



Office of the Council for the  
Ongoing Government of Tokelau  
Tokelau National Statistics Office

# March 2022 quarter Consumer Price Index of Tokelau

## Key facts

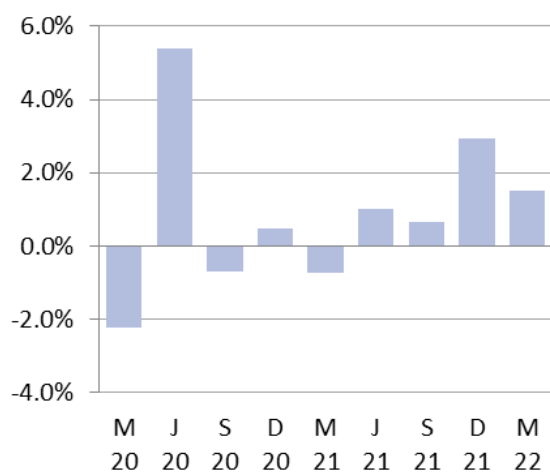
In the March 2022 quarter compared with the December 2021 quarter:

- The consumer price index (CPI) increased 1.5 percent, compared to a 2.9 percent increase in the previous quarter.
- The largest upward contribution to quarterly CPI of 2.7 percent came from the alcoholic beverages and tobacco group, prices increased 7.6 percent this quarter.
- The next largest upward contribution was from the food and non-alcoholic beverages group, which increased 2.5 percent, contributing 0.8 percent to quarterly CPI.
- The transportation group had the largest downward contribution of negative 1.7 percent to quarterly CPI, with prices down 22 percent.

From the March 2021 quarter to the March 2022 quarter, CPI increased 6.2 percent. This compares with a 3.9 percent increase from the December 2020 quarter to the December 2021 quarter.

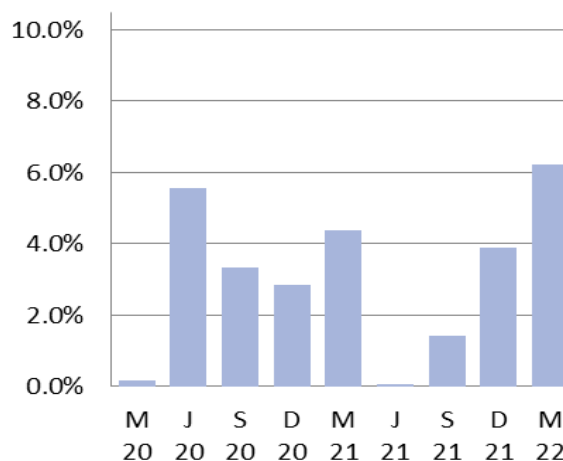
The CPI measures the rate of price change of goods and services purchased by Tokelau households. The Tokelau National Statistics Office (TNSO) collects prices from the co-op and bulk stores on all three atolls, as well as prices from service providers, including transport, energy, and telecommunications.

**Consumer price index**  
Quarterly change



Source: Tokelau National Statistics Office

**Consumer price index**  
Annual change



Source: Tokelau National Statistics Office

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29 April 2022

## Commentary

The following sections provide detailed commentary on the consumer price index of Tokelau:

- [Quarterly CPI rose 1.5 percent for March 2022 quarter](#)
- [Food and non-alcoholic beverages group up 2.5 percent this quarter](#)
- [Alcoholic beverages and tobacco group rose 7.6 percent](#)
- [Summary of other group movements in the quarterly CPI](#)
- [Impact of items that rose and fell in price](#)
- [CPI shows 6.2 percent increase for the year to the March 2022 quarter.](#)

### Quarterly CPI rose 1.5 percent for March 2022 quarter

The March 2022 quarterly CPI rose 1.5 percent; this compares to a 2.9 percent increase in the December 2021 quarter.

Two of the CPI's nine groups recorded a negative contribution in the quarterly CPI, two recorded an increase, one remained unchanged, and the rest had negligible contribution to overall CPI.

