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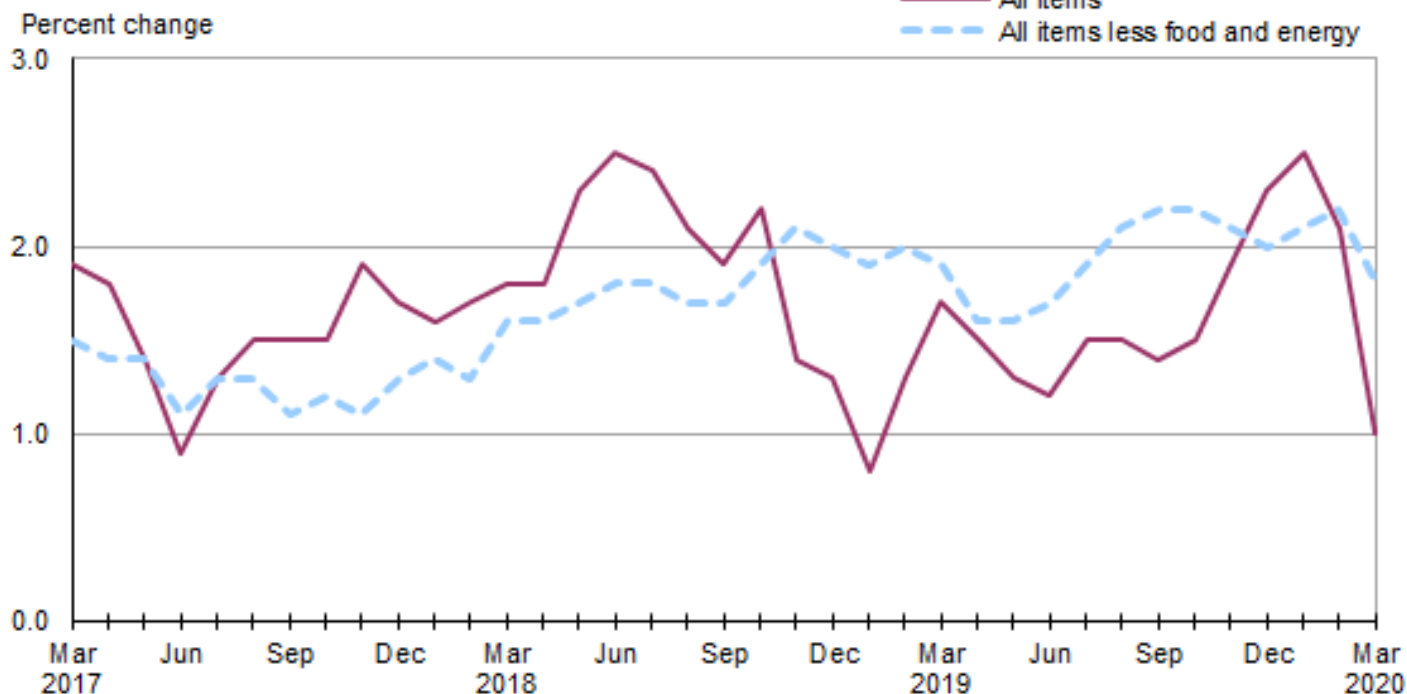
Consumer Price Index, Midwest Region – March 2020

Area prices were down 0.5 percent over the past month, up 1.0 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Midwest Region, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), declined 0.5 percent in March, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See [table A](#).) The March decrease was influenced by lower prices for gasoline. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U advanced 1.0 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) The index for all items less food and energy advanced 2.2 percent over the year. Food prices rose 1.4 percent. Energy prices increased 2.6 percent, largely the result of higher prices for gasoline. (See [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Midwest region, March 2017–March 2020



Food

Food prices inched up 0.2 percent for the month of March. (See [table 1](#).) Prices for food at home crept up 0.2 percent and prices for food away from home were virtually unchanged for the same period.

Over the year, food prices rose 1.8 percent. Prices for food at home advanced 1.3 percent since a year ago, and prices for food away from home rose 2.5 percent.

