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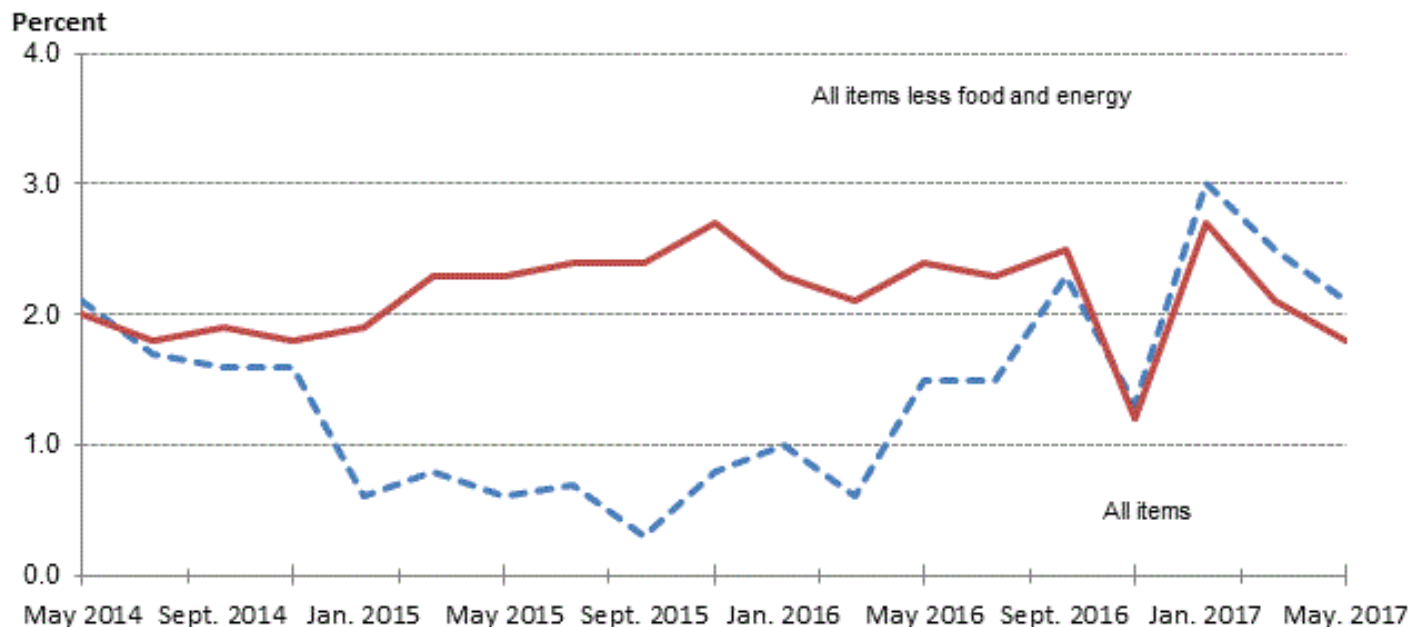
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Consumer Price Index, Boston-Brockton-Nashua — May 2017
Area prices edged up 0.4 percent over two months; up 2.1 percent from a year ago

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Boston-Brockton-Nashua area edged up 0.4 percent in May, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Deborah A. Brown noted that the two-month increase was mainly due to higher prices paid by area consumers for all items less food and energy, up 0.5 percent. Higher food prices up 0.7 percent also contributed to the increase. Energy prices down 0.3 percent, mitigated this increase. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bimonthly changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months the Boston CPI-U rose 2.1 percent. The increase was largely attributable to higher prices within all items less food and energy, up 1.8 percent (See [chart 1](#)). Higher energy prices paid by area consumers, up 7.8 percent also contributed to the increase and to a lesser extent, food prices, up 1.0 percent over the year, contributed also.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Boston-Brockton-Nashua, May 2014 - May 2017



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices edged up 0.7 percent since March mainly due to higher grocery store or food at home prices, up 1.1 percent. Restaurant prices, or food away from home, down 0.1 percent, partially offset the overall increase.

Food prices increased 1.0 percent over the year mainly due to higher restaurant prices, or food away from home, up 1.7 percent. To a lesser extent, grocery store prices edged up 0.5 percent, also contributed to the increase.

Energy

The energy index decreased 0.3 percent over the two months, mainly driven by lower utility piped gas prices down 14.2 percent. Higher prices for gasoline up 4.8 percent almost entirely offset the decrease.

Energy prices were up 7.8 percent from a year ago, largely attributable to higher electricity prices, up 9.7 percent. Higher prices for gasoline, up 4.3 percent, and to a lesser extent, utility (piped) gas up 11.3 percent, also contributed to the overall increase.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy edged up from March (0.5 percent). The increase was mainly attributable to shelter up 1.0 percent. This was driven by higher prices for lodging away from home, and, to a lesser extent higher costs for owners' equivalent rent of residences, up 0.3 percent. Higher prices for new and used motor vehicles and public transportation also contributed to the increase.