Group	Quarterly percentage points contribution to CPI
01. Food and non-alcoholic beverages	0.8%
02. Alcoholic beverages and tobacco	2.7%
03. Clothing and footwear	0.0%
04. Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels	0.0%
05. Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance	-0.3%
07. Transport	-1.7%
08. Communication	0.0%
09. Recreation and culture	0.0%
12. Miscellaneous goods and services	0.0%
Overall CPI	1.5%

**Note:** Percentages may not sum to total due to rounding.

### Food and non-alcoholic beverages group up 2.5 percent this quarter

Prices in the food and non-alcoholic beverages group increased 2.5 percent this quarter, contributing 0.8 percent to quarterly CPI.

The main individual upward contributors to the food subgroup came from higher prices for:

- Corned beef, canned (up 13 percent)
- Mayonnaise (up 47 percent)
- Potato (up 62 percent).

The main individual downward contributors to the food subgroup came from lower prices for:

- Lamb chops (down 11 percent)
- Canned fish, mackerel (down 34 percent)
- Flour (down 7.4 percent).

An increase of the prices in the non-alcoholic beverages subgroup (up 26 percent), was dominated by chocolate-flavoured drink powder and instant coffee (up 70 percent and 27 percent, respectively).

## Alcoholic beverages and tobacco group rose 7.6 percent

Prices in the Alcoholic beverages and tobacco group rose 7.6 percent, contributing 2.7 percent to the inflation rate this quarter. This increase is driven by a 9.2 percent increase in the price of tobacco cigarettes on the island.

This rise in the alcoholic beverages and tobacco group compares to a 0.2 percent price decrease, and a negative 0.1 percent contribution to quarterly CPI in the December 2021 quarter.

## Summary of other group movements in the quarterly CPI

The transport group had the largest downward contribution of 1.7 percent, prices down 22 percent this quarter. This is due to high prices of airfares (if they were in operation) this time of the year.

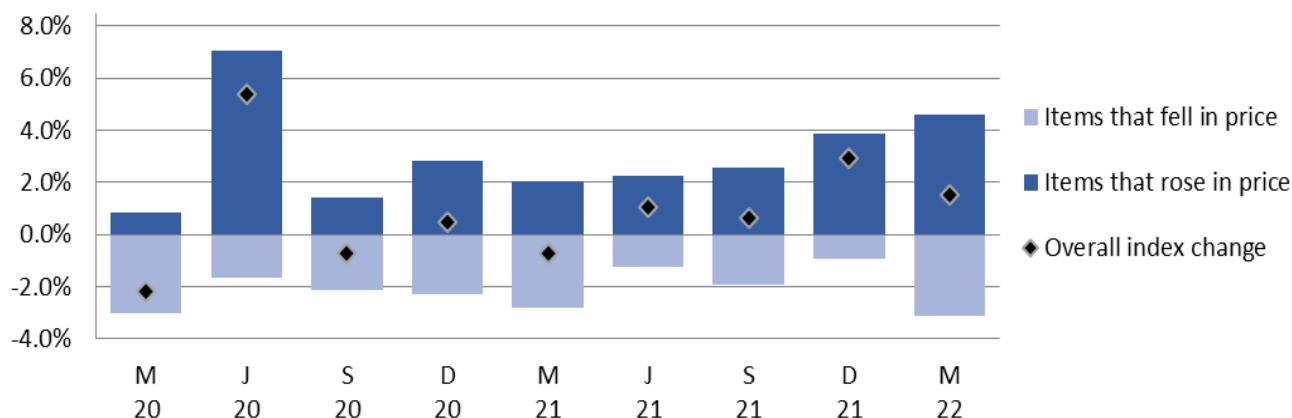
Prices in the furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance group showed prices decreasing 4.8 percent, contributing a negative 0.3 percent to quarterly CPI.

The remaining groups showed small change this quarter; miscellaneous goods and services group (down 1.3 percent), recreation and culture group (up 2.5 percent), clothing and footwear group (down 0.5 percent), and housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels group (up 0.2 percent), their contribution to quarterly CPI were negligible. The communication group remained unchanged this quarter.

