



For Release: Wednesday, March 15, 2017

17-344-PHI

MID-ATLANTIC INFORMATION OFFICE: Philadelphia, Pa.

Technical information: (215) 597-3282 BLSInfoPhiladelphia@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic

Media contact: (215) 861-5600 BLSMediaPhiladelphia@bls.gov

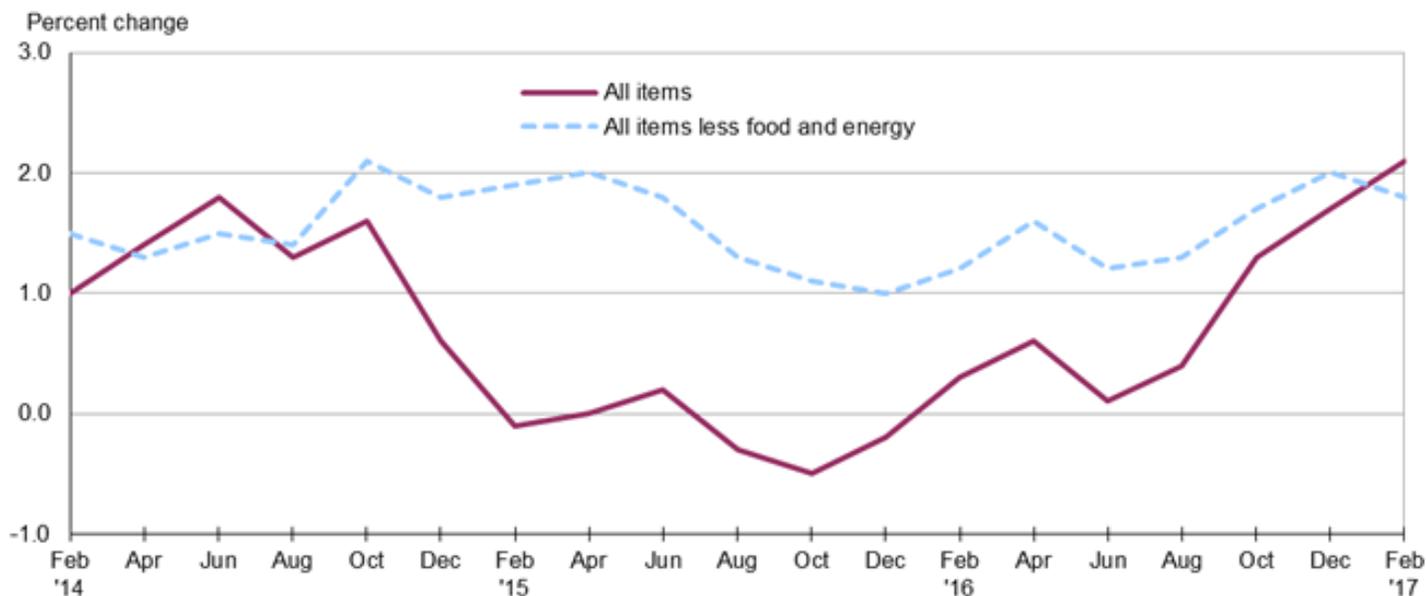
Consumer Price Index, Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City – February 2017

Area prices up 0.7 percent since December and 2.1 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City rose 0.7 percent over the last two months, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted that the recent advance was led by an increase in the all items less food and energy index (0.6 percent). The energy index and food index also increased, up 1.5 percent and 0.7 percent, respectively. (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 CPI-U increased 2.1 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A.](#)) The advance was due mostly to a 1.8-percent increase in the all items less food and energy index. The energy index rose 12.0 percent, while the food index declined 0.7 percent over the year. (See [table 1.](#))

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Philadelphia, February 2014–February 2017



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

After recording a 0.8-percent decline from October to December, the food index increased 0.7 percent since December. Prices were higher for both food at home (0.9 percent) and food away from home (0.3 percent) over the last two months. Within the food at home component, higher prices for various items including carbonated drinks and uncooked beef roasts were moderated by lower prices for chicken and uncooked ground beef, among others.

The food index decreased 0.7 percent over the year. Prices for food at home declined 2.2 percent, while those for food away from home increased 1.7 percent since last February.

Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, advanced 1.5 percent since December. This was due largely to higher prices for gasoline, up 2.9 percent over the last two months. Prices for electricity also increased since December, up 0.4 percent, while those for utility (piped) gas service declined, down 0.7 percent.

Over the year, the energy index rose 12.0 percent, led by a 34.1-percent advance in gasoline prices, the largest over-the-year increase for this index since September 2011. Prices were also higher for utility (piped) gas service (5.3 percent), while those for electricity declined 4.9 percent over the year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased 0.6 percent from December to February. Higher prices for medical care (1.5 percent) and apparel (3.7 percent) were the main contributors to the two-month advance. Lower prices for education and communication (-0.4 percent) moderated the decrease in the all items less food and energy index since December.

