NEWS RELEASE
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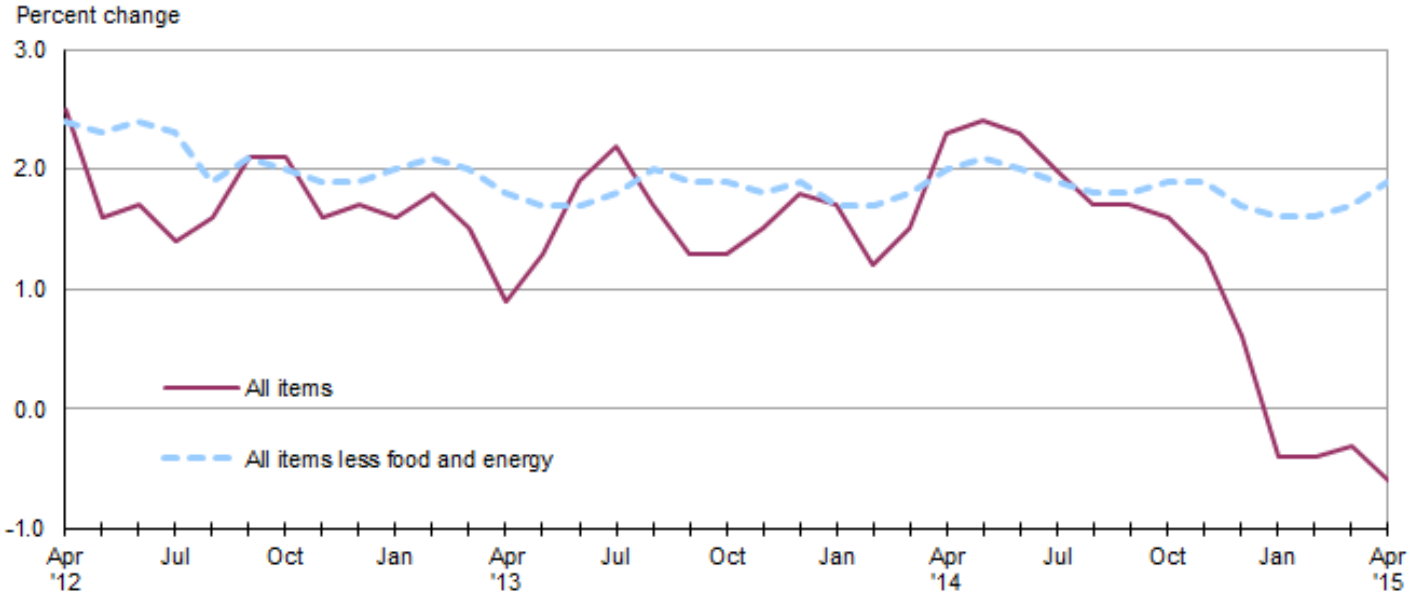
Consumer Price Index, South Region – April 2015

Prices up 0.3 percent over the month; down 0.6 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the South increased 0.3 percent in April, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. The all items less food and energy index also advanced 0.3 percent in April, as price increases were noted for several indexes primarily shelter, apparel, and new and used motor vehicles. The energy index rose 0.4 percent, while the food index edged down 0.2 percent over the month. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the all items CPI-U declined 0.6 percent. The index for all items less food and energy advanced 1.9 percent over the year as a result of increases in several indexes. (See chart 1.)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, South region, April 2012–April 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

The food index edged down 0.2 percent in April, as prices for food at home declined 0.4 percent. Prices for food away from home were up 0.2 percent over the month.

Since April 2014, the food index advanced 1.7 percent, reflecting price increases for both food away from home and food at home, up 3.0 and 0.8 percent, respectively.

Energy

The energy index rose 0.4 percent over the month. A 1.1-percent increase in April for motor fuel prices was largely offset by price declines for electricity (-0.3 percent) and utility (piped) gas service (-0.8 percent).

Over the year, energy prices fell 21.1 percent, reflecting a 33.9-percent drop in motor fuel prices. Utility (piped) gas service prices declined 13.0 percent since April 2014 and electricity prices decreased 0.9 percent.

All items less food and energy

The all items less food and energy index increased 0.3 percent in April, led by a 0.2-percent increase in prices for shelter, a seasonal increase in apparel prices (1.7 percent), and a 0.9-percent rise in prices for new and used motor vehicles.

Since April 2014, the all items less food and energy index advanced 1.9 percent, led by price increases in several categories, most notably shelter (3.1 percent) and medical care (1.8 percent).

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

Month	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month
January	0.5	1.7	0.5	3.2	0.4	1.6	0.3	1.7	-0.7	-0.4
February	0.5	2.2	0.6	3.3	0.9	1.8	0.4	1.2	0.5	-0.3
March	1.2	2.8	0.7	2.8	0.3	1.5	0.6	1.5	0.6	-0.3
April	0.7	3.4	0.4	2.5	-0.2	0.9	0.5	2.3	0.3	-0.6
May	0.5	4.0	-0.4	1.6	0.0	1.3	0.2	2.4		
June	-0.2	3.8	-0.2	1.7	0.4	1.9	0.2	2.3		
July	0.2	4.1	-0.2	1.4	0.2	2.2	-0.1	2.0		
August	0.4	4.3	0.6	1.6	0.1	1.7	-0.2	1.7		
September	0.0	4.1	0.5	2.1	0.0	1.3	0.1	1.7		
October	-0.2	3.7	-0.2	2.1	-0.2	1.3	-0.3	1.6		
November	0.0	3.8	-0.5	1.6	-0.3	1.5	-0.6	1.3		
December	-0.2	3.3	-0.1	1.7	0.1	1.8	-0.6	0.6		

The Consumer Price Index for May 2015 is scheduled to be released on Thursday, June 18, 2015 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 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/homch17_a.htm.

