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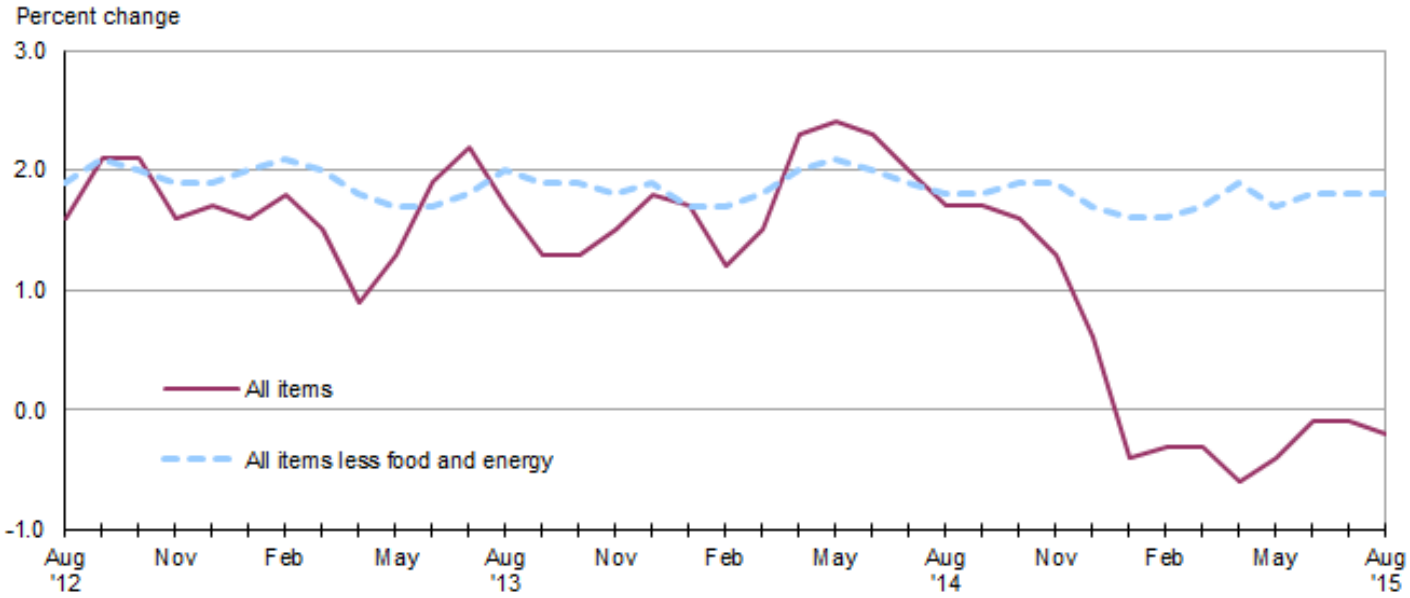
Consumer Price Index, South Region – August 2015

Prices down 0.2 percent over the month and 0.2 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the South edged down 0.2 percent in August, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. The energy index declined by 3.8 percent over the month. The all items less food and energy index inched up 0.1 percent and the food index advanced 0.3 percent over the month. (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 edged down 0.2 percent, the eighth consecutive month of over-the-year declines for this index. The all items less food and energy index advanced 1.8 percent over the year as several categories within this group recorded increases. (See chart 1.)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, South region, August 2012–August 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

The food index rose 0.3 percent in August. Prices for food at home increased 0.4 percent and prices for food away from home edged up 0.2 percent over the month.

Since August 2014, the food index advanced 1.7 percent, reflecting price increases for both food away from home and food at home, up 3.1 and 0.8 percent, respectively.

Energy

The energy index declined 3.8 percent in August, led by a 7.3-percent decrease in motor fuel prices. Over the month electricity prices also declined, down 0.3 percent, while prices for utility (piped) gas service inched up 0.1 percent.

Over the year, energy prices fell 17.1 percent, reflecting a 27.9-percent drop in motor fuel prices. Prices for electricity and utility (piped) gas service also declined, down 2.2 and 10.5 percent, respectively.

All items less food and energy

The all items less food and energy index inched up 0.1 percent in August, as increases in several categories, led by education and communication (0.8 percent) and shelter (0.2 percent), were partially offset by a 0.4-percent decline in the recreation index.

Since August 2014, the all items less food and energy index advanced 1.8 percent as several indexes recorded increases, most notably shelter (3.1 percent) and medical care (2.5 percent). The apparel index declined 0.5 percent over the year.

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

Month	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month
January	0.5	1.7	0.5	3.2	0.4	1.6	0.3	1.7	-0.7	-0.4
February	0.5	2.2	0.6	3.3	0.9	1.8	0.4	1.2	0.5	-0.3
March	1.2	2.8	0.7	2.8	0.3	1.5	0.6	1.5	0.6	-0.3
April	0.7	3.4	0.4	2.5	-0.2	0.9	0.5	2.3	0.3	-0.6
May	0.5	4.0	-0.4	1.6	0.0	1.3	0.2	2.4	0.4	-0.4
June	-0.2	3.8	-0.2	1.7	0.4	1.9	0.2	2.3	0.5	-0.1
July	0.2	4.1	-0.2	1.4	0.2	2.2	-0.1	2.0	-0.1	-0.1
August	0.4	4.3	0.6	1.6	0.1	1.7	-0.2	1.7	-0.2	-0.2
September	0.0	4.1	0.5	2.1	0.0	1.3	0.1	1.7		
October	-0.2	3.7	-0.2	2.1	-0.2	1.3	-0.3	1.6		
November	0.0	3.8	-0.5	1.6	-0.3	1.5	-0.6	1.3		
December	-0.2	3.3	-0.1	1.7	0.1	1.8	-0.6	0.6		

The Consumer Price Index for September 2015 is scheduled to be released on Thursday, October 15, 2015.

