

PRICES AND WAGES IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES 111

II. TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

A. PRICES AND EXPENDITURES

Prices in the transportation services group experienced a greater percentage increase than any other service group in the Consumer Price Index from 1947 to 1958. Local transit fares increased 126.4 percent and led the other items by a wide margin. In fact this item which accounts for 27 percent of the weight of the transportation services index, contributed 40.5 percent of the rise. (See table 21.) The utilities rose much less, in general.

TABLE 21.—*Transportation service prices, 1947-58*

	Relative importance, December 1952	Price index		Percent increase	Average annual rate of change		
		1947	1958		1947-58	1947-53	1953-58
Transportation services.....	3.7	89.3	174.1	95.0	6.3	9.1	3.4
Auto repairs.....	1.1	95.5	141.9	48.6	3.7	4.3	3.0
Insurance.....	1.0	85.0	171.0	101.2	6.6	9.8	2.8
Registration fees.....	.3	97.9	126.9	29.6	2.4	1.3	3.5
Bus and transit fares.....	1.0	88.8	201.0	126.4	7.7	9.9	5.2
Railroad fares.....	.3	89.7	133.2	48.5	3.7	5.4	1.9
Transportation total ¹	11.3	90.6	140.5	55.1	4.1	6.2	1.6
Gas and electricity.....	1.9	97.6	117.0	19.9	1.7	1.1	1.9
Telephone.....	1.1	95.3	127.4	33.7	2.7	4.4	.7
Postage.....	.2	97.4	139.9	37.5	2.9	3.6	2.1
Water.....	.3	101.3	136.4	34.6	-----	-----	6.1

¹ Includes in addition to the services shown in detail above, new and used autos, tires, gasoline and motor oil.

² Index for 1953 annual average. Item was first included in index January 1953. Base: December 1952=100.

Source: BLS, Consumer Price Index.

Consumers' expenditures for transportation services and utilities show divergent trends. Expenditures associated with the operation of private automobiles increased much more than did expenditures for public transportation. Intercity rail transportation suffered the greatest decrease, despite fare increases measured by the Consumer Price Index of nearly 50 percent. The utilities experienced very large increases in expenditure with comparatively little price runup. Tabulated below is the percentage changes in consumer expenditures for various transportation services in the period 1947-58.

TABLE 22.—*Expenditures for transportation services, percentage change, 1947-58*

Item	Percent change in expenditures	
	Aggregate	Per capita
Automobile repair and maintenance.....	132.6	76.6
Bridge, highway, and ferry tolls.....	233.3	175.0
Auto insurance: premiums less claims.....	278.2	213.6
Local transit, taxi, and commutation.....	-5.8	-22.0
Intercity transportation:		
Railroad.....	-38.7	-49.4
Bus.....	-9.3	-25.1
Airline.....	410.0	324.1
Household utilities:		
Electricity.....	196.5	145.1
Gas.....	206.0	153.5
Water.....	121.7	83.5
Telephone and other communication.....	175.2	128.1

Source: Data from "U.S. Income and Output," table II-4.