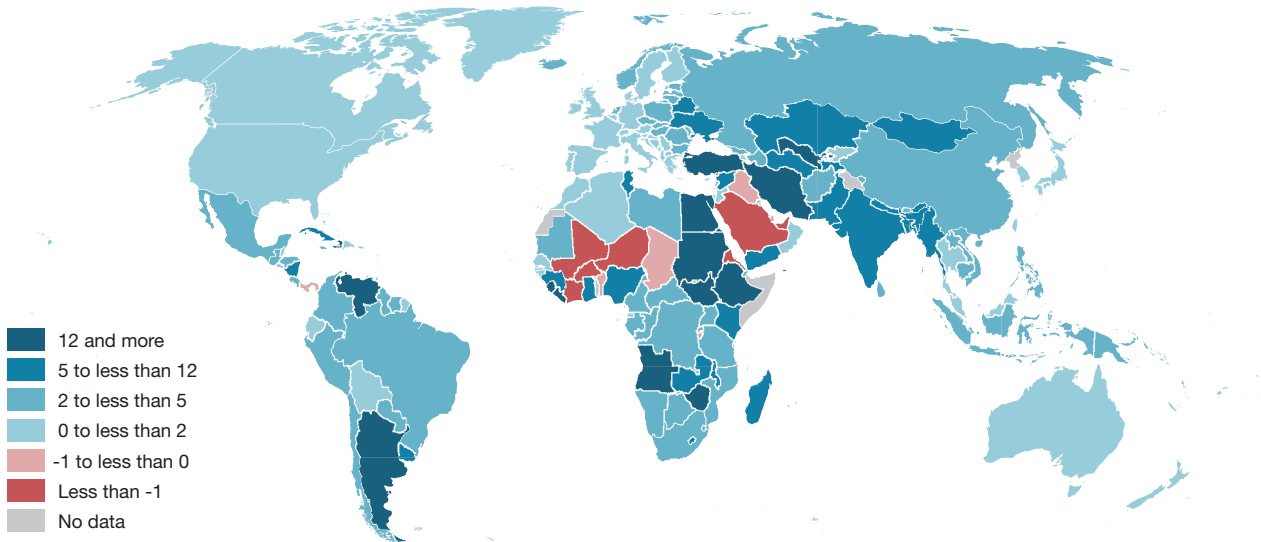




Fact sheet #10: Prices

Map 1 | Annual growth of consumer prices, 2019
(Percentage)



Concepts and definitions

Changes in consumer prices are measured by the consumer price index (CPI), which depicts the price of a basket of consumer goods and services representing average consumption by private households during a year, relative to the base year 2010.

The UNCTAD Commodity Price Index (UCPI) measures the average price, in United States dollars, of main primary commodities exported by developing economies relative to the base year 2015. The weights used in the calculation of the average price represent the shares of commodity groups in developing economies' total commodity exports observed over three years from 2014 to 2016. The overall index is decomposed into sub-indices displaying the price movements of individual commodity groups. The basket of the UCPI was entirely overhauled in 2018. For details, see UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics 2020, annex 6.3 and UNCTAD (2018).

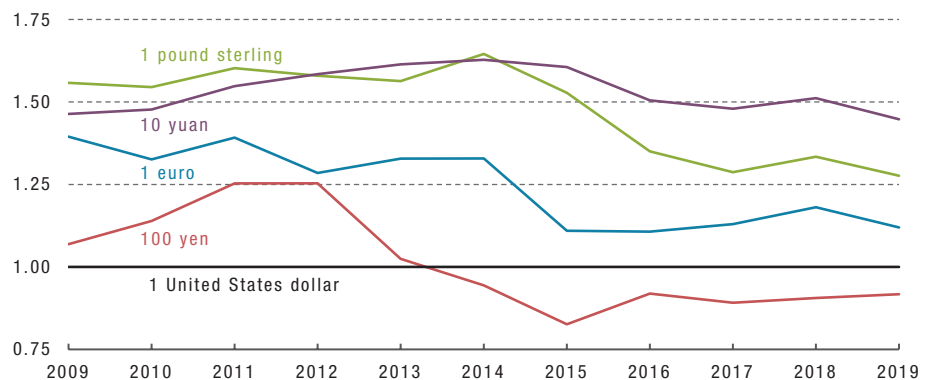
Development of consumer prices in 2019

Inflation rates varied widely across the world's economies in 2019. Consumer prices increased relatively quickly in several economies in North-Eastern Africa and Western Asia. They increased by 250 per cent in Zimbabwe and by around 20 000 per cent in Venezuela. Inflation rates above 50 per cent were also recorded in Argentina, South Sudan and the Sudan. In most economies, however, including all developed economies, growth of consumer prices remained between 0 and 5 per cent.

