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Consumer Price Index, Phoenix area – February 2020

Area prices were up 0.6 percent over the past two months, up 4.4 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Phoenix area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), advanced 0.6 percent for the two months ending in February 2020, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that the February increase was influenced by higher prices for apparel and electricity. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bi-monthly changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U increased 4.4 percent. The index for all items less food and energy advanced 4.3 percent over the year. Energy prices increased 8.8 percent, largely the result of an increase in the price of gasoline. Food prices rose 2.5 percent. (See [table 1.](#))

Food

Food prices increased 0.2 percent for the two months ending in February. (See [table 1.](#)) Prices for food at home advanced 0.7 percent, but prices for food away from home declined 0.3 percent for the same period.

Over the year, food prices rose 2.5 percent. Prices for food away from home advanced 2.7 percent since a year ago, and prices for food at home increased 2.5 percent.

Energy

The energy index rose 1.4 percent for the two months ending in February. The increase was mainly due to higher prices for electricity (6.4 percent). Prices for natural gas service increased 0.2 percent, but prices for gasoline decreased 1.9 percent for the same period.

Energy prices increased 8.8 percent over the year, largely due to higher prices for gasoline (18.2 percent). Prices paid for natural gas service decreased 6.1 percent and prices for electricity declined 3.2 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased 0.6 percent in the latest two-month period. Higher prices for apparel (10.8 percent) and medical care (1.3 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for recreation (-0.9 percent) and other goods and services (-0.2 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy advanced 4.3 percent. Components contributing to the increase included medical care (11.1 percent) and shelter (5.5 percent). Partly offsetting the increases was a price decrease in apparel (-0.7 percent).

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

Consumer Price Index Geographic Revision for 2018

In January 2018, BLS introduced a new geographic area sample for the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This index changed to a bimonthly publication schedule beginning in February, 2018. Additional information on the geographic revision is available at: www.bls.gov/cpi/additional-resources/geographic-revision-2018.htm.

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 Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale metropolitan area covered in this release consists of Maricopa and Pinal Counties in the State of Arizona.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale (December 2001=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Dec. 2019	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020	Feb. 2019	Dec. 2019	Jan. 2020
Expenditure category						
All items	144.910	-	145.746	4.4	0.6	-
Food and beverages	150.694	-	150.831	2.2	0.1	-
Food	151.898	-	152.172	2.5	0.2	-
Food at home	145.678	146.672	146.696	2.5	0.7	0.0
Cereals and bakery products	181.429	-	189.991	6.6	4.7	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....	179.956	-	180.569	1.2	0.3	-
Dairy and related products	119.319	-	115.684	10.9	-3.0	-
Fruits and vegetables	128.001	-	128.623	-4.1	0.5	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials.....	107.963	-	109.040	3.2	1.0	-
Other food at home	143.045	-	143.844	2.9	0.6	-
Food away from home.....	161.633	-	161.092	2.7	-0.3	-
Alcoholic beverages	140.273	-	138.534	-1.1	-1.2	-
Housing	150.228	-	151.030	4.5	0.5	-
Shelter	158.740	158.515	158.989	5.5	0.2	0.3
Rent of primary residence	168.610	168.898	168.952	7.1	0.2	0.0
Owners' equiv. rent of residences	157.337	157.317	157.374	5.0	0.0	0.0
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence	157.337	157.317	157.374	5.0	0.0	0.0
Fuels and utilities.....	147.383	-	153.161	-2.3	3.9	-
Household energy	142.012	150.650	150.162	-3.4	5.7	-0.3
Energy services.....	141.646	150.288	149.829	-3.4	5.8	-0.3
Electricity	150.354	160.514	159.930	-3.2	6.4	-0.4
Utility (piped) gas service	97.272	97.247	97.514	-6.1	0.2	0.3
Household furnishings and operations.....	100.470	-	100.854	2.1	0.4	-
Apparel	124.325	-	137.738	-0.7	10.8	-
Transportation	131.396	-	130.932	6.3	-0.4	-
Private transportation	132.857	-	133.305	6.5	0.3	-
New and used motor vehicles	93.747	-	94.088	2.0	0.4	-
New vehicles	96.202	-	97.070	4.6	0.9	-
Used cars and trucks.....	83.894	-	84.526	-0.9	0.8	-
Motor fuel	248.899	246.152	244.273	17.9	-1.9	-0.8
Gasoline (all types).....	249.343	246.558	244.723	18.2	-1.9	-0.7
Gasoline, unleaded regular(1).....	250.250	247.376	245.490	18.5	-1.9	-0.8
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(1).....	260.010	257.176	254.526	16.2	-2.1	-1.0
Gasoline, unleaded premium(1).....	248.521	246.183	244.744	16.5	-1.5	-0.6
Motor vehicle insurance	168.981	-	-	-	-	-
Medical care	193.813	-	196.321	11.1	1.3	-
Recreation	119.850	-	118.828	1.3	-0.9	-
Education and communication	116.267	-	116.890	0.4	0.5	-
Tuition, other school fees, and child care.....	200.384	-	-	-	-	-
Other goods and services	150.456	-	150.170	3.9	-0.2	-
Commodity and service group						
All items	144.910	-	145.746	4.4	0.6	-
Commodities	124.789	-	125.908	4.8	0.9	-
Commodities less food & beverages.....	111.511	-	113.008	6.4	1.3	-
Nondurables less food & beverages	150.403	-	152.702	9.9	1.5	-
Durables	78.945	-	79.835	1.7	1.1	-
Services.....	158.777	-	159.391	4.1	0.4	-
Special aggregate indexes						

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 Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale (December 2001=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Dec. 2019	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020	Feb. 2019	Dec. 2019	Jan. 2020
All items less medical care	141.965	-	142.672	3.8	0.5	-
All items less shelter.....	137.650	-	138.743	3.6	0.8	-
Commodities less food	112.605	-	114.018	6.0	1.3	-
Nondurables	150.834	-	152.037	5.9	0.8	-
Nondurables less food.....	149.534	-	151.566	9.0	1.4	-
Services less rent of shelter	158.169	-	159.205	2.3	0.7	-
Services less medical care services.....	155.406	-	155.868	3.9	0.3	-
Energy	192.132	195.902	194.789	8.8	1.4	-0.6
All items less energy	142.172	-	142.913	4.0	0.5	-
All items less food and energy	140.603	-	141.409	4.3	0.6	-

Footnotes

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

- Data not available

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