

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX
JANUARY 1953

Consumer Price Index Declines 0.2 Percent
Between December and January as Meat
Prices Drop 1.9 Percent

IMPORTANT

: This report presents the Consumer Price Index for :
: January 1953 for the average of U.S. cities and for :
: individual cities. The measurement of price change :
: from December 1952 to January 1953 is based on the :
: revised index structure, incorporating revised :
: weights, an expanded sample of items and a revised :
: sample of cities, as announced in the Memorandum to :
: Users accompanying the December 1952 report. Infor- :
: mation about the index revision is available upon :
: request. See the General Explanation at the end of :
: this report. :

Retail prices of goods and services bought by moderate-income urban families averaged 0.2 percent lower in January than in December according to the revised Consumer Price Index calculated by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Chiefly responsible for the downward movement were generally lower prices for food and apparel, down on the average of 0.6 and 0.5 percent, respectively. The Reading and Recreation and the Personal Care group indexes, here available for the first time, were also slightly lower than a month ago. The Transportation and Medical Care indexes rose slightly over the month, while the Housing index and the index for Other Goods and Services were unchanged.

Prices in most of the large cities priced both in December and January decreased over the month, and price decreases on the average were approximately the same for cities of all sizes.

The index for January 1953 was 113.9, calculated on the base 1947-49=100. This was 0.7 percent higher than a year ago. This index on the base previously used (1935-39=100) was 190.4.

FOOD The U.S. food index, now based on 46 cities, declined to 113.1 (1947-49=100), 1.7 percent below a year ago, but 12.5 percent above June 1950. The decline over the month was due chiefly to lower prices for meat, poultry, and fish in most cities, and especially in large cities. Prices reported for beef and veal, lamb, and poultry, all dropped about 4 percent over the month. Pork prices showed about a 2 percent increase.

Dairy products declined 1.0 percent, with lower prices for milk and butter. The index for the new subgroup, "Other Foods at Home," was 0.8 percent lower, as decreases were reported in the prices of eggs, fats and oils, and sugar and sweets. The Cereals and Bakery Products index showed no change, and the Fruits and Vegetables index rose 0.8 percent, with the largest increases in medium-sized and small cities. Higher prices for fresh vegetables, especially green beans, carrots, and tomatoes, were responsible for the rise in the Fruits and Vegetables index. Apple prices increased in most cities while prices for oranges dropped substantially. Restaurant meal prices showed little change.

Retail food prices further declined about 1.0 percent between January 15 and January 26 according to preliminary estimates, based on 6 cities.

HOUSING The new Housing index was unchanged over the month, at 116.4, 2.2 percent above a year ago. Some subgroups rose from December to January, and others fell. There was an 0.5 percent decrease over the month in prices for housefurnishings, reflecting January white sales and lower sale prices for some major household appliances which occurred in most cities. Residential rents increased 0.3 percent over the month. Rent increases reflected principally the continued effect of decontrol in a number of large cities and a few small cities. Among the large cities, sizeable increases were reported in Portland, Atlanta, Cleveland and Detroit. There were small advances in gas and electricity bills and solid fuels and fuel oil prices. Prices of home maintenance and repair items (priced for the first time) were slightly higher, but other items of home-owner costs were estimated to have remained unchanged over the month.

APPAREL The Apparel index continued to decline and was 0.5 percent lower in January than in December, as substantial seasonal decreases were reported for a number of winter apparel items. Average prices of men's and boys' apparel, women's and girls' apparel and footwear all were lower with almost all cities sharing in the general downward movement.

OTHER The Transportation index rose 0.3 percent as scattered increases were reported for new automobiles, auto repairs and automobile insurance. Transit fares were raised in Philadelphia. Prices of Medical Care were 0.1 percent higher than in December, as hospital fees and charges for professional services increased in the cities priced in January. Decreases of 0.1 percent and 0.2 percent were reported for Personal Care and Reading and Recreation, the latter due to lower prices for radios and television sets. Movie admissions were higher in a number of cities.

General Price Situation

No significant new developments were apparent in the general retail price situation. The January decline in the Consumer Price Index was a reflection of normal January influences and parallels recent price changes in primary markets. The all-items index dropped to the lowest level since June 1952 and food to the lowest point since March 1952 while apparel prices are lower than for the last 2 years. In contrast, a number of other groups--particularly the services and rent--continued to edge upward. Except for a few items, such as rents, gasoline, etc., the general decontrol of prices and wages, which was very nearly complete by the end of February, had not occasioned any substantial price advances at retail.

Some decline in retail food prices is usual in January, but the fall in prices of beef and poultry was much greater than usual. The decreases followed substantial reductions in primary markets, especially on beef because of recent heavy marketing of steers, and preliminary reports indicate that further declines will be recorded for February. Pork prices increased at wholesale and retail, reflecting comparatively low supply.

