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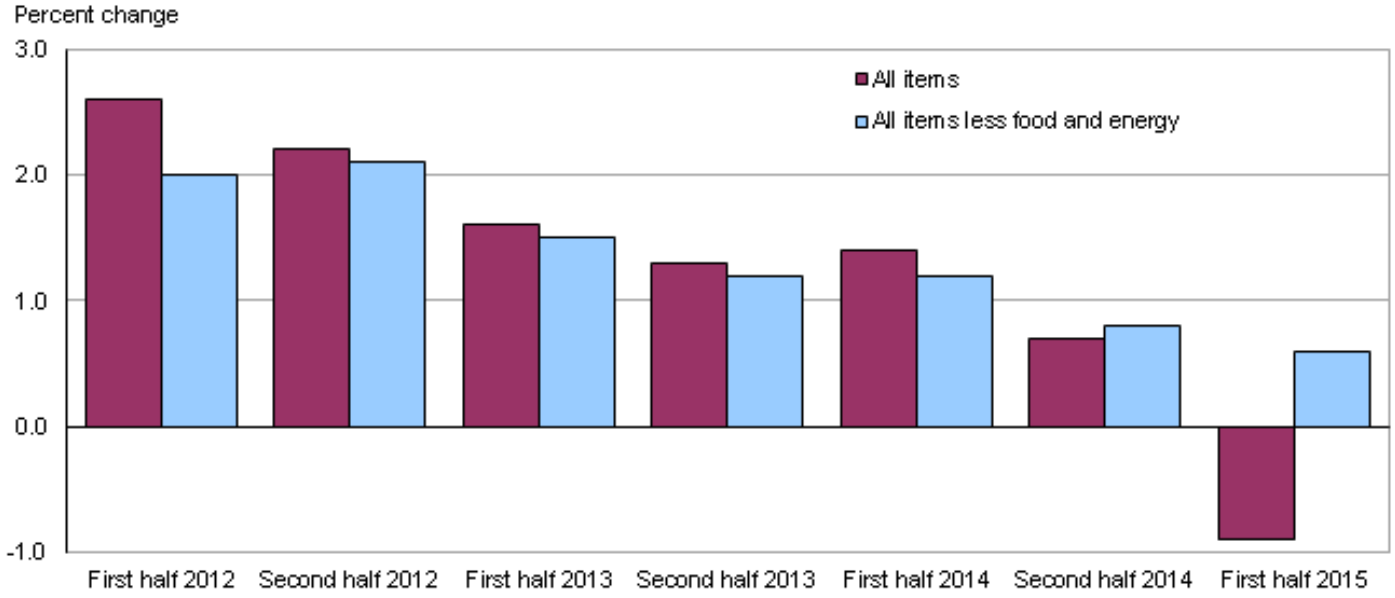
Consumer Price Index, St. Louis – First Half 2015

Prices decreased 0.9 percent from the first half of 2014 to the first half of 2015

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the St. Louis, Mo.-Ill., metropolitan area declined 0.9 percent from the first half of 2014 to the first half of 2015, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. This is the first over-the-year decrease in the all items index since 2009. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that the energy index had the largest downward impact on the index. Energy costs fell 16.1 percent, food prices advanced 1.5 percent, and the all items less food and energy index rose 0.6 percent over the year.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, St. Louis, first half 2012–first half 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices rose 1.5 percent from the first half of 2014 to the first half of 2015 led by a 3.9-percent rise in costs for food away from home. Prices for food at home also contributed to the increase with a gain of 0.3 percent. During the same period one year ago, these indexes rose 4.1 and 4.0 percent, respectively.

Energy

The energy index, which includes motor fuel and household fuels, decreased 16.1 percent from the first half of 2014 to the first half of 2015, after registering a 0.4-percent decline in the same period one year ago. Falling prices for motor fuel (-29.7 percent), most of which occurred in the most recent six months of the period, were largely responsible for lower energy costs. The index for utility (piped) gas service, down 1.6 percent, also contributed to the decrease. In contrast, prices for electricity advanced 5.2 percent over the year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy rose 0.6 percent from the first half of 2014 to the first half of 2015, the smallest over-the-year gain since 2006. Among the expenditure categories posting higher costs were shelter (1.5 percent) and medical care (1.6 percent). In contrast, the indexes for apparel (-1.1 percent) and household furnishings and operations (-0.9 percent) were among the components that registered lower prices over the year.