Energy

The energy index decreased 6.7 percent over the month. The decrease was mainly due to lower prices for gasoline (-12.4 percent). Prices for electricity inched down 0.2 percent, and prices for natural gas service declined 2.7 percent for the same period.

Energy prices declined 9.4 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-17.3 percent). Prices paid for natural gas service decreased 3.1 percent, while prices for electricity rose 0.3 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy edged down 0.1 percent in March. Lower prices for apparel (-1.1 percent) and household furnishings and operations (-0.2 percent) were partially offset by higher prices for used cars and trucks (2.4 percent) and medical care services (0.3 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy advanced 1.8 percent. Components contributing to the increase included shelter (2.6 percent) and medical care services (6.4 percent). Partly offsetting the increases was a price decline in apparel (-2.7 percent).

Table A. Midwest region CPI-U 1-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month
January.....	0.3	0.8	0.7	2.2	0.6	1.6	0.2	0.8	0.4	2.5
February.....	0.0	0.4	0.2	2.4	0.2	1.7	0.7	1.3	0.3	2.1
March.....	0.6	0.5	0.1	1.9	0.2	1.8	0.6	1.7	-0.5	1.0
April.....	0.4	0.8	0.4	1.8	0.4	1.8	0.3	1.5		
May.....	0.4	0.8	0.0	1.4	0.5	2.3	0.3	1.3		
June.....	0.6	0.8	0.0	0.9	0.2	2.5	0.0	1.2		
July.....	-0.5	0.4	0.0	1.3	0.0	2.4	0.2	1.5		
August.....	0.1	0.6	0.3	1.5	0.0	2.1	0.0	1.5		
September.....	0.2	1.1	0.3	1.5	0.1	1.9	0.0	1.4		
October.....	-0.1	1.0	-0.2	1.5	0.1	2.2	0.2	1.5		
November.....	-0.3	1.2	0.2	1.9	-0.6	1.4	-0.2	1.9		
December.....	0.1	1.8	-0.2	1.7	-0.4	1.3	0.0	2.3		

The April 2020 Consumer Price Index for the Midwest Region is scheduled to be released on May 12, 2020.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impact on March 2020 Consumer Price Index Data

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) program suspended data collection by personal visit on March 16, 2020. When possible, data normally collected by personal visit were collected either online or by phone. Additionally, data collection in March was affected by the temporary closing or limited operations of certain types of establishments. These factors resulted in an increase in the number of prices being considered temporarily unavailable and imputed. While the CPI program attempted to collect as much data as possible, many indexes are based on smaller amounts of collected prices than usual, and a small number of indexes that are normally published were not published this month. Additional information is available at www.bls.gov/bls/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-bls-price-indexes.htm#CPI.