## Impact of items that rose and fell in price

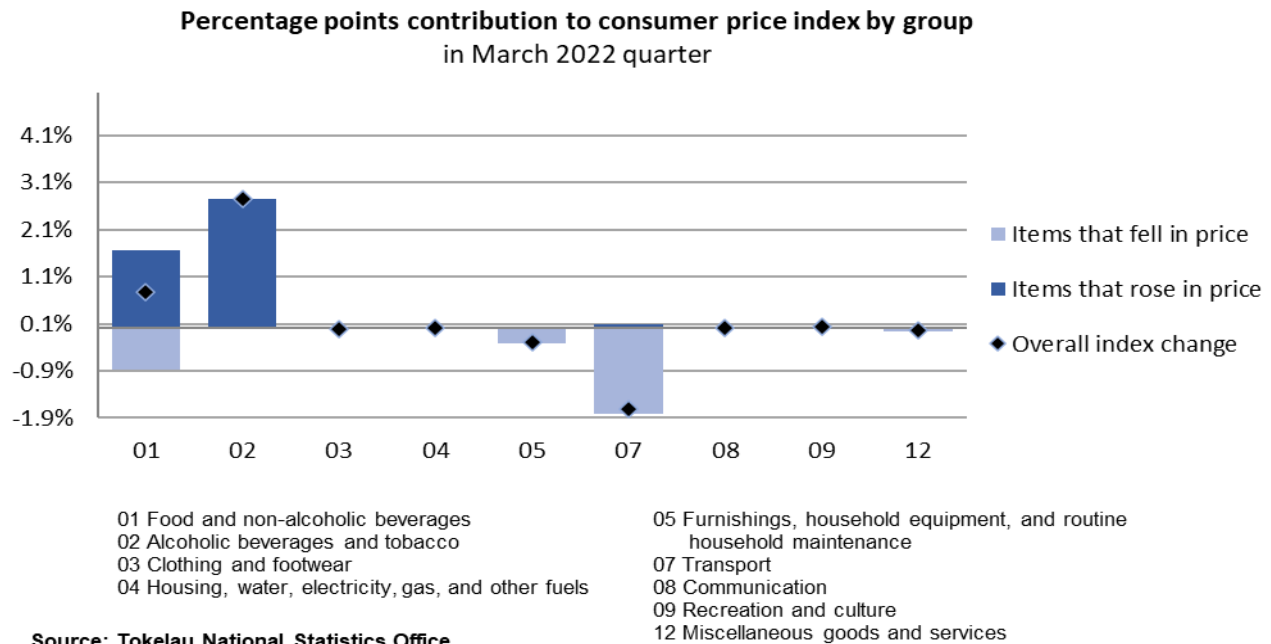
The graph below shows the impact of items that rose and fell in price over time: the overall impact was a 1.5 percent increase in the CPI for the March 2022 quarter.

**Percentage points contribution to consumer price index over time**  
 Quaterly change to March 2022 quarter



Source: Tokelau National Statistics Office

The following graph shows the impact of items that rose and fell in price by group this quarter.



## CPI shows 6.2 percent increase for the year to the March 2021 quarter

The CPI increased 6.2 percent in the year to the March 2022 quarter. This compares with a 3.9 percent annual inflation rise to the December 2021 quarter.

The largest upward contribution came from the food and non-alcoholic beverages group of 3.3 percent, prices increased 10.8 percent to annual CPI.

Key individual upward contributions to the food subgroup came from higher prices for:

- Chicken (up 24 percent)
- Rice (up 30 percent)
- Sugar (up 20 percent).

The main individual downward contributions to the food subgroup came from lower prices for:

- Lamb chops (down 26 percent)
- Canned fish, tuna (down 16 percent)
- Tomato sauce, canned (down 33 percent).

The alcoholic beverages and tobacco group showed the next largest contribution of 2.7 percent, prices went up 7.1 for this annual CPI.

Four other groups contributed to the annual CPI; for the transport group, it contributed 0.4 percent (prices up 7.1 percent). The miscellaneous goods and services group contributed 0.1 percent (prices up 3.2 percent). The housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels group down 3.3 percent, contributing a negative 0.2 percent. And the recreation and culture group prices dropped 6.1 percent, contributing a negative 0.1 percent to the annual CPI.

