



Economic News Release

Employment Cost Index news release text

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EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX - DECEMBER 2011

Compensation costs for civilian workers increased 0.4 percent, seasonally adjusted, for the 3-month period ending December 2011, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Wages and salaries (which make up about 70 percent of compensation costs) also increased 0.4 percent, and benefits (which make up the remaining 30 percent of compensation) increased 0.6 percent.

Civilian Workers

Compensation costs for civilian workers increased 2.0 percent for the 12-month period ending December 2011, the same as the increase a year earlier in December 2010. Wages and salaries increased 1.4 percent for the current 12-month period. In December 2010 the increase was 1.6 percent. Benefit costs increased 3.2 percent for the 12-month period ending December 2011. In December 2010, the increase was 2.9 percent.

Private Industry Workers

Compensation costs for private industry workers increased 2.2 percent over the year, compared to the 2.1 percent increase for the previous 12-month period. Wages and salaries increased 1.6 percent for the current 12-month period. The increase for the 12-month period ending December 2010 was 1.8 percent. The increase in the cost of benefits was 3.6 percent for the 12-month period ending December 2011, higher than the December 2010 increase of 2.9 percent. Employer costs for health benefits increased 3.5 percent for the 12-month period ending December 2011, lower than the December 2010 increase of 5.0 percent.

Among occupational groups, compensation cost increases for private industry workers for the 12-month period ending December 2011 ranged from 1.7 percent for service occupations to 2.4 percent for production, transportation, and material moving occupations. Among industry supersectors, compensation cost increases for private industry workers for the current 12-month period ranged from 1.0 percent for leisure and hospitality to 2.8 percent for manufacturing.

State and Local Government Workers

Compensation costs for state and local government workers decelerated over the year. In December 2011, the increase for the 12-month period was 1.3 percent. In December 2010, the increase for the 12-month period was 1.8 percent. Values for this series—which began in June 1982—have ranged from the current period's 1.3 percent to 9.6 percent. Wages and salaries increased 1.0 percent for the 12-month period ending December 2011. A year earlier the increase was 1.2 percent. Prior values for this series, which also began in June 1982, ranged from 1.0 percent to 8.5 percent. Benefit costs increased 2.1 percent in December 2011, down from the December 2010 increase of 2.9 percent. Prior values for this series, which began in June 1990, ranged from 1.2 percent to 8.3 percent.

The Employment Cost Index for March 2012 is scheduled to be released on Friday, April 27, 2012, at 8:30 a.m. (EST).

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.

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Table A. Major series of the Employment Cost Index
(Percent change)

Category	3-month,	12-month,
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	seasonally adjusted		not seasonally adjusted				
	Sep. 2011	Dec. 2011	Dec. 2010	Mar. 2011	June 2011	Sep. 2011	Dec. 2011
CIVILIAN WORKERS[1]							
Compensation[2]	0.3	0.4	2.0	2.0	2.2	2.0	2.0
Wages and salaries	0.3	0.4	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.4
Benefits	0.1	0.6	2.9	3.0	3.6	3.2	3.2
PRIVATE INDUSTRY							
Compensation[2]	0.4	0.4	2.1	2.0	2.3	2.1	2.2
Wages and salaries	0.4	0.4	1.8	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.6
Benefits	0.1	0.7	2.9	3.0	4.0	3.3	3.6
STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT							
Compensation[2]	0.0	0.3	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.5	1.3
Wages and salaries	-0.2	0.3	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.0
Benefits	0.3	0.3	2.9	3.3	3.0	2.5	2.1

[1] Includes private industry and State and local government.

[2] Includes wages and salaries and benefits.

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