolate & confectionery with an 8.5 per cent rise,
- **restaurants & hotels** which contributed 0.5 percentage points. Here, restaurant & cafe prices, overall, rose by 5.1 per cent over the year.

Other measures of CPI inflation

Percentage changes over 12 months



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(14 Kb)

Consumer Prices Index excluding indirect taxes (CPIY)

The CPIY is the same as the all items CPI except that it excludes price changes which are directly due to changes in indirect taxation (such as VAT).

In the year to October, the CPIY rose by 3.5 per cent, down from 3.7 per cent in September. The CPIY and CPI 12-month rates have therefore both decreased by 0.2 percentage points between September and October. The increase in road fuel duty that came into effect in October 2010, which impacts on the CPI (but not the CPIY) 12-month rate comparison this month, was not sufficient to cause a divergence between the change in the CPIY and CPI 12-month rates between September and October.

Consumer Prices Index at constant tax rates (CPI-CT)

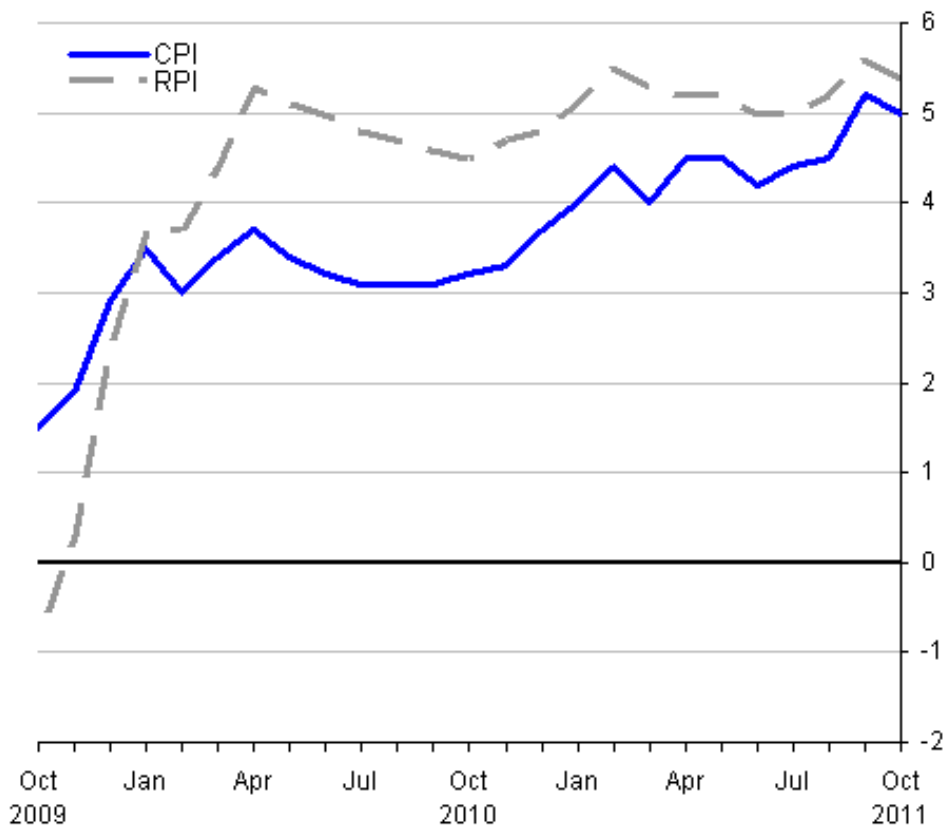
The CPI-CT is the same as the CPI except that tax rates are kept constant at the rates they were in the base period (currently January 2011).

In the year to October, CPI-CT rose by 3.4 per cent, down from 3.5 per cent in September. Therefore the CPI-CT 12-month rate fell by a 0.1 percentage point between September and October compared with a decrease of 0.2 percentage points in the CPI 12-month rate between the same two months. The impact of rounding is the main reason for the small difference in the changes in the CPI-CT and CPI 12-month rates between September and October. However, the impact of the increase in road fuel duty that came into effect in October 2010, which impacts on the CPI (but not the CPI-CT) 12-month rate comparison this month, also contributed.