Apparel and housefurnishings sales were prevalent as usual this January despite the general decontrol of prices of most apparel in late November and early December. Since October, the apparel index has declined almost 1 percent and by January was more than 2 percent below last January. Housefurnishings also dropped more than 2 percent over the year in spite of the normal price adjustments which accompanied introduction of some 1953 models of major household appliances.

Most other groups--predominantly services--are still considerably above a year ago, although generally they have risen less than commodities from prewar prices.

: OLD SERIES: The Bureau has resumed compilation of the Old Series :
 : index, as directed by the President on January 30. :
 : It is expected that the first of the Old Series indexes for 1953 :
 : will be available about the first week in April. :

TABLE 1. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX 1/ -- U.S. AVERAGE ALL ITEMS AND COMMODITY GROUPS
Indexes and Percent Changes for Selected Dates

GROUP	January 1953	December 1952	November 1952	January 1952	June 1950	Year 1939
	This Month	Last Month	2 Months Ago	Last Year	Pre-Korea	Pre-World War II
INDEXES (1947-49 = 100)						
ALL ITEMS	113.9	114.1	114.3	113.1	101.8	59.4
FOOD 2/	113.1	113.8	115.0	115.0	100.5	47.1
Food at home	112.9	113.8	115.0	115.0	100.5	47.1
Cereals and bakery products	117.7	117.7	117.5	115.3	102.7	57.2
Meats, poultry and fish	110.9	113.0	114.3	117.1	106.1	41.6
Dairy products	111.6	112.7	113.3	112.0	92.3	49.8
Fruits and vegetables	116.7	115.8	115.9	118.2	102.5	46.3
Other foods at home	109.7	110.6	114.3	109.1	94.1	6/
HOUSING 3/	116.4	116.4	115.7	113.9	104.9	6/
Rent	121.1	120.7	119.5	116.0	108.7	86.6
Gas and electricity	105.9	105.6	105.4	103.5	102.7	104.9
Solid fuels and fuel oil	123.3	123.2	121.6	117.7	107.6	56.4
Housefurnishings	107.7	108.2	108.0	110.2	97.4	53.4
Household operation	113.4	113.4	113.3	110.9	99.6	6/
APPAREL 4/	104.6	105.1	105.2	107.0	96.5	52.5
TRANSPORTATION	129.3	128.9	128.9	122.8	109.9	6/
MEDICAL CARE	119.4	119.3	118.9	114.7	105.4	6/
PERSONAL CARE	112.4	112.5	112.4	111.0	99.2	6/
READING AND RECREATION	107.8	106.0	107.4	107.2	102.5	6/
OTHER GOODS AND SERVICES 5/	115.9	115.9	115.8	113.2	103.7	6/

PERCENT CHANGE TO JANUARY 1953 FROM:

	December 1952	November 1952	January 1952	June 1950	Year 1939
ALL ITEMS	- 0.2	- 0.3	0.7	11.9	91.8
FOOD 2/	- 0.6	- 1.7	- 1.7	12.5	140.1
Food at home	- 0.8	- 1.8	- 1.8	12.3	139.7
Cereals and bakery products	0	0.2	2.1	14.6	105.8
Meats, poultry and fish	- 1.9	- 3.0	- 5.3	4.5	166.6
Dairy products	- 1.0	- 1.5	- 0.4	20.9	124.1
Fruits and vegetables	0.8	0.7	- 1.3	13.9	152.1
Other foods at home	- 0.8	- 4.0	0.5	16.6	126.7 7/
HOUSING 3/	0	0.6	2.2	11.0	53.0 7/
Rent	0.3	1.3	4.4	11.4	39.8
Gas and electricity	0.3	0.5	2.3	3.1	1.0
Solid fuels and fuel oil	0.1	1.4	4.8	14.6	118.6
Housefurnishings	- 0.5	- 0.3	- 2.3	10.6	101.7
Household operation	0	0.1	2.3	13.9	65.8 7/
APPAREL 4/	- 0.5	- 0.6	- 2.2	8.4	99.2
TRANSPORTATION	0.3	0.3	5.3	17.7	87.7 7/
MEDICAL CARE	0.1	0.4	4.1	13.3	64.5 7/
PERSONAL CARE	- 0.1	0	1.3	13.3	88.6 7/
READING AND RECREATION	- 0.2	0.4	0.6	5.2	71.1 7/
OTHER GOODS AND SERVICES 5/	0	0.1	2.4	11.8	64.2 7/

1/ See General Explanation at end of tables.

2/ Includes "Food away from home" for which indexes will be available later in 1953.

3/ Includes "Other shelter" for which indexes will be available later in 1953.

4/ Indexes for subgroups of apparel will be available later in 1953.

5/ Includes tobacco, alcoholic beverages, and "miscellaneous services" (such as legal services, banking fees, burial services, etc.).