Trends in exchange rates

In 2019, three of the most traded currencies depreciated against the United States dollar. The price of the euro in dollar terms decreased by 5.2 per cent and pound sterling and yuan by around 4.2 per cent. The yen appreciated slightly. Over the last decade, the United States dollar exchange rate to these currencies has been slightly increasing.

Figure 1 | Exchange rates against the United States dollar
(Annual average)

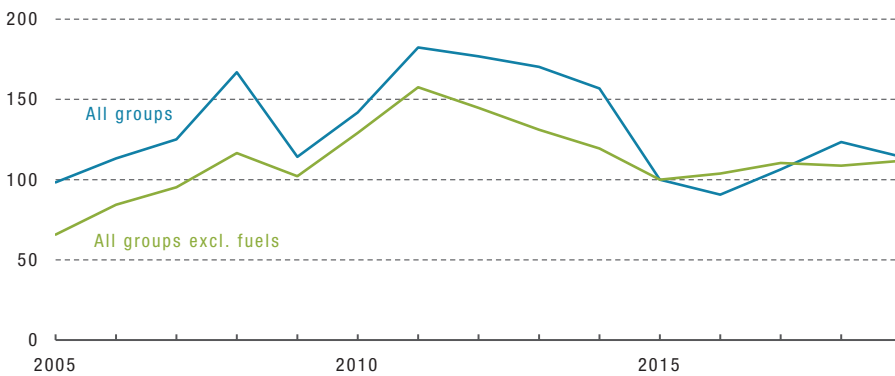




Commodity price index falling, led by fuels

In 2019, the UCPI fell by 7.4 per cent compared to the previous year, indicating that the prices of main commodities exported by developing economies have stopped rising. However, the price index excluding fuels went up (+2.8 per cent). Indeed, falling fuel prices (-12.6 per cent) were the main driver behind the decrease in the overall index. Prices for agricultural raw materials and food also declined, though less than prices for fuels, while prices for minerals, ores and metals increased.

Figure 2 UNCTAD Commodity Price Index (2015=100)

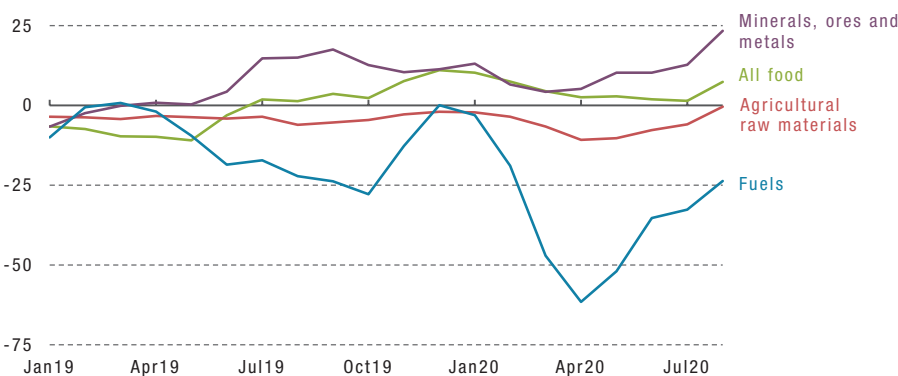


Recent monthly trends in commodity prices

Making a comparison with the same month in the previous year, fuel prices decreased at accelerating rates from March to October 2019. They remained stable in December 2019 and January 2020. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, prices began tumbling and reached a historic year-on-year decrease of 61.6 per cent in April 2020. Between then and August, the pace of decrease has slowed down to -23.7 per cent, year-on-year.

Prices of other commodity groups followed more stable trends. The prices for food and especially for minerals, ores and metals increased continuously from mid-2019, whereas prices for agricultural raw materials continuously declined. From December 2019, the year-on-year growth of prices slowed down in all commodity groups for several months. This stagnation lasted for food until July 2020.

Figure 3 Year-on-year growth of prices by commodity group (Percentage)



Note: Percentage change of UCPI sub-indices, compared to the same month in the previous year.

For references, see UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics 2020, annex 6.4.

