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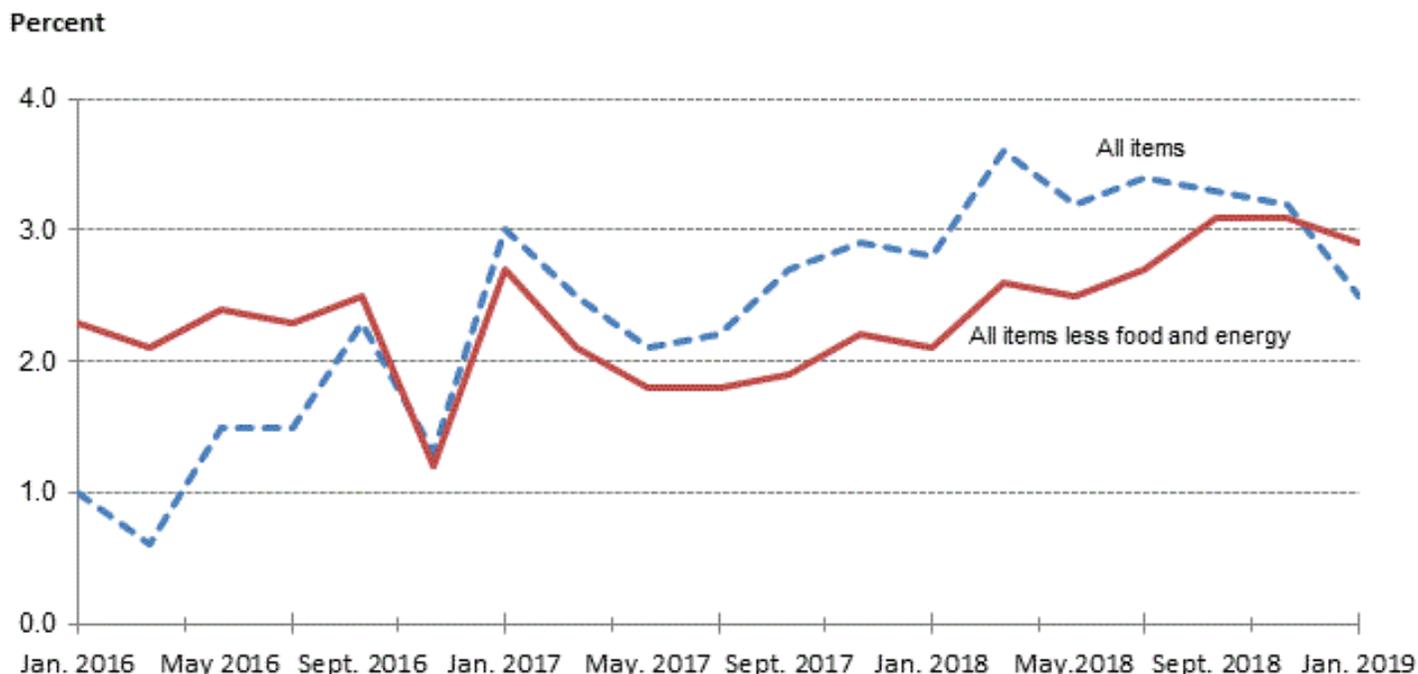
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Consumer Price Index, Boston-Cambridge-Newton — January 2019
Area prices up 0.5 percent over two months; up 2.5 percent from a year ago

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Boston-Cambridge-Newton area increased 0.5 percent in January, 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 0.8 percent and to a lesser extent higher food prices, up 1.0 percent. Lower energy prices, down 3.7 percent partially offset 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 2.5 percent. The increase was largely attributable to higher prices within all items less food and energy up 2.9 percent.(See [chart 1.](#))

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



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices edged up 1.0 percent since November, mainly due to higher food at home prices, up 1.1 percent. Restaurant prices, up 1.0 percent also contributed to the increase. Higher food at home prices were mainly driven by higher prices for fruits and vegetables, up 3.2 percent.

Food prices increased 1.9 percent over the year, mainly due to both higher food at home prices, up 1.6 percent, and food away from home prices, up 2.4 percent.

Energy

The energy index decreased 3.7 percent over the two months, mainly driven by lower gasoline prices, down 11.2 percent. Higher electricity prices, and utility (piped) gas prices, up 3.4 percent and 2.6 percent respectively, partially moderated the decrease.

Energy prices were down 0.9 percent from a year ago, largely attributable to gasoline prices, down 2.8 percent.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased from November (0.8 percent) mainly due to higher shelter costs. Within shelter, higher prices in lodging away from home, mainly drove the increase. Owners' equivalent rent of residences, up 0.6 percent also contributed to the increase.