6/ Not available. Indexes for 1939 will be published when calculations are completed.

7/ Approximate.

TABLE 2. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX ^{1/} -- ALL ITEMS INDEXES FOR SELECTED DATES
U.S. Average and 20 Large Cities

City	(1 9 4 7 - 4 9 = 1 0 0)					(1935-39 = 100)
	January 1953	December 1952	November 1952	January 1952	June 1950	January 1953
U.S. AVERAGE ^{2/}	113.9	114.1	114.3	113.1	101.8	190.4
CITIES PRICED MONTHLY:						
Chicago	114.2	114.6	115.1	114.0	102.8	194.5
Detroit	115.7	116.0	115.3	113.7	102.8	195.3
Los Angeles	115.4	115.3	115.1	113.7	101.3	192.8
New York	111.7	112.0	112.9	111.3	100.9	184.9
Philadelphia	114.3	114.7	114.7	113.5	101.6	190.2
CITIES PRICED IN JAN., APR., JULY, OCT. ^{3/}						
					April 1950	
Boston	112.1			111.8	101.2	180.5
Kansas City	114.3			113.2	101.4	184.0
Minneapolis	114.4			113.3 ^{4/}	102.1 ^{4/}	189.4
Pittsburgh	112.6			113.1	99.9	191.4
Portland, Ore.	114.6			114.9	101.5	198.5
CITIES PRICED IN MAR., JUNE, SEPT., DEC. ^{3/}						
				December 1951	June 1950	December 1952
Atlanta		117.1 ^{5/}		115.6 ^{5/}	101.3 ^{5/}	198.6 ^{5/}
Baltimore		114.4		112.4	101.6	196.7
Cincinnati		112.5		111.6	101.2	189.5
St. Louis		114.9		114.0	101.1	191.8
San Francisco		115.6		113.0	100.9	197.6
CITIES PRICED IN FEB., MAY, AUG., NOV. ^{3/}						
				November 1951	May 1950	November 1952
Cleveland			113.6	112.7	100.4	193.6
Houston			116.0	115.2	103.5	196.4
Scranton			113.1	111.6	100.2	187.9
Seattle			115.6	113.9	102.0	197.6
Washington, D.C.			113.8	112.5	101.6	186.9

^{1/} See General Explanation at end of tables.

^{2/} The U.S. Average is based on prices collected in 46 cities. In addition to the 20 cities listed individually, 26 cities are included in the national average. Indexes are not calculated for these 26 cities.

^{3/} Foods, fuels, rents and a few other items priced monthly; other commodities and services priced quarterly.

^{4/} December 1951 and June 1950; formerly priced March, June, September, December.

^{5/} November 1952, November 1951 and May 1950; formerly priced February, May, August, November.

TABLE 3. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX ^{1/} -- PERCENT CHANGES FROM DECEMBER 1952 TO JANUARY 1953
U.S. Average and Five Cities Priced Monthly
All Items and Commodity Groups

City	All Items	Food	Housing	Apparel	Trans- portation	Medical Care	Personal Care	Reading & Recreation	Other Goods & Services
U.S. AVERAGE	- 0.2	- 0.6	0	- 0.5	0.3	0.1	- 0.1	- 0.2	0
Chicago	- 0.3	- 1.0	- 0.1	- 0.7	0.7	0.1	- 0.3	- 0.7	- 0.1
Detroit	- 0.3	- 1.1	0.2	- 0.1	0.1	- 0.1	0.2	- 0.1	- 0.1
Los Angeles	0.1	- 0.3	0.2	- 0.6	0.6	0	- 0.1	1.3	0
New York	- 0.3	- 0.7	0	- 0.1	0.1	0	- 0.1	0.3	0
Philadelphia	- 0.3	- 1.2	0.2	- 1.2	0.6	0	0.1	1.1	0

See footnotes on table 1 and General Explanation at end of tables.

TABLE 4. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX 1/ -- ALL ITEMS AND COMMODITY GROUPS
January 1953 Indexes and Percent Changes, October 1952 to January 1953
U.S. Average and 10 Cities Priced in January