The remaining groups showed minor changes in the year to the March 2022 quarter. For the clothing and footwear group, prices up 0.4 percent, and the furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance group, prices dropped 0.5 percent. Both contributions were negligible to annual CPI. The communication group did not change.

## Definitions

### About the consumer price index

The consumer price index (CPI) measures the changing price of a fixed basket of goods and services purchased by households. The selection and relative importance of the goods and services in the CPI basket represents the overall expenditure pattern of households in Tokelau.

The aim of the CPI is to measure price changes of the same sample of products at each outlet over time. When there is a change in the size or quality of any of the goods or services in the basket, an adjustment is made to ensure that the price change shown in the CPI is not affected by the change in size or quality.

The CPI of Tokelau has been published quarterly since September 2012, and was rebased in March 2017. The index reference period is the March 2017 quarter (=100.0).

An updated listing of the representative goods and services monitored in the CPI basket, and the sources and methods used to compile various parts of the CPI, are available in the "Technical notes: Consumer Price Index" (October 2017 version) at [www.tokelau.org.nz/Stats.html](http://www.tokelau.org.nz/Stats.html).

### More definitions

A **price index** measures the change in price between time periods for a given set of goods and services. It summarises a set of prices for a variety of goods and services collected from a number of outlets.

The **index reference** period is the benchmark to which prices in other periods are compared (eg if the index number in a later period is 115.0, prices have increased by 15.0 percent since the index reference period).

**Upward/downward contributions:** Items mentioned in this release are often those that made a large contribution to the overall movement in the CPI. An item's contribution is a combination of its weight in the index (its relative importance, based on its share of household spending on goods and services covered by the CPI) and the magnitude of price movement. If two items record the same percentage rise in price, then the item with the larger CPI weighting will make a larger contribution to the overall movement. This contribution is also referred to as points (or index points) contribution.

**Airfares:** Since the Corona virus pandemic, Tokelau's only portal for international travel was no longer available (March 2020). TNSO and StatsNZ Tokelau support team constructed a method to impute airfares based on the previous year's price. By doing this, the price fluctuations are based on prices from previous quarters capturing more of the seasonality.

(Note this does not include repatriation and/or medical emergency flights.)

### Reference period

Prices for the March 2022 quarter were collected between 15 February and 8 April 2022, by staff working for the village administrative centres, as well as TNSO staff in Apia and Tokelau.

### Price influencers

Price changes may be influenced by external events. Factors that affected the quarterly and the annual March 2022 CPI include:

- Tokelau uses the New Zealand dollar as its currency; so major changes in the strength of the New Zealand dollar over the Samoan tala can change Tokelau's buying power in Samoa<sup>1</sup>.
- Since 2013 nearly all goods sold in Tokelau have been sourced directly from Samoa. Many of these goods are re-exports, originating from various other countries including China, Australia, and New Zealand. This introduces price fluctuation between quarters, and can be caused both by local demand, and by international variables including demand, availability, seasonal effect, and changes in exchange rates. Changes in availability or price in Samoa have a strong influence on the Tokelau CPI.
- Each village sets pricing policy (such as for cigarettes, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks) independently, and this can change at any point.
- In July 2017, General fono (Parliament) approved a national 325 percent tax increase on cigarettes, in an effort to reduce smoking and hence the prevalence of non-communicable diseases in the atoll population. Since then, each Taupulega has introduced further price rises. Because cigarettes have a relatively large weight in the CPI, any change in their price will significantly impact the overall CPI movement as seen since 2017. To separate out the anomaly created by the cigarette pricing policy (combined with reduced availability in the atoll stores), we calculate CPI with and without cigarettes. This will provide for a smooth transition to "Tobacco free Tokelau 2020", which has nil cigarette imports as a target.

## Liability

All care and diligence has been used in processing, analysing, and extracting data and information in this publication. However, the TNSO gives no warranty it is error-free and will not be liable for any loss or damage suffered by the use directly, or indirectly, of the information in this publication.

## Timing

Our information releases are delivered electronically by third parties. Delivery may be delayed by circumstances outside our control. The TNSO does not accept responsibility for any such delay.

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<sup>1</sup> The Tokelau Department of Finance tends to fix its exchange rate for the calendar year (currently WST/NZD=1.75), taking out some of the volatility.