Inflation in all developed economies



Euro, pound sterling and yuan depreciated against the United States dollar in 2019



Falling year-on-year growth rates of commodity prices after January 2020



In April 2020, fuel prices 61% below April 2019 levels

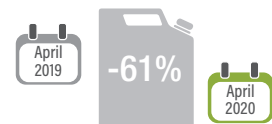



Table 1 Consumer prices by group of economies

Group of economies	Consumer price index		Annual growth rate	
	(2010=100)		(Percentage)	
	2014	2019	2014–2019	2019
World	113	129	2.7	3.1
Developing economies	124	155	4.6	5.5
Developing economies: Africa	135	222	10.4	9.9
Developing economies: America	125	175	7.0	7.5
Developing economies: Asia and Oceania	122	143	3.3	4.5
Transition economies	134	191	7.4	4.9
Developed economies	107	114	1.2	1.5
Selected groups				
Developing economies excluding China	128	171	5.9	6.9
Developing economies excluding LDCs	123	152	4.4	5.3
LDCs	146	263	12.4	10.4
LLDCs	131	212	10.1	11.2
SIDS (UNCTAD)	122	136	2.1	1.6
HIPCs (IMF)	132	177	6.1	4.7
BRICS	122	145	3.6	3.9
G20	112	125	2.3	2.7

Note: Venezuela is not considered.

Table 2 Exchange rate and consumer prices among main exporting economies

Economy (Ranked by share in world exports)	Exchange rate to United States dollar			Consumer price index			Share in world exports ^a
				(2010=100)			(Percentage)
	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019	2019
China	0.14796	0.15115	0.14475	119	122	125	10.8
United States of America	1.00000	1.00000	1.00000	112	115	117	10.2
Germany	1.12968	1.18095	1.11947	109	111	113	(e) 7.3
Japan	0.00892	0.00906	0.00917	104	105	105	(e) 3.6
United Kingdom	1.28704	1.33417	1.27641	115	118	120	3.6
France	1.12968	1.18095	1.11947	107	109	110	(e) 3.6
Netherlands	1.12968	1.18095	1.11947	111	113	116	(e) 3.3
Korea, Republic of	0.00088	0.00091	0.00086	113	115	115	(e) 2.7
China, Hong Kong SAR	0.12832	0.12758	0.12762	128	131	135	2.6
Singapore	0.72415	0.74138	0.73305	113	114	114	2.6
Italy	1.12968	1.18095	1.11947	109	110	111	(e) 2.6
Canada	0.77045	0.77171	0.75370	112	115	117	(e) 2.2
India	0.01536	0.01462	0.01420	160	168	180	2.2
Ireland	1.12968	1.18095	1.11947	105	106	107	(e) 2.0
Mexico	0.05284	0.05196	0.05191	130	137	142	(e) 2.0
Spain	1.12968	1.18095	1.11947	108	110	111	(e) 2.0
Russian Federation	0.01714	0.01596	0.01545	168	173	181	(e) 1.9
Switzerland, Liechtenstein	1.01555	1.02262	1.00626	98	99	100	1.9
Belgium	1.12968	1.18095	1.11947	113	115	117	(e) 1.7
United Arab Emirates	0.27229	0.27229	0.27229	113	117	115	1.6

^a Exports of goods and services.



Table 3 Price indices of selected primary commodities
(2015=100)

Commodity group	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
All groups	142	182	177	170	157	100	91	106	123	114
All food	114	141	132	120	119	100	104	102	96	94
Food	111	135	127	120	118	100	104	103	96	98
Tropical beverages	110	144	112	90	111	100	97	94	86	81
Vegetable oilseeds and oils	121	151	152	136	123	100	107	106	100	93
Agricultural raw materials	142	177	143	131	115	100	100	105	103	99
Minerals, ores and metals	136	164	153	138	121	100	105	116	118	125
Minerals, ores and non-precious metals	170	191	159	156	133	100	101	128	131	135
Precious metals	110	143	148	125	111	100	107	108	108	117
Fuels	150	198	197	194	180	100	83	104	132	116
Selected groups										
Tropical beverages and food	111	137	124	112	117	100	102	101	94	94
All groups excl. fuels	129	158	145	131	119	100	104	110	109	112
All groups excl. precious metals	146	188	181	176	163	100	88	106	126	114
All groups excl. precious metals and fuels	138	164	143	134	123	100	102	112	109	109

Table 4 Monthly price indices of main commodity groups
(2015=100)

Period		All groups	All food	Agricultural raw materials	Minerals, ores and metals	Fuels
2019	January	112	93	101	116	115
	February	116	93	101	122	120
	March	118	92	101	121	123
	April	121	92	102	122	128
	May	119	90	101	121	125
	June	112	93	100	126	112
	July	114	94	99	131	113
	August	109	92	97	129	106
	September	113	92	97	131	112
	October	110	94	96	129	107
	November	113	98	96	126	113
	December	116	102	98	127	116
2020	January	114	102	99	132	112
	February	104	100	97	130	97
	March	83	96	94	127	65
	April	73	94	91	129	49
	May	81	93	90	134	60
	June	90	95	92	139	72
	July	95	95	93	148	76
	August	101	99	96	159	81