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy rose 1.8 percent, with higher shelter costs being the main driver of the increase up 1.9 percent. Higher recreation and other goods and services prices up 6.6 percent and 6.0 percent, respectively, also contributed to the overall increase. Within shelter, higher costs for owners' equivalent rent of residences, up 2.1 percent, led the increase.

CPI-W

In May, the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) was 264.713. The CPI-W was up 0.3 percent over two months and increased 2.2 percent over the year.

The July 2017 Consumer Price Index for Boston-Brockton-Nashua is scheduled to be released on Friday, August 11, 2017, at 8:30 a.m. (ET).

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 89 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 28 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 87 urban areas across the country from about 6,000 housing units and approximately 24,000 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 change 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 <https://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 Boston-Brockton-Nashua, Mass.-N.H.-Maine-Conn. consolidated area covered in this release is comprised of Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, Bristol, Hampden, and Worcester Counties in Massachusetts; Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham, and Strafford Counties in New Hampshire; York County in Maine; and Windham County in Connecticut.






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Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Boston-Brockton-Nashua, Ma.-N.H.-Maine-Conn., (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Mar. 2017	Apr. 2017	May 2017	May 2016	Mar. 2017	Apr. 2017
All items.....		265.070		266.256	2.1	0.4	
All items (1967 = 100).....		770.433		773.880			
Food and beverages.....		258.411		259.428	1.1	0.4	
Food.....		258.746		260.444	1.0	0.7	
Food at home.....		243.793	246.455	246.542	0.5	1.1	0.0
Food away from home.....		284.807		284.485	1.7	-0.1	
Alcoholic beverages.....		259.430		252.275	2.3	-2.8	
Housing.....		268.885		270.157	2.6	0.5	
Shelter.....		316.390	317.610	319.588	1.9	1.0	0.6
Rent of primary residence(1).....		328.992	329.812	329.836	2.6	0.3	0.0
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(1)(2)(3).....		338.114	338.698	339.191	2.1	0.3	0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(1)(2)(3).....		338.114	338.698	339.191	2.1	0.3	0.1
Fuels and utilities.....		272.981		264.662	9.7	-3.0	
Household energy.....		229.481	228.453	221.361	10.3	-3.5	-3.1
Energy services(1).....		244.524	243.129	235.321	10.1	-3.8	-3.2
Electricity(1).....		276.971	277.035	277.650	9.7	0.2	0.2
Utility (piped) gas service(1).....		179.588	175.774	154.001	11.3	-14.2	-12.4
Household furnishings and operations.....		128.342		128.787	-0.3	0.3	
Apparel.....		147.823		146.570	2.2	-0.8	
Transportation.....		184.533		188.169	0.6	2.0	
Private transportation.....		183.721		186.794	0.9	1.7	
Motor fuel.....		194.747	202.829	203.890	4.4	4.7	0.5
Gasoline (all types).....		192.520	200.608	201.682	4.3	4.8	0.5
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....		185.985	194.182	195.299	4.1	5.0	0.6
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....		208.015	213.659	214.388	5.0	3.1	0.3
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....		208.082	213.977	214.517	5.7	3.1	0.3
Medical care.....		637.160		635.502	-0.2	-0.3	
Recreation(6).....		124.970		124.428	6.6	-0.4	
Education and communication(6).....		158.582		158.366	1.6	-0.1	
Other goods and services.....		475.618		474.681	6.0	-0.2	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities.....		189.019		189.644	0.7	0.3	
Commodities less food and beverages.....		152.515		152.954	0.4	0.3	
Nondurables less food and beverages.....		195.942		196.704	1.7	0.4	
Durables.....		110.295		110.462	-1.2	0.2	
Services.....		333.838		335.536	2.8	0.5	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter.....		247.615		248.025	2.2	0.2	
All items less medical care.....		250.795		252.081	2.3	0.5	
Commodities less food.....		156.721		156.936	0.5	0.1	
Nondurables.....		226.251		227.137	1.3	0.4	
Nondurables less food.....		199.497		199.751	1.7	0.1	

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Boston-Brockton-Nashua, Ma.-N.H.-Maine-Conn., (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Mar. 2017	Apr. 2017	May 2017	May 2016	Mar. 2017	Apr. 2017
Services less rent of shelter(2).....		371.673		371.639	3.8	0.0	
Services less medical care services.....		313.143		314.894	3.1	0.6	
Energy		212.731	215.670	212.173	7.8	-0.3	-1.6
All items less energy		273.837		275.211	1.7	0.5	
All items less food and energy		277.261		278.584	1.8	0.5	

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) This index series underwent a change in composition in January 2010. The expenditure class now includes weight from secondary residences, and has been re-titled "Owners' equivalent rent of residences." The item stratum "Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence" excludes secondary residences.

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

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

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

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