The St. Louis CPI-U stood at 218.543 for the first half of 2015. This means that a market basket of goods and services that cost $100.00 in the 1982-84 base period cost $218.54 in the first half of 2015. Because metropolitan area CPI data are not adjusted for seasonal price variation, consumers and businesses should be cautious in drawing conclusions about long-term retail price trends from short-term changes in the metropolitan area indexes.

CPI-W

The Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for the St. Louis, Mo.-Ill., metropolitan area for the first half of 2015 was 217.378. The CPI-W decreased 1.2 percent from the first half of 2014 to the first half of 2015.

The Consumer Price Index for the Second Half of 2015 is scheduled to be released in January 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 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 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 areas; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The St. Louis, Mo.-Ill., area covered in this release includes Clinton, Jersey, Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair Counties in Illinois; and Crawford (part), Franklin, Jefferson, Lincoln, St. Charles, St. Louis, and Warren Counties and St. Louis City in Missouri.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes for semiannual averages and percent changes for selected periods St. Louis, MO-IL (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Semiannual average indexes			Percent change to 1st half 2015 from-	
	1st half 2014	2nd half 2014	1st half 2015	1st half 2014	2nd half 2014
Expenditure category					
All Items	220.440	219.994	218.543	-0.9	-0.7
All items (1967=100)	654.744	653.419	649.109		
Food and beverages	243.849	245.947	246.906	1.3	0.4
Food	242.699	244.783	246.281	1.5	0.6
Food at home	230.201	231.083	230.911	0.3	-0.1
Food away from home	261.371	266.488	271.495	3.9	1.9
Alcoholic beverages	232.535	234.548	228.032	-1.9	-2.8
Housing	205.896	208.167	208.155	1.1	0.0
Shelter	236.697	238.199	240.275	1.5	0.9
Rent of primary residence [1]	214.555	215.472	218.026	1.6	1.2
Owners' equiv. rent of residences [1] [2]	244.529	247.253	248.729	1.7	0.6
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence [1] [2]	244.529	247.253	248.729	1.7	0.6
Fuels and utilities	207.060	216.335	207.325	0.1	-4.2
Household energy	184.906	203.050	187.706	1.5	-7.6
Energy services [1]	186.231	206.746	191.633	2.9	-7.3
Electricity [1]	186.446	216.266	196.229	5.2	-9.3
Utility (piped) gas service [1]	158.443	160.894	155.966	-1.6	-3.1
Household furnishings and operations	124.060	123.328	122.936	-0.9	-0.3
Apparel	154.377	152.919	152.607	-1.1	-0.2
Transportation	205.429	196.580	186.351	-9.3	-5.2
Private transportation	204.930	196.615	185.532	-9.5	-5.6
Motor fuel	325.137	284.676	228.602	-29.7	-19.7
Gasoline (all types)	319.708	279.782	224.821	-29.7	-19.6
Gasoline, unleaded regular [3]	311.496	272.066	217.906	-30.0	-19.9
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade [3] [4]	366.468	322.183	260.957	-28.8	-19.0
Gasoline, unleaded premium [3]	307.870	272.622	223.376	-27.4	-18.1
Medical Care	393.188	397.113	399.380	1.6	0.6
Recreation [5]	117.052	115.898	117.536	0.4	1.4
Education and communication [5]	139.373	139.194	139.860	0.3	0.5
Other goods and services	310.630	309.398	308.338	-0.7	-0.3
Commodity and Service Group					
All Items	220.440	219.994	218.543	-0.9	-0.7
Commodities	193.181	190.242	186.043	-3.7	-2.2
Commodities less food & beverages	166.671	161.572	155.198	-6.9	-3.9
Nondurables less food & beverages	230.786	220.749	207.564	-10.1	-6.0
Durables	108.635	107.543	106.677	-1.8	-0.8
Services	249.655	251.576	252.726	1.2	0.5
Special aggregate indexes:					
All items less medical care	211.865	211.188	209.540	-1.1	-0.8
All items less shelter	216.817	215.563	212.836	-1.8	-1.3
Commodities less food	169.872	164.944	158.516	-6.7	-3.9
Nondurables	237.726	233.736	227.570	-4.3	-2.6
Nondurables less food	232.375	223.047	210.198	-9.5	-5.8
Services less rent of shelter [2]	269.835	272.130	272.415	1.0	0.1
Services less medical care services	236.538	238.360	239.336	1.2	0.4
Energy	245.934	239.112	206.259	-16.1	-13.7
All items less energy	220.869	221.537	222.594	0.8	0.5