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 **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-		
	Jun. 2015	Jul. 2015	Aug. 2015	Aug. 2014	Jun. 2015	Jul. 2015
Expenditure category						
All Items	232.026	231.719	231.260	-0.2	-0.3	-0.2
All items (December 1977=100)	376.378	375.880	375.136	-	-	-
Food and beverages	245.240	245.647	246.347	1.7	0.5	0.3
Food	246.670	247.118	247.855	1.7	0.5	0.3
Food at home	240.253	240.573	241.461	0.8	0.5	0.4
Food away from home	259.094	259.735	260.258	3.1	0.4	0.2
Alcoholic beverages	224.657	224.514	224.702	1.2	0.0	0.1
Housing	222.222	222.664	222.880	1.9	0.3	0.1
Shelter	250.743	251.494	251.897	3.1	0.5	0.2
Rent of primary residence [1]	256.660	257.795	258.980	4.1	0.9	0.5
Owners' equiv. rent of residences [1] [2]	252.938	253.735	254.229	2.9	0.5	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence [1] [2]	252.929	253.724	254.219	2.9	0.5	0.2
Fuels and utilities	235.930	236.532	236.424	-1.7	0.2	0.0
Household energy	195.537	195.880	195.374	-3.5	-0.1	-0.3
Energy services [1]	195.913	196.320	195.803	-3.2	-0.1	-0.3
Electricity [1]	197.714	197.764	197.147	-2.2	-0.3	-0.3
Utility (piped) gas service [1]	167.997	170.692	170.870	-10.5	1.7	0.1
Household furnishings and operations	122.551	121.793	121.579	-1.0	-0.8	-0.2
Apparel	134.364	130.264	131.214	-0.5	-2.3	0.7
Transportation	206.437	204.570	200.086	-8.4	-3.1	-2.2
Private transportation	203.934	202.684	198.354	-8.7	-2.7	-2.1
New and used motor vehicles [3]	104.054	103.762	103.662	-0.1	-0.4	-0.1
New vehicles	153.737	153.000	152.957	0.1	-0.5	0.0
New cars and trucks [3] [4]	104.662	104.153	104.103	0.1	-0.5	0.0
New cars [4]	155.010	153.830	153.609	-0.4	-0.9	-0.1
Used cars and trucks	150.507	150.635	150.471	-0.9	0.0	-0.1
Motor fuel	235.267	229.495	212.686	-27.9	-9.6	-7.3
Gasoline (all types)	234.270	228.523	211.730	-27.8	-9.6	-7.3
Unleaded regular [4]	231.110	224.939	207.729	-28.5	-10.1	-7.7
Unleaded midgrade [4] [5]	249.024	245.005	229.330	-25.7	-7.9	-6.4
Unleaded premium [4]	243.022	239.763	226.214	-23.6	-6.9	-5.7
Medical care	424.087	424.259	425.673	2.5	0.4	0.3
Medical care commodities	340.501	341.679	345.766	3.9	1.5	1.2
Medical care services	452.215	451.948	452.177	2.0	0.0	0.1
Professional services	356.515	356.626	356.817	1.2	0.1	0.1
Recreation [3]	116.487	116.483	115.982	0.6	-0.4	-0.4
Education and communication [3]	134.843	135.008	136.115	0.6	0.9	0.8
Other goods and services	406.407	406.867	407.078	1.6	0.2	0.1
Commodity and service group						
All Items	232.026	231.719	231.260	-0.2	-0.3	-0.2
Commodities	185.371	184.195	182.861	-3.8	-1.4	-0.7
Commodities less food and beverages	156.422	154.644	152.534	-7.1	-2.5	-1.4
Nondurables less food and beverages	202.634	199.505	195.322	-10.5	-3.6	-2.1
Nondurables less food, beverages, and apparel	244.888	242.254	235.088	-13.3	-4.0	-3.0
Durables	112.615	112.021	111.708	-1.5	-0.8	-0.3
Services	279.264	279.793	280.175	2.3	0.3	0.1
Rent of shelter [2]	257.266	258.078	258.498	3.1	0.5	0.2
Transportation services	313.286	312.300	310.768	2.6	-0.8	-0.5

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-		
	Jun. 2015	Jul. 2015	Aug. 2015	Aug. 2014	Jun. 2015	Jul. 2015
Other services	330.904	331.674	333.022	2.1	0.6	0.4
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	221.344	221.020	220.486	-0.4	-0.4	-0.2
All items less food	229.539	229.116	228.476	-0.5	-0.5	-0.3
All items less shelter	225.936	225.189	224.371	-1.6	-0.7	-0.4
Commodities less food	158.588	156.850	154.795	-6.8	-2.4	-1.3
Nondurables	223.112	221.617	219.690	-4.5	-1.5	-0.9
Nondurables less food	203.653	200.692	196.754	-9.9	-3.4	-2.0
Nondurables less food and apparel	241.960	239.551	233.041	-12.3	-3.7	-2.7
Services less rent of shelter [2]	315.678	315.864	316.209	1.5	0.2	0.1
Services less medical care services	263.476	264.043	264.427	2.3	0.4	0.1
Energy	209.641	207.200	199.299	-17.1	-4.9	-3.8
All items less energy	235.265	235.197	235.572	1.8	0.1	0.2
All items less food and energy	233.667	233.509	233.821	1.8	0.1	0.1
Commodities less food and energy commodities	149.007	147.839	147.897	-0.6	-0.7	0.0
Energy commodities	238.861	233.040	216.277	-27.7	-9.5	-7.2
Services less energy services	287.919	288.460	288.943	2.7	0.4	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.