City	All Items	Total Food 2/	Housing					Apparel 4/	Transportation	Medical Care	Personal Care	Reading & Recreation	Other Goods & Services 5/	
			Total 3/	Rent	Gas & Electricity	Solid Fuels & Fuel Oils	House-furnishings							Household Operation
January 1953 Indexes (1947-49 = 100)														
U.S. AVERAGE	113.9	113.1	116.4	121.1	105.9	123.3	107.7	113.4	104.6	129.3	119.4	112.4	107.8	115.9
Boston	112.1	111.3	114.8	116.4	105.5	124.7	106.4	107.6	102.8	134.2	123.3	110.4	106.4	115.1
Chicago	114.2	111.2	119.1		100.0	122.0	107.0	117.5	106.0	134.5	117.1	114.3	108.8	110.5
Detroit	115.7	115.9	118.6		109.8	117.4	109.9	107.7	102.7	126.1	116.7	119.1	111.0	120.7
Kansas City	114.3	110.2	116.4		102.6	113.2	106.2	118.2	106.1	130.6	119.1	114.9	109.4	115.5
Los Angeles	115.4	114.1	122.2		108.7		110.7	106.5	104.6	125.8	118.5	117.9	104.9	111.7
Minneapolis	114.4	113.9	115.9	120.5	106.3	113.7	105.7	112.0	105.3	120.7	125.1	117.3	113.7	121.2
New York	111.7	112.4	112.6	110.4	108.0	130.2	108.8	116.9	105.7	127.8	121.3	105.9	107.4	116.6
Philadelphia	114.3	115.5	112.7		101.8	125.4	110.1	111.1	103.9	133.3	119.5	116.3	110.6	120.5
Pittsburgh	112.6	113.0	113.7		113.7	120.3	106.2	116.3	103.4	139.4	116.8	105.5	98.4	117.0
Portland, Ore.	114.6	112.6	118.1	126.8	118.6	111.6	109.2	110.8	104.3	126.3	117.5	111.8	116.1	114.4
Percent Change -- October 1952 to January 1953														
U.S. AVERAGE	- 0.3	- 1.7	1.0	1.9	0.9	1.8	- 0.2	0.5	- 0.9	0.7	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.1
Boston	- 1.1	- 3.4	0.8	n.a.	- 0.4	1.9	0.1	- 0.2	- 0.5	0.6	0.7	- 0.1	0	- 0.3
Chicago	- 0.7	- 3.6	2.4		0	0.7	- 0.7	1.5	- 0.2	0.7	0.8	- 0.3	- 0.2	0.5
Detroit	0.2	- 2.1	3.3		6.6	0.8	- 0.4	- 0.2	- 0.5	0.2	- 0.3	0.2	0.1	- 0.1
Kansas City	- 0.8	- 3.7	0.8		0.9	1.5	- 0.6	0.1	- 0.2	0.3	0.4	- 0.3	- 0.3	1.3
Los Angeles	0.5	0.4	1.2		1.9		0.3	0.5	- 0.1	1.5	0	- 0.2	- 2.6	0
Minneapolis	n.a.	- 2.0	n.a.	n.a.	- 3.5	0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
New York	- 0.6	- 1.8	0.4	0.5	0.1	3.7	- 0.1	0	- 0.8	0	- 0.2	0.5	1.9	0.3
Philadelphia	- 0.3	- 1.5	1.0		0	2.1	0.1	2.7	- 1.1	0.5	- 0.1	- 0.3	0.8	0
Pittsburgh	- 0.7	- 1.9	1.1		5.3	0	- 0.2	4.1	- 0.8	0.9	1.2	- 0.4	- 7.5	0.1
Portland, Ore.	- 0.3	- 2.2	1.4	1.3	13.0	1.2	0.4	1.9	- 1.8	0.5	0.1	- 0.2	- 0.2	0

See footnotes on table 1 and General Explanation at end of tables.
n.a. - Not available.

TABLE 5. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX 1/ -- FOOD AND ITS SUBGROUPS
January 1953 Indexes and Percent Changes, December 1952 to January 1953
U.S. Average and 20 Large Cities
(1947-49 = 100)

