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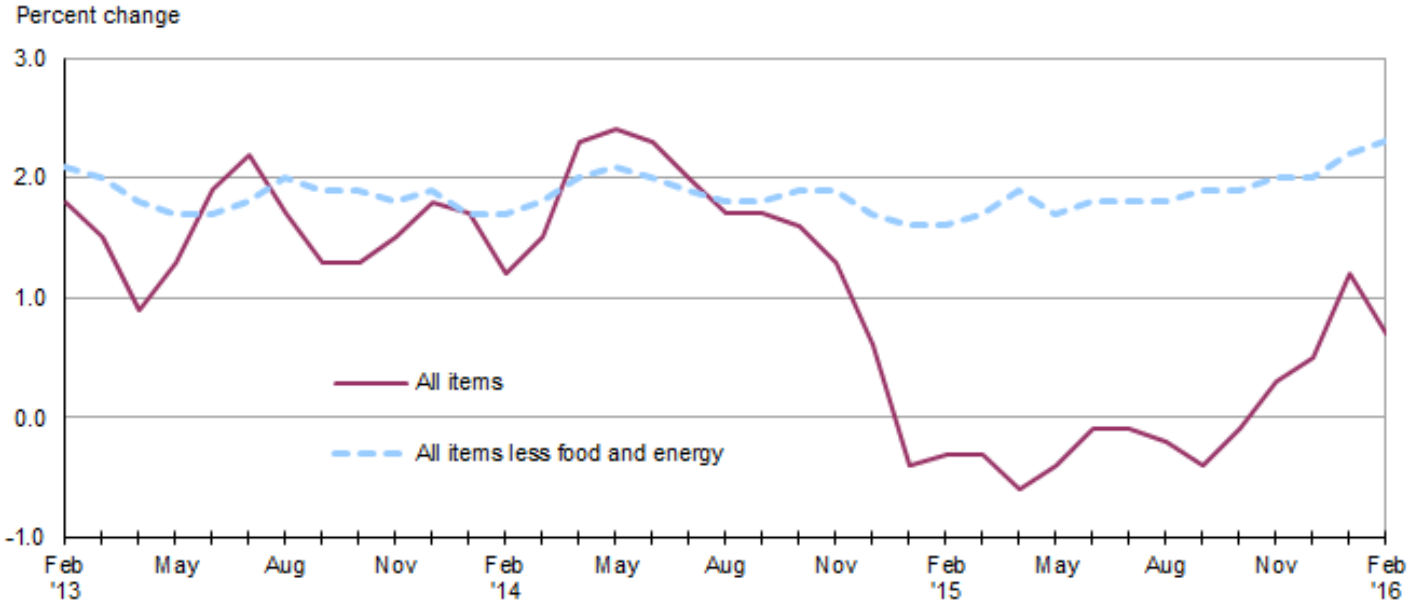
Consumer Price Index, South Region – February 2016

Prices up 0.1 percent over the month and 0.7 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the South inched up 0.1 percent in February, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. The all items less food and energy index rose 0.4 percent and the food index edged up 0.2 percent over the month. The energy index declined 3.7 percent in February. (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 rose 0.7 percent. The all items less food and energy index advanced 2.3 percent over the year reflecting price increases for shelter, medical care, and education and communication. (See chart 1.)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, South region, February 2013–February 2016



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

The food index edged up 0.2 percent in February. Prices for food at home rose 0.3 percent over the month, and those for food away from home inched up 0.1 percent.

Since February 2015, the food index advanced 0.5 percent, reflecting higher prices for food away from home, up 2.3 percent. The food at home index declined 0.8 percent over the year.

Energy

The energy index decreased 3.7 percent in February, led by a 8.2-percent decline in motor fuel prices. The electricity and utility (piped) gas service indexes also decreased over the month, down 0.3 and 1.5 percent, respectively.

Over the year, energy prices declined 13.4 percent, reflecting a 23.6-percent drop in motor fuel prices. Prices for electricity (-3.8 percent) and utility (piped) gas service (-8.9 percent) also declined over the year.

All items less food and energy

The all items less food and energy index rose 0.4 percent in February reflecting increases in several indexes, including a seasonal increase in the apparel index (3.5 percent). Other categories with over-the-month advances included medical care (0.8 percent), recreation (0.7 percent), and shelter (0.1 percent).

Since February 2015, the all items less food and energy index advanced 2.3 percent, as several indexes saw increases, most notably shelter (2.8 percent). Medical care, fueled by an increase in medical care services (3.7 percent), rose 3.7 percent over the year. The education and communication index increased 1.8 percent from February 2015 to February 2016.

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

Month	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016	
	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month
January	0.5	3.2	0.4	1.6	0.3	1.7	-0.7	-0.4	0.0	1.2
February	0.6	3.3	0.9	1.8	0.4	1.2	0.5	-0.3	0.1	0.7
March	0.7	2.8	0.3	1.5	0.6	1.5	0.6	-0.3		
April	0.4	2.5	-0.2	0.9	0.5	2.3	0.3	-0.6		
May	-0.4	1.6	0.0	1.3	0.2	2.4	0.4	-0.4		
June	-0.2	1.7	0.4	1.9	0.2	2.3	0.5	-0.1		
July	-0.2	1.4	0.2	2.2	-0.1	2.0	-0.1	-0.1		
August	0.6	1.6	0.1	1.7	-0.2	1.7	-0.2	-0.2		
September	0.5	2.1	0.0	1.3	0.1	1.7	-0.2	-0.4		
October	-0.2	2.1	-0.2	1.3	-0.3	1.6	0.0	-0.1		
November	-0.5	1.6	-0.3	1.5	-0.6	1.3	-0.2	0.3		
December	-0.1	1.7	0.1	1.8	-0.6	0.6	-0.4	0.5		

The Consumer Price Index for March 2016 is scheduled to be released on Thursday, April 14, 2016.