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes for semiannual averages and percent changes for selected periods St. Louis, MO-IL (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Semiannual average indexes			Percent change to 1st half 2015 from-	
	1st half 2014	2nd half 2014	1st half 2015	1st half 2014	2nd half 2014
All items less food and energy	217.354	217.761	218.738	0.6	0.4

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 November 1982=100 base.
(3) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.
(4) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.
(5) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

Table 2. Consumer Price Index for Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W): Indexes for semiannual averages and percent changes for selected periods St. Louis, MO-IL (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Semiannual average indexes			Percent change to 1st half 2015 from-	
	1st half 2014	2nd half 2014	1st half 2015	1st half 2014	2nd half 2014
Expenditure category					
All Items	220.003	219.353	217.378	-1.2	-0.9
All items (1967=100)	647.262	645.349	639.536		
Food and beverages	244.628	247.695	248.840	1.7	0.5
Food	244.206	247.326	248.874	1.9	0.6
Food at home	231.907	234.247	234.541	1.1	0.1
Food away from home	261.850	267.355	272.137	3.9	1.8
Alcoholic beverages	223.788	225.698	220.780	-1.3	-2.2
Housing	208.531	211.041	210.898	1.1	-0.1
Shelter	237.305	238.999	241.044	1.6	0.9
Rent of primary residence [1]	214.555	215.472	218.026	1.6	1.2
Owners' equiv. rent of residences [1] [2]	224.024	226.519	227.871	1.7	0.6
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence [1] [2]	224.024	226.519	227.871	1.7	0.6
Fuels and utilities	210.633	220.702	211.486	0.4	-4.2
Household energy	186.650	206.149	190.492	2.1	-7.6
Energy services [1]	189.533	210.884	195.253	3.0	-7.4
Electricity [1]	186.445	216.264	196.228	5.2	-9.3
Utility (piped) gas service [1]	158.444	160.895	155.967	-1.6	-3.1
Household furnishings and operations	116.720	115.333	115.077	-1.4	-0.2
Apparel	152.146	149.043	147.737	-2.9	-0.9
Transportation	209.914	200.730	189.723	-9.6	-5.5
Private transportation	208.694	199.750	188.382	-9.7	-5.7
Motor fuel	325.120	284.719	228.574	-29.7	-19.7
Gasoline (all types)	319.709	279.783	224.822	-29.7	-19.6
Gasoline, unleaded regular [3]	311.481	272.054	217.895	-30.0	-19.9
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade [3] [4]	366.468	322.183	260.957	-28.8	-19.0
Gasoline, unleaded premium [3]	307.885	272.635	223.387	-27.4	-18.1
Medical Care	395.545	399.388	401.564	1.5	0.5
Recreation [5]	119.941	118.548	120.230	0.2	1.4
Education and communication [5]	132.432	132.548	133.124	0.5	0.4
Other goods and services	323.076	324.182	325.548	0.8	0.4
Commodity and Service Group					
All Items	220.003	219.353	217.378	-1.2	-0.9
Commodities	197.656	194.331	189.566	-4.1	-2.5
Commodities less food & beverages	173.455	167.308	159.973	-7.8	-4.4
Nondurables less food & beverages	233.828	220.907	205.189	-12.2	-7.1
Durables	116.813	115.990	115.249	-1.3	-0.6
Services	247.790	250.094	251.190	1.4	0.4
Special aggregate indexes:					
All items less medical care	212.775	211.951	209.817	-1.4	-1.0
All items less shelter	215.809	214.332	211.025	-2.2	-1.5
Commodities less food	175.908	169.950	162.637	-7.5	-4.3
Nondurables	238.565	233.771	226.598	-5.0	-3.1
Nondurables less food	234.098	222.045	206.927	-11.6	-6.8
Services less rent of shelter [2]	248.072	250.894	251.031	1.2	0.1
Services less medical care services	235.090	237.333	238.280	1.4	0.4
Energy	248.343	239.587	205.283	-17.3	-14.3
All items less energy	219.145	219.994	221.083	0.9	0.5

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Consumer Price Index for Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W): Indexes for semiannual averages and percent changes for selected periods St. Louis, MO-IL (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Semiannual average indexes			Percent change to 1st half 2015 from-	
	1st half 2014	2nd half 2014	1st half 2015	1st half 2014	2nd half 2014
All items less food and energy	214.009	214.384	215.377	0.6	0.5

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 November 1984=100 base.
(3) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.
(4) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.
(5) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.