City	Total Food 2/		Total Food at Home		Cereals & Bakery Products		Meats, Poultry & Fish		Dairy Products		Fruits & Vegetables		Other Foods at Home	
	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change
U.S. AVERAGE	113.1	- 0.6	112.9	- 0.8	117.7	0	110.9	- 1.9	111.6	- 1.0	116.7	0.8	109.7	- 0.8
Atlanta	112.5	- 0.4	112.4	- 0.5	115.2	0.2	113.2	- 1.1	115.0	0.8	119.0	- 0.2	103.1	- 1.2
Baltimore	112.7	- 0.7	112.6	- 0.8	116.8	- 0.2	112.1	- 2.0	111.5	- 0.1	115.9	0.3	107.6	- 0.8
Boston	111.3	- 0.6	111.2	- 0.7	117.2	- 0.3	107.7	- 2.1	112.2	- 2.7	116.5	2.6	103.7	- 0.2
Chicago	111.2	- 1.0	111.0	- 1.2	115.7	0.1	105.6	- 2.5	111.6	- 2.1	113.3	- 0.4	115.5	0.3
Cincinnati	113.6	- 0.7	113.5	- 0.8	117.7	0.6	112.0	- 0.4	110.0	- 2.7	115.7	0.3	114.3	- 1.4
Cleveland	110.8	- 1.0	110.7	- 1.1	114.4	0.2	107.8	- 2.2	112.3	- 0.6	111.1	0	109.5	- 1.4
Detroit	115.9	- 1.1	115.7	- 1.3	114.8	- 0.5	111.8	- 1.1	112.8	- 1.1	126.7	- 1.7	109.9	- 1.6
Houston	113.8	- 0.5	113.7	- 0.6	114.7	0	109.5	- 1.5	116.1	- 0.3	119.3	1.4	111.6	- 1.4
Kansas City	110.2	- 1.8	109.7	- 2.2	117.4	- 0.3	108.3	- 2.5	107.1	- 6.9	111.5	- 0.4	106.0	- 0.9
Los Angeles	114.1	- 0.3	114.0	- 0.4	117.2	0	113.2	- 1.8	113.0	0	112.9	0.4	112.6	0.1
Minneapolis	113.9	- 0.6	113.8	- 0.7	119.0	0	107.9	- 0.2	110.7	- 1.7	122.3	- 0.4	115.1	- 1.3
New York	112.4	- 0.7	112.2	- 0.9	121.1	0	113.8	- 2.5	106.3	- 1.0	112.6	0.5	108.3	0
Philadelphia	115.5	- 1.2	115.3	- 1.4	118.0	- 0.2	113.4	- 2.8	114.0	- 1.6	121.3	- 0.2	109.4	- 0.7
Pittsburgh	113.0	- 1.1	112.8	- 1.2	117.5	- 0.1	106.5	- 2.7	113.1	- 0.2	116.0	- 2.2	115.3	- 0.1
Portland, Ore.	112.6	- 0.1	112.6	- 0.1	113.4	0	112.2	- 0.8	110.7	0	114.2	0.5	112.8	0.1
St. Louis	113.5	- 1.2	113.2	- 1.5	111.9	0.1	109.6	- 0.8	111.3	- 3.6	118.0	- 1.2	116.6	- 1.7
San Francisco	114.3	- 0.5	114.2	- 0.6	122.7	0.1	112.1	- 2.2	112.0	- 0.1	116.9	0.3	116.8	0
Seranton	112.2	- 1.0	112.0	- 1.1	116.2	0.1	108.4	- 3.3	111.4	- 0.5	116.4	0.3	108.8	- 0.4
Seattle	113.3	- 0.2	113.3	- 0.2	118.9	0.2	109.2	- 2.0	112.0	0.8	119.3	1.4	110.3	0
Washington, D.C.	111.5	- 0.6	111.4	- 0.7	112.5	- 0.1	109.8	- 2.1	113.5	0.3	112.7	- 1.0	107.6	0.1

See footnotes on table 1 and General Explanation at end of tables.

The Consumer Price Index (revised January 1953) measures the average change in prices of goods and services purchased by city wage-earner and clerical-worker families. The goods and services included in the index "market basket" are those required to maintain the level of living characteristic of such families in 1952. The quantities and qualities of the items in the "market basket" remain the same between consecutive pricing periods, so that the index measures the effect of price change only on the cost of living of these families.

The indexes are presented on a base of 1947-49=100. The index numbers thus show the average increase or decrease in prices from the 1947-49 average. (For convenience of users, the indexes are also shown on the base 1935-39=100). The city indexes do not indicate whether it costs more to live in one city than in another. Comparisons of city indexes show only whether prices have risen more or less in one city than another since the base period.

The Bureau has been compiling the Consumer Price Index for nearly 40 years. At four different times it has been necessary to bring the "market basket" of goods and services up to date and to modernize the samples and methods of calculation. The indexes in this report are revised as of January 1953. The "market basket" is based on extensive surveys of postwar expenditure patterns of city families, and reflects changes that have occurred since prewar in the amounts, kinds and qualities of things people buy, as well as new things that were not part of our pattern of living a few years ago.

About 300 items are priced to estimate the average change in prices of all items in the "market basket." Among these items are all the important goods and services that wage and clerical workers buy. Prices are collected at regular intervals, and the successive prices are compared to determine price changes. The items priced are described by detailed specifications to insure that as far as possible, the same quality is priced each time, and that differences in reported prices are measures of price change only. Prices are obtained in a sample of 46 cities representative of all cities in the U.S., including the 12 largest urban areas with populations over 1 million, 9 other large cities, 9 medium-sized cities, and 16 small cities. In each city, prices are reported by stores of various kinds and by service establishments and individuals (such as physicians and dentists) from whom wage and clerical workers buy goods and services.

Foods, fuels, rents, and a few other items are priced monthly in all cities. Prices of most other goods and services are obtained on a regular rotating pricing cycle--monthly in the 5 largest cities, every 3 months in 25 large and medium-sized cities, and every 4 months in the 16 smallest cities. In any given month, goods and services other than foods, fuels and rents are priced in 17 or 18 cities out of the 46. Price collection extends over 3 or 4 weeks, centered on the 15th of the month. Prices for a few items (e.g., auto insurance, railroad fares) are computed from published sources.