RPI compared with CPI

RPI compared with CPI

Percentage changes over 12 months



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All items Retail Prices Index (RPI)

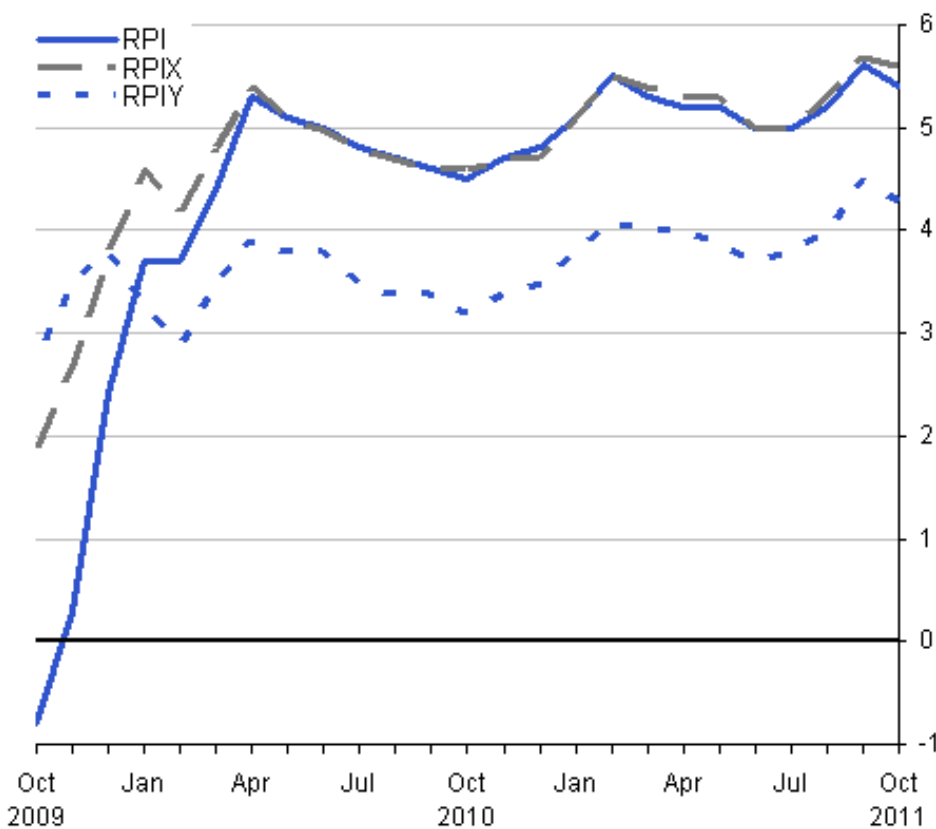
In the year to October, the all items RPI rose by 5.4 per cent, down from 5.6 per cent in September. The RPI and CPI 12-month rates have therefore both decreased by 0.2 percentage points between

September and October. Even at the more detailed level the differences in the contributions to the change in the RPI and CPI 12-month rates are relatively small, the largest are:

- **air transport:** has a much lower weight in the RPI than the CPI so the downward effect from this component had a smaller impact on the RPI,
- **mortgage interest payments:** had a downward effect on the RPI but is excluded from the CPI.

Other measures of RPI inflation

Percentage changes over 12 months



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All items Retail Prices Index excluding mortgage interest payments (RPIX)

The RPIX is the same as the all items RPI except for mortgage interest payments, which is excluded from RPIX.

In the year to October, the RPIX rose by 5.6 per cent, down from 5.7 per cent in September. Therefore the RPIX 12-month rate fell by a 0.1 percentage point between September and October

compared with a decrease of 0.2 percentage points in the RPI 12-month rate between the same two months.

Mortgage interest payments had a downward effect on the RPI 12-month rate between September and October but is excluded from the RPIX.