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 **South region** is comprised of Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods South (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Feb. 2015	Mar. 2015	Apr. 2015	Apr. 2014	Feb. 2015	Mar. 2015
Expenditure category						
All Items	227.944	229.337	229.957	-0.6	0.9	0.3
All items (December 1977=100)	369.757	372.017	373.023	-	-	-
Food and beverages	245.444	245.020	244.636	1.7	-0.3	-0.2
Food	246.924	246.392	245.962	1.7	-0.4	-0.2
Food at home	242.165	240.999	239.926	0.8	-0.9	-0.4
Food away from home	256.901	257.298	257.813	3.0	0.4	0.2
Alcoholic beverages	224.177	225.250	225.502	1.3	0.6	0.1
Housing	219.385	219.868	220.275	2.1	0.4	0.2
Shelter	247.887	248.935	249.515	3.1	0.7	0.2
Rent of primary residence [1]	254.203	255.041	255.547	3.7	0.5	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of residences [1] [2]	250.331	251.109	251.632	2.9	0.5	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence [1] [2]	250.323	251.099	251.622	2.9	0.5	0.2
Fuels and utilities	229.614	227.759	227.105	-1.3	-1.1	-0.3
Household energy	188.775	186.675	185.968	-2.9	-1.5	-0.4
Energy services [1]	188.804	186.706	186.013	-2.6	-1.5	-0.4
Electricity [1]	187.678	186.078	185.509	-0.9	-1.2	-0.3
Utility (piped) gas service [1]	180.506	175.343	173.902	-13.0	-3.7	-0.8
Household furnishings and operations	122.089	122.225	122.784	-0.3	0.6	0.5
Apparel	130.884	137.271	139.604	0.3	6.7	1.7
Transportation	193.490	197.631	199.151	-10.8	2.9	0.8
Private transportation	191.291	195.573	197.101	-11.1	3.0	0.8
New and used motor vehicles [3]	102.428	103.287	104.254	0.5	1.8	0.9
New vehicles	153.333	153.378	154.314	0.7	0.6	0.6
New cars and trucks [3] [4]	104.378	104.409	105.042	0.7	0.6	0.6
New cars [4]	154.467	154.853	155.468	0.1	0.6	0.4
Used cars and trucks	143.214	146.965	149.632	0.3	4.5	1.8
Motor fuel	192.244	206.124	208.485	-33.9	8.4	1.1
Gasoline (all types)	190.667	204.709	207.214	-34.0	8.7	1.2
Unleaded regular [4]	187.033	201.386	203.761	-34.7	8.9	1.2
Unleaded midgrade [4] [5]	206.808	219.436	222.556	-32.1	7.6	1.4
Unleaded premium [4]	203.351	215.445	218.536	-30.4	7.5	1.4
Medical care	420.167	421.612	422.149	1.8	0.5	0.1
Medical care commodities	336.832	337.267	338.125	2.9	0.4	0.3
Medical care services	448.262	450.117	450.505	1.5	0.5	0.1
Professional services	352.968	354.899	355.417	1.2	0.7	0.1
Recreation [3]	116.318	116.300	116.731	0.2	0.4	0.4
Education and communication [3]	134.623	134.890	135.079	0.8	0.3	0.1
Other goods and services	404.270	404.454	403.625	1.5	-0.2	-0.2
Commodity and service group						
All Items	227.944	229.337	229.957	-0.6	0.9	0.3
Commodities	180.661	182.729	183.405	-4.7	1.5	0.4
Commodities less food and beverages	149.876	152.884	153.965	-8.4	2.7	0.7
Nondurables less food and beverages	189.474	195.422	196.880	-13.0	3.9	0.7
Nondurables less food, beverages, and apparel	226.010	231.814	232.803	-16.7	3.0	0.4
Durables	111.794	112.253	112.983	-0.8	1.1	0.7
Services	275.750	276.505	277.077	2.2	0.5	0.2
Rent of shelter [2]	254.295	255.387	255.972	3.0	0.7	0.2
Transportation services	307.498	308.514	309.595	2.2	0.7	0.4

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 South (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Feb. 2015	Mar. 2015	Apr. 2015	Apr. 2014	Feb. 2015	Mar. 2015
Other services	328.526	329.586	330.713	1.9	0.7	0.3
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	217.299	218.675	219.292	-0.8	0.9	0.3
All items less food	224.799	226.485	227.264	-1.0	1.1	0.3
All items less shelter	221.318	222.864	223.505	-2.2	1.0	0.3
Commodities less food	152.187	155.151	156.212	-8.0	2.6	0.7
Nondurables	216.122	219.127	219.734	-5.9	1.7	0.3
Nondurables less food	191.206	196.879	198.270	-12.2	3.7	0.7
Nondurables less food and apparel	224.730	230.106	231.027	-15.5	2.8	0.4
Services less rent of shelter [(2)]	311.368	311.717	312.288	1.4	0.3	0.2
Services less medical care services	260.056	260.730	261.302	2.3	0.5	0.2
Energy	186.545	191.746	192.447	-21.1	3.2	0.4
All items less energy	233.304	234.275	234.887	1.8	0.7	0.3
All items less food and energy	231.318	232.551	233.346	1.9	0.9	0.3
Commodities less food and energy commodities	147.798	149.226	150.118	-0.1	1.6	0.6
Energy commodities	196.186	209.976	212.298	-33.6	8.2	1.1
Services less energy services	284.824	285.900	286.614	2.6	0.6	0.2

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) Index is 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.
- Data not available.
Regions defined as the four Census regions. South includes Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.
NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date. Data not seasonally adjusted.