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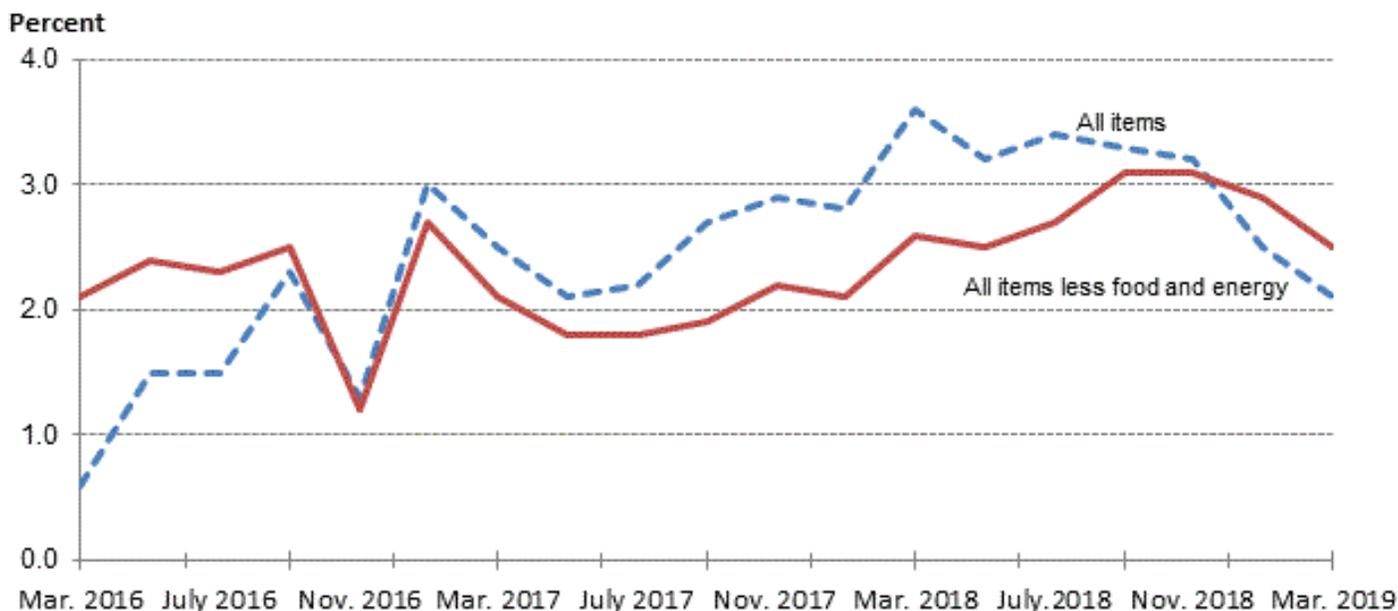
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Consumer Price Index, Boston-Cambridge-Newton — March 2019 **Area prices up 0.5 percent over two months; up 2.1 percent from a year ago**

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Boston-Cambridge-Newton area increased 0.5 percent in March, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Deborah A. Brown noted that this was mainly attributable to higher prices within all items less food and energy, up 0.4 percent and to a lesser extent higher food prices, up 1.1 percent. Higher energy prices, up 0.9 percent also contributed to the 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 2.5 percent. (See [chart 1.](#))

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Boston-Cambridge-Newton, March 2016 - March 2019



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices increased 1.1 percent since January, mainly due to higher food at home prices, up 1.8 percent. Higher food at home prices were mainly driven by higher prices for fruits and vegetables, up 6.6 percent.

Food prices increased 2.6 percent over the year, mainly due to both higher food at home prices, up 2.6 percent, and food away from home prices, up 2.7 percent.

Energy

The energy index increased 0.9 percent over the two months, mainly driven by higher gasoline prices, up 1.9 percent.

Energy prices were down 2.5 percent from a year ago, largely attributable to lower prices in utility piped gas, down 12.4 percent. Lower local gasoline prices, down 2.5 percent, also contributed to the decline.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased from January (0.4 percent) mainly due to higher apparel costs, up 9.5 percent. Higher local costs for owners' equivalent rent of residences (0.2) percent, also contributed to the increase.

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy rose 2.5 percent, with higher shelter costs being the main driver of the increase, up 3.7 percent. Within shelter, higher costs for owners' equivalent rent of residences, up 4.2 percent and to a lesser extent, higher rent of primary residence, up 3.7 percent led the increase. Higher apparel and recreation costs, up 5.7 percent and 2.5 percent respectively, also contributed to the increase.

CPI-W

In March, the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) was 279.451. The CPI-W increased 0.5 percent over two months and increased 2.1 percent over the year.