All items Retail Prices Index excluding mortgage interest payments and indirect taxes (RPIY)

The RPIY is the same as the all items RPI except that it excludes price changes which are directly due to changes in indirect taxation (such as VAT) and mortgage interest payments.

In the year to October, the RPIY rose by 4.3 per cent, down from 4.5 per cent in September. Therefore the RPIY and RPI 12-month rates both fell by 0.2 percentage points between September and October. The increase in road fuel duty that came into effect in October 2010, which impacts on the RPI (but not the RPIY) 12-month rate comparison this month, was not sufficient to cause a divergence between the change in the RPIY and RPI 12-month rates between September and October.

Selected Records

Selected CPI Records

All items CPI	Annual rate +5.0%, down from +5.2% last month Lowest since August 2011 (+4.5%)
Housing & household services	Annual rate +9.1%, up from +8.6% last month Highest since February 2009 (+10.0%)

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Selected RPI Records

All items RPI	Annual rate +5.4%, down from +5.6% last month Lowest since August 2011 (+5.2%)
All items RPI exc MIPS (RPIX)	Annual rate +5.6%, down from +5.7% last month Lowest since August 2011 (+5.3%)
Tobacco	Annual rate +13.4% up from +13.1% last month Highest since March 1992 (+16.1%)
Fuel & light	Annual rate +20.2%, up from +18.8% last month Highest since February 2009 (+22.3%)
Motoring Expenditure	Annual rate +7.7%, down from +8.7% last month Lowest since October 2009 (+5.3%)
Leisure services	Annual rate +2.8%, down from +3.3% last month Also +2.8% in July 2007 Last lower in September 2006 (+2.5%)

Download table

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Data tables

[CPI and RPI detailed Reference Tables \(1.16 Mb Excel sheet\)](#) is a printer friendly multi-worksheet Excel spreadsheet, that pulls together the numerous tables that were published in the old style Consumer Price Indices Statistical Bulletin and Focus on Consumer Prices publication before the introduction of the new website on 27 August 2011. The 'Contents' page provides guidance on those data sets which are included, along with a correlation index showing old and new naming conventions and previous publication source(s), for example: RPI All items 1947 -2011 or RP02 & Table 4.1 in Focus is now the new Table 20.

[CPI and RPI detailed Reference Tables 1-4 \(34.9 Kb Pdf\)](#) are also available in pdf format.

Background notes

1. New ONS website

The most efficient way to access the latest CPI and RPI data and briefing on the new website is via the CPI or RPI key figures on the [homepage](#).

In response to user feedback, we have also taken the opportunity to make all CPI and RPI data available in one location. These data are provided [via an Excel file \(1.16 Mb Excel sheet\)](#). This development has been well received but in response to additional comments from users, we have also now made the tables within the spreadsheet 'printer friendly'. We do hope that this makes it even easier for all users to access and use CPI and RPI data.

To further help users, very detailed CPI data are now available including the [individual price quotes and item indices](#) that underpin the CPI. Please note that the data that are published are at a level which means that no individual retailer or service provider will be able to be identified. The data published currently covers January 1996 to March 2011. Going forward, these data will be updated once a quarter with around a three month lag compared with the latest CPI publication, for example, the data will next be updated when the November CPI is published on 13 December 2011, at which point the detailed data published will be extended to September 2011.

Further information on the CPI and RPI, including details of the methodology used to construct the indices, articles, historic data etc on the [Consumer Price Index](#) web page.

2. Measurement of cars within the CPI and RPI

The UK Statistics Authority, in September 2011, endorsed proposals from the [Consumer Prices Advisory Committee](#) (CPAC) relating to the measurement methods used for cars within the CPI and RPI. CPAC recommended that car prices in the CPI and RPI should be measured via transaction prices from car dealer websites instead of the current approach of using 'list' prices. CPAC also recommended that the same improved method should be used for both the CPI and RPI (currently two different methods are used).