Since February 2016, the index for all items less food and energy rose 1.8 percent. Prices were higher for a number of indexes including shelter and medical care, up 2.1 percent each. Lower prices for household furnishings and operations (-0.1 percent), among others, moderated the 12-month increase in the all items less food and energy index.

Table A. Philadelphia CPI-U 2-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	2-month	12-month								
February	0.7	1.8	0.5	1.0	-0.2	-0.1	0.3	0.3	0.7	2.1
April	0.1	1.1	0.5	1.4	0.5	0.0	0.9	0.6		
June	0.3	1.5	0.6	1.8	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.1		
August	0.5	1.1	0.0	1.3	-0.5	-0.3	-0.2	0.3		
October	-0.4	0.3	-0.1	1.6	-0.3	-0.5	0.6	1.3		
December	0.1	1.2	-0.8	0.6	-0.6	-0.2	-0.1	1.7		

The Consumer Price Index for April 2017 is scheduled to be released Friday, May 12, 2017 at 8:30 am (ET).

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City is published bi-monthly. 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 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 87 urban areas across the country from about 4,000 housing units and approximately 26,000 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 **Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md., Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania; Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem Counties in New Jersey; New Castle County in Delaware; and Cecil County in Maryland.

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

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md., (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Dec. 2016	Jan. 2017	Feb. 2017	Feb. 2016	Dec. 2016	Jan. 2017
All items.....		246.591		248.345	2.1	0.7	
All items (1967 = 100).....		712.388		717.455			
Food and beverages.....		230.329		231.922	-0.7	0.7	
Food.....		230.006		231.542	-0.7	0.7	
Food at home.....		236.044	236.517	238.144	-2.2	0.9	0.7
Food away from home.....		216.429		217.186	1.7	0.3	
Alcoholic beverages.....		231.177		233.427	-0.7	1.0	
Housing.....		253.626		253.897	1.7	0.1	
Shelter.....		315.978	315.854	316.102	2.1	0.0	0.1
Rent of primary residence(1).....		292.277	292.353	292.817	1.4	0.2	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(1)(2)(3).....		324.006	324.122	324.536	1.9	0.2	0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(1)(2)(3).....		324.006	324.122	324.536	1.9	0.2	0.1
Fuels and utilities.....		199.105		199.955	0.4	0.4	
Household energy.....		165.066	166.708	165.944	0.2	0.5	-0.5
Gas (piped) and electricity(1).....		176.556	177.576	176.689	-2.0	0.1	-0.5
Electricity(1).....		185.093	187.184	185.866	-4.9	0.4	-0.7
Utility (piped) gas service(1).....		150.670	149.648	149.608	5.3	-0.7	0.0
Household furnishings and operations.....		113.038		113.360	-0.1	0.3	
Apparel.....		110.286		114.340	4.5	3.7	
Transportation.....		203.254		206.708	6.6	1.7	
Private transportation.....		202.752		205.142	7.0	1.2	
Motor fuel.....		212.174	227.122	218.292	34.1	2.9	-3.9
Gasoline (all types).....		209.259	223.991	215.241	34.1	2.9	-3.9
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....		206.202	221.029	211.978	35.1	2.8	-4.1
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....		216.396	230.903	222.553	30.9	2.8	-3.6
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....		213.566	226.664	220.597	28.5	3.3	-2.7
Medical care.....		500.731		508.405	2.1	1.5	
Recreation(6).....		122.801		124.295	0.2	1.2	
Education and communication(6).....		134.539		133.974	0.2	-0.4	
Other goods and services.....		526.333		533.018	4.9	1.3	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities.....		174.345		176.470	2.5	1.2	
Commodities less food and beverages.....		143.453		145.676	4.5	1.5	
Nondurables less food and beverages.....		181.529		185.537	9.3	2.2	
Durables.....		101.468		102.019	-2.1	0.5	
Services.....		319.807		321.274	2.0	0.5	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter.....		223.939		226.331	2.1	1.1	
All items less medical care.....		235.919		237.412	2.2	0.6	
Commodities less food.....		146.559		148.790	4.3	1.5	
Nondurables.....		206.963		209.934	4.0	1.4	
Nondurables less food.....		184.430		188.330	8.5	2.1	

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, Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md., (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Dec. 2016	Jan. 2017	Feb. 2017	Feb. 2016	Dec. 2016	Jan. 2017
Services less rent of shelter(2).....		330.939		333.930	1.8	0.9	
Services less medical care services.....		305.719		306.899	2.0	0.4	
Energy		182.110	188.444	184.837	12.0	1.5	-1.9
All items less energy		255.563		257.224	1.4	0.6	
All items less food and energy		262.508		264.208	1.8	0.6	

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) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.

(3) 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.

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

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

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

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