The May 2019 Consumer Price Index for Boston-Cambridge-Newton is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, June 12, 2019, 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 94 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 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 75 urban areas across the country from about 5,000 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 Boston-Cambridge-Newton, Mass.-N.H. Core Based Statistical Area covered in this release is comprised of Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk Counties in Massachusetts; Rockingham, Strafford Counties in New Hampshire.

Information from this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339.

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

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jan. 2019	Feb. 2019	Mar. 2019	Mar. 2018	Jan. 2019	Feb. 2019
All items.....		278.976		280.393	2.1	0.5	
All items (1967 = 100).....		810.852		814.971			
Food and beverages		267.429		269.784	2.2	0.9	
Food		269.169		272.174	2.6	1.1	
Food at home		252.353	253.592	256.923	2.6	1.8	1.3
Cereal and bakery products		301.429		305.512	2.6	1.4	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		252.469		253.007	-0.2	0.2	
Dairy and related products		286.537		282.610	4.2	-1.4	
Fruits and vegetables		324.455		345.801	3.2	6.6	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)		165.354		167.615	3.0	1.4	
Other food at home		199.768		201.937	3.4	1.1	
Food away from home.....		298.580		298.802	2.7	0.1	
Alcoholic beverages		251.903		246.830	-2.4	-2.0	
Housing		291.405		291.327	2.6	0.0	
Shelter		343.856	342.088	343.857	3.7	0.0	0.5
Rent of primary residence(2).....		358.078	356.377	357.517	3.7	-0.2	0.3
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2)(3)(4)		365.737	365.377	366.543	4.2	0.2	0.3
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2)(3)(4).....		365.737	365.377	366.543	4.2	0.2	0.3
Fuels and utilities.....		309.637		310.649	-1.8	0.3	
Household energy		263.003	261.872	263.764	-2.5	0.3	0.7
Energy services(2)		278.714	276.552	277.637	-3.1	-0.4	0.4
Electricity(2).....		314.163	313.952	315.864	2.8	0.5	0.6
Utility (piped) gas service(2).....		208.960	204.696	204.689	-12.4	-2.0	0.0
Household furnishings and operations.....		126.587		125.649	-2.5	-0.7	
Apparel.....		135.026		147.799	5.7	9.5	
Transportation		192.302		193.368	0.5	0.6	
Private transportation		193.538		194.633	0.4	0.6	
New and used motor vehicles(5).....		106.942		106.782	1.7	-0.1	
New Vehicles(1)		216.023		213.695	0.4	-1.1	
Used cars and trucks(1)		317.799		320.169	0.2	0.7	
Motor fuel		214.604	209.853	218.685	-2.5	1.9	4.2
Gasoline (all types).....		212.094	207.394	216.142	-2.5	1.9	4.2
Gasoline, unleaded regular(6).....		205.441	200.617	209.413	-2.7	1.9	4.4
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(6)(7).....		227.478	223.713	229.853	-2.1	1.0	2.7
Gasoline, unleaded premium(6).....		224.673	221.871	228.895	-1.1	1.9	3.2
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....							
Medical care		655.374		659.055	1.5	0.6	
Recreation(5).....		124.490		124.667	2.5	0.1	
Education and communication(5).....		164.719		165.389	0.1	0.4	
Tuition, other fees, and child care(1).....		1,348.743		1,348.743	2.4	0.0	
Other goods and services		498.150		500.318	3.4	0.4	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		190.988		193.728	0.4	1.4	
Commodities less food and beverages		151.331		154.171	-1.0	1.9	

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

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

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jan. 2019	Feb. 2019	Mar. 2019	Mar. 2018	Jan. 2019	Feb. 2019
Nondurables less food and beverages...		196.487		203.181	0.7	3.4	
Durables		108.044		107.571	-3.5	-0.4	
Services.....		358.347		358.681	2.9	0.1	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter.....		255.724		257.866	1.1	0.8	
All items less medical care		264.422		265.754	2.2	0.5	
Commodities less food		155.359		157.932	-1.1	1.7	
Nondurables		231.024		235.565	1.5	2.0	
Nondurables less food.....		199.578		205.393	0.4	2.9	
Services less rent of shelter(3).....		392.542		393.382	1.9	0.2	
Services less medical care services.....		337.062		337.226	3.0	0.0	
Energy		240.079	237.384	242.276	-2.5	0.9	2.1
All items less energy		286.599		287.967	2.5	0.5	
All items less food and energy		290.462		291.556	2.5	0.4	

Footnotes

(1) Indexes on a January 1978=100 base.

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

(3) Indexes on a November 1982=100 base.

(4) 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.

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

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

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

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