The Authority plans to reach a final decision in January 2012 following public consultation which is underway, closing on 23 December 2011. The Office for National Statistics currently plans to introduce this change from the February 2012 CPI and RPI, published on 20 March 2012.

3. Proposed User Group on Consumer Prices

Consideration is being given to the setting up of a User Group on Consumer Prices. An initial meeting of the proposed group is taking place on 18 November 2011 at the Royal Statistical Society. Further details can be obtained by e-mailing events@rss.org.uk.

4. Next month

Inflation for November 2010 to November 2011 will be published on 13 December 2011. CPI and RPI inflation rates between November 2010 and October 2011 were 4.6 per cent and 4.9 per cent respectively. Inflation rates for November 2010 to November 2011 will take account of price changes between October 2011 and November 2011.

5. Relevance

The CPI is the main UK domestic measure of consumer price inflation for macroeconomic purposes. It forms the basis for the Government's target for inflation that the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is required to achieve. From April 2011 the CPI is also being used for the indexation of benefits, tax credits and public service pensions. The uprating is based on the 12-month change in the September CPI.

Internationally, the CPI is known as the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP). HICPs are calculated in each Member State of the European Union, according to rules specified in a series of European regulations developed by Eurostat in conjunction with the EU Member States. HICPs are used to compare inflation rates across the European Union. Since January 1999, the HICP has also been used by the European Central Bank (ECB) as the measure of price stability across the euro area.

6. Methodology

The CPI and the RPI are compiled using the same underlying price data, based on a large and representative selection of around 650 individual goods and services for which price movements are measured in around 150 randomly selected areas throughout the UK. Around 180,000 separate price quotations are used every month to compile the indices. The outlets in which the prices are collected are selected randomly. Expenditure weights are held constant for one year at a time.

The selection of goods and services that are priced to compile the CPI and RPI is reviewed annually. The contents of the [2011 basket are described in a list on the ONS website \(265 Kb Pdf\)](#). The expenditure weights used to compile the indices are also updated each year. Additional details of the updated CPI and RPI weights for 2011 are available from the ONS website in an article published on 19 April 2011 entitled Consumer Prices Index and Retail Prices Index: [Updating Weights for 2011 \(301.5 Kb Pdf\)](#).

Rates of change for the CPI are calculated from unrounded index levels, rather than from the published indices, which are rounded to one decimal place. The use of unrounded indices increases the accuracy of the calculation. The unrounded index levels are available on request. By contrast, rates of change for the RPI are calculated from the published rounded indices.

7. Reliability

Once the RPI indices are published they are never revised. CPI indices are revisable although the only time the CPI all items index has been revised was when the index was re-referenced to 2005=100, which took place with the publication of the January 2006 indices.

8. Comparability

The CPI's coverage of goods and services was extended in stages in the areas of health, education, childcare and insurance, with effect from the January 2000, 2001, and 2002 indices. In 2000, there was also a change to the population basis for the weights which was broadened from private households to include expenditure by foreign visitors and residents of institutional households.

The official CPI series starts in 1996 but estimates for earlier periods are available back to 1988. These estimates are broadly consistent with data from 1996 but should be treated with some caution.

RPI data are available back to 1947 but have been re-referenced on several occasions since then, generally accompanied by changes to the coverage and/or structure of the detailed sub-components. Details of these changes are given in Appendices 1 and 2 of the [CPI Technical Manual \(754.3 Kb Pdf\)](#).

9. Other measures of inflation – main uses and methodological details

Detailed explanations on the main uses and methodology used to construct the 'other measures of inflation' included within this statistical bulletin and how they differ from the CPI can be found in Chapter 10 of the [CPI Technical Manual \(754.3 Kb Pdf\)](#). In summary:

- All items Retail Prices Index (RPI): the RPI is the most long-standing general purpose measure of inflation in the UK. Historically the uses of the RPI include the indexation of various prices and incomes and the uprating of pensions, state benefits and index-linked gilts, as well as the revalorisation of excise duties. Please note, though, that from April 2011 the CPI is being used to uprate benefits, tax credits and public service pensions.