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 93 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 29 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 75 urban areas across the country from about 6,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 retail establishments—department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch17.pdf.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The Midwest region is comprised of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Midwest Region, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes			Percent change from		
	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2020	Mar. 2019	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020
All items	239.690	240.421	239.163	1.0	-0.2	-0.5
All items (December 1977 = 100).....	389.988	391.178	389.132			
Food and beverages	249.749	250.546	250.985	1.8	0.5	0.2
Food	249.149	249.998	250.385	1.8	0.5	0.2
Food at home	228.471	229.829	230.242	1.3	0.8	0.2
Cereals and bakery products	258.395	259.049	263.897	1.9	2.1	1.9
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....	249.974	250.342	249.895	1.3	0.0	-0.2
Dairy and related products	198.996	204.018	205.106	5.2	3.1	0.5
Fruits and vegetables	273.091	270.704	266.321	-2.3	-2.5	-1.6
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials.....	164.544	165.660	168.120	1.7	2.2	1.5
Other food at home	197.375	199.839	199.916	1.5	1.3	0.0
Food away from home.....	283.255	283.349	283.705	2.5	0.2	0.1
Alcoholic beverages	255.820	255.963	257.042	1.1	0.5	0.4
Housing	235.848	236.473	236.274	2.0	0.2	-0.1
Shelter	284.095	285.087	285.236	2.6	0.4	0.1
Rent of primary residence(1).....	284.503	285.103	285.681	3.2	0.4	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(1) (2).....	289.737	290.183	290.829	3.1	0.4	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(1)(2).....	289.674	290.119	290.750	3.0	0.4	0.2
Fuels and utilities.....	220.145	219.893	218.073	-0.1	-0.9	-0.8
Household energy	176.012	175.612	173.522	-1.0	-1.4	-1.2
Energy services(1)	182.261	181.800	179.976	-0.8	-1.3	-1.0
Electricity(1).....	197.280	197.750	197.286	0.3	0.0	-0.2
Utility (piped) gas service(1).....	146.477	144.572	140.717	-3.1	-3.9	-2.7
Household furnishings and operations	116.081	116.200	115.925	0.0	-0.1	-0.2
Apparel	113.913	115.759	114.500	-2.7	0.5	-1.1
Transportation	201.165	200.811	194.627	-4.2	-3.3	-3.1
Private transportation	196.607	196.078	191.397	-3.5	-2.6	-2.4
New and used motor vehicles(3).....	96.750	97.548	98.056	-0.2	1.3	0.5
New vehicles	137.921	138.832	137.827	-0.7	-0.1	-0.7
New cars and trucks(3)(4).....	97.498	98.139	97.425	-0.7	-0.1	-0.7
New cars(4).....	134.980	136.468	136.092	1.0	0.8	-0.3
Used cars and trucks.....	134.978	136.400	139.694	0.1	3.5	2.4
Motor fuel	225.542	216.693	190.225	-17.2	-15.7	-12.2
Gasoline (all types).....	224.003	215.217	188.548	-17.3	-15.8	-12.4
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....	217.738	209.022	182.452	-17.8	-16.2	-12.7
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....	260.923	251.190	225.738	-14.2	-13.5	-10.1
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....	250.064	242.390	219.327	-12.6	-12.3	-9.5
Motor vehicle insurance(6).....	738.436	749.097	754.488	1.3	2.2	0.7
Medical care	507.573	512.813	513.815	4.6	1.2	0.2
Medical care commodities.....	382.508	382.459	381.749	-2.5	-0.2	-0.2
Medical care services.....	549.439	556.381	557.930	6.4	1.5	0.3
Professional services	423.023	425.728	426.030	1.6	0.7	0.1
Recreation(3).....	123.725	123.761	123.663	2.0	-0.1	-0.1
Education and communication(3).....	138.804	139.094	138.982	1.1	0.1	-0.1
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(6) ..	1,198.577	1,200.416	1,198.238	-0.2	0.0	-0.2

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Midwest Region, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes			Percent change from		
	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2020	Mar. 2019	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020
Other goods and services	442.284	444.148	445.981	3.4	0.8	0.4
Commodity and service group						
Commodities	179.077	179.188	177.355	-1.2	-1.0	-1.0
Commodities less food and beverages	145.404	145.262	142.690	-3.0	-1.9	-1.8
Nondurables less food and beverages.....	192.027	190.834	183.552	-5.5	-4.4	-3.8
Durables	101.002	101.500	102.021	-0.3	1.0	0.5
Services.....	302.305	303.715	303.129	2.5	0.3	-0.2
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less shelter.....	226.182	226.830	225.101	0.3	-0.5	-0.8
All items less medical care	227.006	227.518	226.148	0.6	-0.4	-0.6
Commodities less food	148.801	148.666	146.181	-2.9	-1.8	-1.7
Nondurables	220.336	220.085	216.446	-1.6	-1.8	-1.7
Nondurables less food.....	195.416	194.311	187.575	-5.0	-4.0	-3.5
Services less rent of shelter(2).....	331.000	332.903	331.502	2.3	0.2	-0.4
Services less medical care services.....	283.863	284.835	284.076	1.9	0.1	-0.3
Energy	198.499	194.298	181.240	-9.4	-8.7	-6.7
All items less energy	246.743	247.941	247.758	1.8	0.4	-0.1
All items less food and energy	247.043	248.306	248.021	1.8	0.4	-0.1

Footnotes

(1) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

(2) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.

(3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

(6) Indexes on a December 1977=100 base.

Note: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.