Food. Food prices are collected monthly from chain and representative independent food stores in all 46 cities, during the first 3 days of the week which includes the 15th of the month. Prices for restaurant meals are based on menus collected on the regular pricing cycle for each city as described above.

Rent. Rents are obtained each month by mail from tenants of representative samples of dwellings in each of the 46 cities, and once every 2 years by personal visit, when local samples of dwellings are also reviewed. The rent index measures changes in rent from one period to another for the same rented dwellings, with the same facilities, furnishings and services.

Other Shelter. Materials and services for house maintenance and repair are priced on the regular city pricing cycle. Prices of houses, fire insurance rates, mortgage interest and taxes, which change only occasionally, are obtained annually or biennially, and changes estimated between pricing dates. Sales prices of houses are obtained from records of mortgages insured by the Federal Housing Administration.

Fuels, including Gas and Electricity. Prices prevailing on the 15th of the month are collected monthly by mail from fuel dealers and utility companies in 46 cities.

All Goods and Services other than Foods, Fuels and Rents. Prices are collected in person, on the city cycle described above, from samples of representative department stores, apparel and shoe stores, housefurnishings and appliance dealers, barber shops, beauty shops, doctors, hospitals, moving picture theaters, etc. Prices for such items as newspapers, street car and bus fares, and telephone service are collected by mail. Prices of used cars are obtained from car dealers through a trade association.

Price changes for all items in each city are combined in accordance with their importance in the "market basket" for that city to obtain an average price change for that city. Price changes for the 46 cities are combined for the U.S. with the use of 1950 population data. Each city is given an importance or weight proportionate to the wage-earner and clerical-worker population it represents in the index. The 12 largest cities, each weighted by its own population, when combined have about two-fifths of the total weight in the national index. Each of the 3 other city-size groups has about one-fifth of the total weight; i.e., the 9 other large cities, the 9 medium-sized cities, and the 16 small cities. City indexes are compiled for the 20 largest of the 46 cities priced for the national average. The remaining 26 cities in which prices are collected are :

Anna, Illinois	Huntington, W. Virginia	Pulaski, Virginia
Camden, Arkansas	Laconia, New Hampshire	Ravenna, Ohio
Canton, Ohio	Lodi, California	Rawlins, Wyoming
Charleston, W. Virginia	Lynchburg, Virginia	San Jose, California
Evansville, Indiana	Madill, Oklahoma	Sandpoint, Idaho
Garrett, Indiana	Madison, Wisconsin	Shawnee, Oklahoma
Glendale, Arizona	Middlesboro, Kentucky	Shenandoah, Iowa
Grand Forks, N. Dakota	Middletown, Connecticut	Youngstown, Ohio
Grand Island, Nebraska	Newark, Ohio	

The present index, as described above, has been linked (spliced) to the "interim adjusted" Consumer Price Index for 34 cities, issued through December 1952, to form a continuous series back to 1913. ^{1/}

For detailed descriptions of the Consumer Price Index, its uses and limitations, see the following:

"The Consumer Price Index," A Short Description of the Index as Revised, 1953.
 "The Revised Consumers' Price Index--A Summary of Changes in the Index and Suggestions for Transition from the 'Interim Adjusted' and 'Old Series' Indexes to the Revised Index."
 Bureau of Labor Statistics Bulletin No. 1039: "Interim Adjustment of the Consumers' Price Index."
 January 1951 Report: "Consumers' Price Index and Retail Food Prices."
 December 1952 Report: "Consumers' Price Index and Retail Food Prices."

Monthly Labor Review articles:

The Revised Consumer Price Index (February 1953).
 Adjusted Consumers' Price Index: Relative Importance of Items (June 1951).
 Interim Adjustment of Consumers' Price Index (April 1951).
 Selection of Cities for Consumer Expenditure Survey-1950 (April 1951).
 Revision of the Consumers' Price Index (July 1950).

^{1/} See December 1952 report, "Consumers' Price Index and Retail Food Prices." Tables of rebased "interim adjusted" indexes for the U. S. and for 20 cities are available upon request.

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"OLD SERIES" CONSUMERS' PRICE INDEX FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 1953

The Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor issued today the reinstated "old series" Consumers' Price Indexes for the months of January and February 1953. The index for January (1935-39=100) was 190.5, a decline of 0.4 percent from the preceding month of December 1952. The index declined 0.9 percent further in February to 188.6. The decline over the quarter, October to January was 0.6 percent; and over the quarter, November to February, was 1.6 percent. The chief factor in the declines in both January and February was the continued downturn in food prices, particularly the prices of meats.

The "old series" is the series of consumers' price indexes discontinued at the end of 1952 and reinstated by direction of President Eisenhower and Secretary of Labor Martin P. Durkin in response to requests of both labor and management groups having wage contracts based on this "old series." The Bureau of Labor Statistics will publish these "old series" indexes through the indexes for June 1953.