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy rose 2.9 percent, with higher shelter costs being the main driver of the increase, up 4.7 percent. Within shelter, higher costs for owners' equivalent rent of residences, up 4.3 percent and to a lesser extent, higher rent of primary residence, up 4.4 percent led the increase.

CPI-W

In January, the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) was 277.969. The CPI-W increased 0.2 percent over two months and increased 2.3 percent over the year.

The March 2019 Consumer Price Index for Boston-Cambridge-Newton is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, April 10, 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	Nov. 2018	Dec. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2018	Nov. 2018	Dec. 2018
All items.....		277.632		278.976	2.5	0.5	
All items (1967 = 100).....		806.946		810.852			
Food and beverages		264.467		267.429	1.5	1.1	
Food		266.382		269.169	1.9	1.0	
Food at home		249.715	252.155	252.353	1.6	1.1	0.1
Cereal and bakery products		292.317		301.429	2.4	3.1	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		255.373		252.469	1.6	-1.1	
Dairy and related products		287.058		286.537	8.0	-0.2	
Fruits and vegetables		314.498		324.455	-1.2	3.2	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)		163.407		165.354	1.4	1.2	
Other food at home		199.126		199.768	0.8	0.3	
Food away from home.....		295.534		298.580	2.4	1.0	
Alcoholic beverages		246.882		251.903	-3.4	2.0	
Housing		287.035		291.405	3.7	1.5	
Shelter		338.854	341.240	343.856	4.7	1.5	0.8
Rent of primary residence(2).....		355.082	357.167	358.078	4.4	0.8	0.3
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2)(3)(4)		363.452	365.338	365.737	4.3	0.6	0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2)(3)(4).....		363.452	365.338	365.737	4.3	0.6	0.1
Fuels and utilities.....		305.274		309.637	0.8	1.4	
Household energy		258.417	258.098	263.003	0.4	1.8	1.9
Energy services(2)		270.334	272.870	278.714	2.1	3.1	2.1
Electricity(2).....		303.965	303.965	314.163	0.1	3.4	3.4
Utility (piped) gas service(2).....		203.570	208.866	208.960	5.8	2.6	0.0
Household furnishings and operations.....		123.966		126.587	-1.8	2.1	
Apparel.....		141.282		135.026	0.9	-4.4	
Transportation		196.925		192.302	0.9	-2.3	
Private transportation		197.966		193.538	0.8	-2.2	
New and used motor vehicles(5).....		104.487		106.942	3.0	2.3	
New Vehicles(1)		207.482		216.023	0.4	4.1	
Used cars and trucks(1)		315.519		317.799	2.3	0.7	
Motor fuel		241.684	229.707	214.604	-2.8	-11.2	-6.6
Gasoline (all types).....		238.902	227.045	212.094	-2.8	-11.2	-6.6
Gasoline, unleaded regular(6).....		232.165	220.334	205.441	-2.9	-11.5	-6.8
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(6)(7).....		252.895	241.158	227.478	-1.3	-10.1	-5.7
Gasoline, unleaded premium(6).....		247.102	237.355	224.673	-2.3	-9.1	-5.3
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....							
Medical care		656.108		655.374	1.2	-0.1	
Recreation(5).....		123.936		124.490	2.8	0.4	
Education and communication(5).....		166.050		164.719	0.5	-0.8	
Tuition, other fees, and child care(1).....		1,348.743		1,348.743	2.9	0.0	
Other goods and services		489.490		498.150	2.6	1.8	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		192.091		190.988	-0.7	-0.6	
Commodities less food and beverages		154.244		151.331	-2.3	-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	Nov. 2018	Dec. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2018	Nov. 2018	Dec. 2018
Nondurables less food and beverages...		204.755		196.487	-1.9	-4.0	
Durables		106.392		108.044	-2.9	1.6	
Services.....		354.920		358.347	4.0	1.0	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter.....		256.108		255.724	1.1	-0.1	
All items less medical care		263.032		264.422	2.6	0.5	
Commodities less food		158.004		155.359	-2.4	-1.7	
Nondurables		233.740		231.024	0.0	-1.2	
Nondurables less food.....		206.851		199.578	-2.1	-3.5	
Services less rent of shelter(3).....		391.396		392.542	3.0	0.3	
Services less medical care services.....		333.589		337.062	4.1	1.0	
Energy		249.278	243.899	240.079	-0.9	-3.7	-1.6
All items less energy		284.295		286.599	2.7	0.8	
All items less food and energy		288.233		290.462	2.9	0.8	

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.