The main differences between the CPI and RPI are:

- population base: CPI includes all UK private and institutional households and foreign visitors to the UK. The RPI includes private households only and excludes the highest income households and pensioner households mainly dependent on state benefits; these excluded private households account for around 13 per cent of all UK household expenditure
- item coverage: the most significant difference is that the CPI excludes a number of items relating to housing costs (such as mortgage interest payments, house depreciation and council tax) that are included in the RPI
- index methodology – formula: the CPI mainly uses the geometric mean whereas the RPI uses the arithmetic mean to combine individual prices at the first stage of aggregation
- item coding: the CPI uses a standard international classification system whereas the RPI uses a system unique to itself and not used elsewhere. The different approaches reflect the fact that the CPI is used to compare inflation rates across Europe so a standard framework is required; the RPI is mainly used within the UK only

A breakdown of the [differences between the CPI and RPI \(62.9 Kb Pdf\)](#) annual inflation rates can be found on the ONS website.

Also available is an explanation on the [increased impact that the different formula used to construct the CPI and RPI \(61 Kb Pdf\)](#) had on the indices during 2010:

- All items Retail Prices Index excluding mortgage interest payments (RPIX): this index is the same as the all items RPI but it excludes the mortgage interest payments component
- All items Retail Prices Index excluding mortgage interest payments and indirect taxes (RPIY): is an index designed to measure movements in 'core' prices as the index excludes price changes which are directly due to changes in indirect taxation (for example VAT; excise

duties on tobacco, alcohol and petrol; local authority taxation; and vehicle excise duties) and mortgage interest payments. The purpose of the index is to obtain a better indication of inflationary pressures at times when prices are directly influenced by Government-driven changes

- Consumer Prices Index excluding indirect taxes (CPIY): is an index designed to measure movements in 'underlying prices' as it excludes price changes which are directly due to changes in indirect taxation (for example VAT, excise duties on tobacco, alcohol and petrol). As with the RPIY, its main purpose is to obtain a better indication of inflationary pressures at times when prices are directly influenced by Government-driven changes
- Consumer Prices Index at constant tax rates (CPI-CT): is an index where tax rates are kept constant at the rates as they were in the base period (currently January 2011). The analytical value of the CPI-CT is when it is compared with the CPI; differences in the monthly and annual rates of change between the two indices provide an indication of the impact of tax changes on the CPI

10. Accessibility

This bulletin includes the October 2011 data, collected on 11 October 2011. [Publication dates are on the website \(51.7 Kb Pdf\)](#). The European Commission (Eurostat) will release figures for the harmonised index of consumer prices (HICP) for the month of October 2011 for EU Member States, together with an EU average, on 16 November 2011. Further information on HICP for the European Union, Eurozone and other EU Member States is available from [Eurostat's HICP](#) web page.

11. Further information

A more detailed [quality report \(174.5 Kb Pdf\)](#) for this statistical bulletin is available on the ONS website. The report assesses the CPI and RPI against standard dimensions of quality such as relevance, accuracy and accessibility. The report was last updated in November 2009.

The [mini Triennial Review \(344.9 Kb Pdf\)](#) of the CPI and RPI Central Collection of Prices is also available.

A full description of how the CPI and RPI are compiled is given in the Consumer Price Indices [Technical Manual \(754.3 Kb Pdf\)](#).

12. General

Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the Media Relations Office. Also available is a list of the names of those given [pre-publication access \(89.4 Kb Pdf\)](#) to the contents of this release.

In line with the Consumer Price Indices Pre-Release arrangements, an advanced estimate of the CPI was provided to the Governor of the Bank of England and the Chancellor of the Exchequer 3.5 working days ahead of publication. The Governor shared this information with the MPC, and officials present at the MPC policy meeting, on Wednesday 9 November.

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13. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html or from the Media Relations Office email: media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk

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This document is also available on our website at www.ons.gov.uk.

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