In reinstating the "old series," the Bureau has followed in general the practices and procedures previously used in the compilation of these indexes. The items priced, the cities in which prices are collected, the weights used to combine them, and the calculation methods are those which have been regularly used in the "old series" in 1952 and several preceding years.

The indexes for February and succeeding months do not differ from what they would have been if the series had never been interrupted.

For the January index the Bureau used some supplementary pricing and compilation methods. Prices currently collected in January were available for about 79 percent of the index weight normally priced in January; another 15 percent were satisfactorily collected in February (called "back-pricing"); the remaining 6 percent, chiefly fresh fruits and vegetables, were estimated on the basis of prices collected in other cities in December, January and February. Standard estimating methods were used.

For users of the index who wish more detailed information, the Bureau has prepared a factual summary of the methods and procedures, which is available upon request. In addition, the Bureau has maintained a complete record of its procedures in compiling the January index.

OLD SERIES CONSUMERS' PRICE INDEX FOR MODERATE-INCOME FAMILIES ^{1/}
 U. S. Average and 13 Cities by Groups
 January 15, 1953 (Partly Estimated)
 (1935-39 = 100)

City ^{2/}	: All : Items	: Food	: Apparel	: Rent	: Fuel, Elec. & : : Refrigeration : House- : Miscel- : Total : Gas & : furnish- : laneous : : Elec. : ings :			
					U.S. AVERAGE	190.3	228.6	201.2
Birmingham, Ala.	197.3	223.9	211.4		146.3	79.3	195.0	175.4
Boston, Mass.	180.9	215.1	186.3	129.6	173.3	116.5	194.5	168.3
Chicago, Ill.	194.8	229.4	206.2		142.5	83.5	191.9	179.5
Cincinnati, Ohio	191.6	231.9	201.3		159.5	104.9	194.6	180.5
Detroit, Mich.	196.0	231.1	198.1		164.8	93.6	215.8	196.6
Houston, Texas	194.9	241.1	214.7		106.2	91.5	198.8	179.5
Kansas City, Mo.	182.3	212.2	193.5		137.1	71.7	187.5	181.8
Los Angeles, Calif.	191.3	234.2	192.3		107.0	100.6	205.0	175.2
Minneapolis, Minn. ^{3/}	188.9	220.6	206.4	149.5	145.9	83.4	196.6	181.8
New York, N.Y.	184.8	226.5	206.7	119.4	155.8	105.9	196.3	176.5
Philadelphia, Pa.	190.2	226.9	194.8		160.1	104.2	212.6	177.5
Pittsburgh, Pa.	192.7	231.7	228.3		159.3	114.1	209.1	173.6
Portland, Oreg.	197.6	241.9	199.3	133.4	145.1	108.8	202.4	180.3

Percent Change from October 15, 1952

U.S. AVERAGE	- 0.6	- 2.3	- 1.0	2.1	2.1	1.0	- 0.1	0.6
Birmingham, Ala.	- 0.9	- 2.4	- 1.2		2.0	0	- 0.2	0.2
Boston, Mass.	- 1.6	- 3.7	- 2.1		2.4	- 0.2	0	0.2
Chicago, Ill.	- 1.6	- 5.2	- 0.7		1.3	0	- 0.8	0.5
Cincinnati, Ohio	- 0.3	- 2.8	- 1.1		0.4	0.1	1.0	3.4
Detroit, Mich.	0.1	- 0.5	- 0.1		1.3	4.3	- 0.3	0.2
Houston, Texas	- 0.2	- 0.5	- 2.1		0.4	0.5	- 1.5	0.7
Kansas City, Mo.	- 1.2	- 3.7	0.4		1.3	0.4	- 1.2	0.4
Los Angeles, Calif.	0.8	1.2	- 0.9		1.1	1.5	1.5	0.3
Minneapolis, Minn. ^{3/}		- 2.8			- 0.3	- 1.8		
New York, N. Y.	- 1.0	- 2.4	- 0.7	0.3	2.2	0.2	- 0.5	0.6
Philadelphia, Pa.	- 0.6	- 1.9	- 1.4		2.0	0	0	0.9
Pittsburgh, Pa.	- 1.2	- 2.9	- 1.5		1.5	3.4	- 0.1	0.9
Portland, Oreg.	- 0.5	- 2.0	- 0.6	1.3	4.8	11.0	1.0	0.3

- ^{1/} This table presents the "old series" Consumers' Price Index, as reinstated, for January 15, 1953. For details on the reinstatement of this series see "Memorandum to Users of the Consumer Price Index, February 3, 1953." See the attached statement for a description of the calculation of the January index.
- ^{2/} Indexes for Buffalo, N.Y.; Denver, Colo.; Indianapolis, Ind.; Manchester, N.H.; Richmond, Va.; and Savannah, Ga., usually available for January, have not been calculated. April 1953 "old series" indexes for these cities will be published.
- ^{3/} Previously priced on a March, June, September, December cycle.