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 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 **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-		
	Dec. 2015	Jan. 2016	Feb. 2016	Feb. 2015	Dec. 2015	Jan. 2016
Expenditure category						
All Items	229.581	229.469	229.646	0.7	0.0	0.1
All items (December 1977=100)	372.412	372.230	372.517	-	-	-
Food and beverages	246.125	246.208	246.728	0.5	0.2	0.2
Food	247.543	247.542	248.101	0.5	0.2	0.2
Food at home	239.762	239.421	240.210	-0.8	0.2	0.3
Food away from home	261.992	262.498	262.719	2.3	0.3	0.1
Alcoholic beverages	225.705	227.087	227.009	1.3	0.6	0.0
Housing	222.710	223.068	223.206	1.7	0.2	0.1
Shelter	253.815	254.654	254.928	2.8	0.4	0.1
Rent of primary residence [1]	261.682	262.351	262.581	3.3	0.3	0.1
Owners' equiv. rent of residences [1] [2]	256.398	256.983	257.037	2.7	0.2	0.0
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence [1] [2]	256.387	256.973	257.028	2.7	0.3	0.0
Fuels and utilities	225.482	223.934	223.084	-2.8	-1.1	-0.4
Household energy	182.721	180.941	180.066	-4.6	-1.5	-0.5
Energy services [1]	183.050	181.291	180.436	-4.4	-1.4	-0.5
Electricity [1]	182.834	181.197	180.587	-3.8	-1.2	-0.3
Utility (piped) gas service [1]	169.306	166.878	164.448	-8.9	-2.9	-1.5
Household furnishings and operations	121.533	121.496	121.849	-0.2	0.3	0.3
Apparel	130.231	127.750	132.186	1.0	1.5	3.5
Transportation	190.467	188.529	186.352	-3.7	-2.2	-1.2
Private transportation	188.175	186.199	183.783	-3.9	-2.3	-1.3
New and used motor vehicles [3]	102.262	102.782	103.611	1.2	1.3	0.8
New vehicles	153.011	153.743	154.845	1.0	1.2	0.7
New cars and trucks [3] [4]	104.155	104.659	105.455	1.0	1.2	0.8
New cars [4]	153.465	154.322	155.362	0.6	1.2	0.7
Used cars and trucks	142.825	143.234	144.670	1.0	1.3	1.0
Motor fuel	170.941	160.040	146.874	-23.6	-14.1	-8.2
Gasoline (all types)	169.930	159.143	145.991	-23.4	-14.1	-8.3
Unleaded regular [4]	165.316	154.454	141.180	-24.5	-14.6	-8.6
Unleaded midgrade [4] [5]	189.665	178.593	166.183	-19.6	-12.4	-6.9
Unleaded premium [4]	189.917	180.635	169.145	-16.8	-10.9	-6.4
Medical care	428.859	432.458	435.890	3.7	1.6	0.8
Medical care commodities	344.468	345.566	349.499	3.8	1.5	1.1
Medical care services	457.246	461.806	464.990	3.7	1.7	0.7
Professional services	358.852	358.699	358.899	1.7	0.0	0.1
Recreation [3]	115.861	116.211	116.974	0.6	1.0	0.7
Education and communication [3]	137.064	137.146	137.103	1.8	0.0	0.0
Other goods and services	410.087	411.232	410.899	1.6	0.2	-0.1
Commodity and service group						
All Items	229.581	229.469	229.646	0.7	0.0	0.1
Commodities	178.113	177.079	176.861	-2.1	-0.7	-0.1
Commodities less food and beverages	146.106	144.653	144.146	-3.8	-1.3	-0.4
Nondurables less food and beverages	183.278	179.681	177.682	-6.2	-3.1	-1.1
Nondurables less food, beverages, and apparel	216.563	212.273	206.749	-8.5	-4.5	-2.6
Durables	110.173	110.366	110.975	-0.7	0.7	0.6
Services	281.443	282.219	282.779	2.5	0.5	0.2
Rent of shelter [2]	260.430	261.308	261.600	2.9	0.4	0.1
Transportation services	318.421	319.075	319.862	4.0	0.5	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 South (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Dec. 2015	Jan. 2016	Feb. 2016	Feb. 2015	Dec. 2015	Jan. 2016
Other services	335.662	336.477	337.634	2.8	0.6	0.3
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	218.616	218.332	218.356	0.5	-0.1	0.0
All items less food	226.589	226.460	226.578	0.8	0.0	0.1
All items less shelter	221.191	220.685	220.823	-0.2	-0.2	0.1
Commodities less food	148.549	147.158	146.660	-3.6	-1.3	-0.3
Nondurables	213.102	211.267	210.472	-2.6	-1.2	-0.4
Nondurables less food	185.442	182.112	180.216	-5.7	-2.8	-1.0
Nondurables less food and apparel	216.256	212.443	207.383	-7.7	-4.1	-2.4
Services less rent of shelter [2]	316.668	317.339	318.256	2.2	0.5	0.3
Services less medical care services	265.440	265.952	266.328	2.4	0.3	0.1
Energy	173.686	167.911	161.619	-13.4	-6.9	-3.7
All items less energy	236.573	237.084	237.975	2.0	0.6	0.4
All items less food and energy	235.053	235.655	236.605	2.3	0.7	0.4
Commodities less food and energy commodities	146.744	146.663	147.921	0.1	0.8	0.9
Energy commodities	174.457	163.543	150.400	-23.3	-13.8	-8.0
Services less energy services	291.800	292.863	293.582	3.1	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.