OLD SERIES CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR MODERATE-INCOME FAMILIES 1/

U. S. Average and 17 Cities by Groups

February 15, 1953

(1935-39 = 100)

City 2/	All Items	Food	Apparel	Rent	Fuel, Elec. & Refrigeration			House-furnishings	Miscellaneous
					Total	Gas & Elec.			
U.S. AVERAGE	188.6	223.1	201.8	136.4	154.1	100.4	206.3	177.6	
Birmingham, Ala.	194.9	216.9	212.1	191.0	146.3	79.3	195.4	174.8	
Boston, Mass.	178.9	209.4	187.0		173.3	118.6	195.3	168.6	
Chicago, Ill.	193.3	224.8	204.9		112.5	83.5	194.0	179.7	
Cincinnati, Ohio	190.1	226.5	203.0		161.4	108.7	194.5	180.7	
Cleveland, Ohio	191.0	225.5	201.6	150.2	160.8	106.8	186.0	176.0	
Detroit, Mich.	193.9	225.7	198.3		164.8	93.6	217.1	196.5	
Houston, Texas	193.1	234.6	215.3	157.1	106.2	91.5	197.8	179.5	
Los Angeles, Calif.	189.4	228.8	191.9		107.0	100.6	204.5	175.2	
Milwaukee, Wisc.	194.6	223.4	198.4	175.5	158.3	99.1	222.5	171.5	
New Orleans, La.	190.9	236.0	207.6	139.7	114.3	74.3	208.4	157.9	
New York, N. Y.	183.2	222.0	206.6		155.8	105.9	196.9	176.6	
Norfolk, Va.	189.5	226.5	191.2	141.1	166.0	98.5	202.2	173.9	
Philadelphia, Pa.	187.9	220.4	196.4	130.5	160.1	104.2	214.0	177.6	
Pittsburgh, Pa.	191.3	226.9	230.5		159.2	114.0	208.7	173.6	
Scranton, Pa.	186.3	219.4	213.9		181.0	105.4	177.8	163.2	
Seattle, Wash.	193.1	229.1	200.8	148.6	135.5	89.5	204.7	186.2	
Washington, D. C.	185.3	223.2	225.9		166.2	112.5	221.1	181.4	

Percent Change from November 15, 1952

U.S. AVERAGE	- 1.6	- 4.5	- 0.4	1.6	1.6	0.8	0	0.5
Birmingham, Ala.	- 1.4	- 3.5	- 0.8	0.2	2.0	0	0.2	- 0.2
Boston, Mass.	- 2.1	- 5.2	- 1.3		2.4	0	0.6	0.4
Chicago, Ill.	- 2.2	- 6.6	- 1.6		1.3	0	0.1	0.3
Cincinnati, Ohio	- 0.3	- 3.4	0.3		1.1	3.7	- 0.1	3.4
Cleveland, Ohio	- 1.8	- 6.5	- 0.1	2.9	0.1	0	- 0.2	2.6
Detroit, Mich.	- 1.1	- 3.2	0.6		0.7	4.1	0.2	0.1
Houston, Texas	- 0.8	- 2.5	- 1.4	0.9	0.4	0.5	- 0.3	0.7
Los Angeles, Calif.	- 0.7	- 2.3	- 1.3		1.1	1.5	0.5	0.7
Milwaukee, Wisc.	- 1.7	- 5.2	- 0.3	0.5	2.3	0	1.0	0.5
New Orleans, La.	- 0.5	- 1.9	- 0.6	4.3	0	0	0.5	- 0.1
New York, N.Y.	- 2.3	- 5.1	- 0.4		1.9	0.4	- 0.2	0.3
Norfolk, Va.	- 2.4	- 5.9	- 0.6	0.5	- 0.1	- 0.3	- 0.1	0.5
Philadelphia, Pa.	- 1.8	- 4.4	- 0.7	0.4	1.8	0	0.1	0.7
Pittsburgh, Pa.	- 1.9	- 4.9	- 0.5		1.5	3.3	- 0.7	0.9
Scranton, Pa.	- 2.2	- 5.3	0.1		3.0	0	- 1.4	1.1
Seattle, Wash.	- 1.1	- 3.5	0.2	1.4	0.6	0	- 0.7	0.8
Washington, D. C.	- 1.1	- 3.6	1.2		2.6	0	- 0.4	0.2

1/ These "old series" indexes for February are based on currently collected prices and were computed using "old series" weights and calculation procedures. For details on the reinstatement of the "old series" indexes see "Memorandum to Users of the Consumer Price Index, February 3, 1953."

2/ Indexes for Atlanta, Ga., previously priced in February, will be published for March 1953.

