

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

FEBRUARY 1953

Consumer Price Index Declines 0.4 Percent
Between January and February as Meat
Prices Again Drop Sharply

IMPORTANT

: This report presents the Consumer Price Index for :
: February 1953 for the average of U.S. cities and :
: for individual cities. The measurement of price :
: change from January 1953 to February 1953 is based :
: on the revised index structure. Information about :
: the index revision is given in the February 1953 :
: Monthly Labor Review or available upon request. :

Retail prices of goods and services bought by families of city wage and clerical workers averaged 0.4 percent lower in February than January 1953, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Chiefly responsible for the decline was a further drop of 1.4 percent in food prices. The group indexes for Reading and Recreation, Transportation, Medical Care, and Other Goods and Services were also slightly lower than a month ago. The Housing and Personal Care group indexes rose slightly, while the index for Apparel was unchanged.

Prices in the larger cities which were priced in both January and February decreased over the month. For the cities priced quarterly, prices on the average decreased from November to February approximately the same percent in cities of all sizes.

The index for February 1953 dropped to 113.4, calculated on the base 1947-49 = 100, the same as for June 1952. This was 0.9 percent higher than a year ago and 11.4 percent above June 1950 (pre-Korea). The revised index converted to the base previously used (1935-39 = 100) was 189.6.

FOOD The U.S. Food index, based on 46 cities, decreased 1.4 percent between January and February with food prices lower, on the average, in all cities surveyed. The February index was 111.5 (1947-49 = 100), the lowest since January 1951. It was 1.0 percent below a year ago, but 10.9 percent above June 1950. All classes of food declined over the month, with the sharpest decrease, 2.9 percent, occurring for meats, poultry and fish. Prices for beef were nearly 10 percent below January 1953 levels. Lamb and poultry prices fell about 3 percent while pork prices continued to rise, showing approximately a 3 percent increase over the month. Price movements for meats, poultry and fish were similar in cities of all sizes.

The decline of 2.2 percent in "Other Foods at Home" was due primarily to price decreases for eggs, which were about 9 percent lower than a month ago. Lower prices for butter and for milk in some cities caused a decline of 0.8 percent in the Dairy Products index. The Fruits and Vegetables index was down 0.7 percent as lower prices for fresh vegetables more than offset increases in fresh fruit prices. The Cereals and Bakery Products index declined slightly and restaurant meal prices showed little change.

The fall in retail food prices showed signs of abating as preliminary estimates based on 6 cities indicated a decline of only 0.2 percent between February 15 and March 2. This estimate does not include "Food Away from Home."

HOUSING The Housing index for February was 116.6, an advance of 0.2 percent over the month and 2.3 percent over a year ago. Small increases were reported for all components except Solid Fuels and Fuel Oil, which was unchanged from January. Residential rents rose 0.3 percent over the month. The Housefurnishings index also advanced 0.3 percent over the month but was unchanged over the quarter. Much of the increase between January and February resulted from the return to regular prices for textile housefurnishings which were included in January "white sales." The small advance, 0.2 percent, in gas and electricity bills reflected a rate increase for gas in Minneapolis and a fuel adjustment for electricity in Cincinnati. The Household Operation subgroup index rose 0.1 percent with higher prices of soaps and detergents.

APPAREL The Apparel index was unchanged between January and February. Decreases reported for women's and girls' apparel particularly in large cities, offset increases for men's and boys' apparel and footwear.

OTHER GROUPS The Transportation index declined 0.2 percent. Used car prices were generally lower but there were increases in a few cities in the cost of new cars and auto insurance. The Reading and Recreation group index was 0.3 percent below last month due to lower prices for sporting goods and television sets. Movies and newspapers were higher in a few cities. Prices for Medical Care and Other Goods and Services were 0.1 percent lower. Prices for Personal Care rose slightly, 0.1 percent.

GENERAL PRICE SITUATION

Retail prices in February and into March were influenced in the main by general economic conditions already apparent in January. The downward trend in primary market commodity prices which has persisted almost steadily since early 1951 is now showing up in lower retail prices. The average level of retail prices, including both goods and services, dropped back to the level of June 1952. Prices of food, apparel, and housefurnishings have reached the levels of 2 years ago or more; prices of most services continued to edge upward to peaks or near peaks.

The removal of wage and price controls was completed by mid-March. Although the ultimate result may not be known for some months, ample supplies of commodities generally have prevented sudden inflationary effects of decontrol.

The decline in foods, due only in part to normal seasonal influences, followed the substantial decreases in December and January, and further decreases were reported after mid-February. All important classes of foods shared in the downward movement. As in January, decreases were especially pronounced for beef, reflecting unusually heavy marketings of steers, which by mid-March had reduced primary market prices of steers to the lowest point since October 1946. Average retail prices of meats, poultry and fish were lower than at any time since November 1950.

Effects of large production were also apparent for other commodities. Prices of milk and potatoes have decreased under the influence of large supplies. Heavy supplies of gasoline led to the rescinding of price rises introduced by wholesale producers in some areas following decontrol.

Nevertheless, there are present in the price situation some factors which may lead to higher prices for some commodities. The approach of Easter has resulted in larger retail sales, particularly for apparel. Decontrol has been followed by price increases for a few commodities for which the demand is strong, notably cigarettes and coffee. The full effect of recently increased costs of some raw materials and increases in wages and other costs has not yet worked through to retail 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 January and February Old Series indexes will be available by April 8.

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

GROUP	February 1953	January 1953	December 1952	February 1952	June 1950	Year 1939
	This Month	Last Month	2 Months Ago	Last Year	Pre-Korea	Pre-World War II
<u>INDEXES (1947-49 = 100)</u>						
ALL ITEMS	113.4	113.9	114.1	112.4	101.8	59.4
FOOD ^{2/}	111.5	113.1	113.8	112.6	100.5	47.1
Food at home	111.1	112.9	113.8	112.6	100.5	47.1
Cereals and bakery products	117.6	117.7	117.7	115.5	102.7	57.2
Meats, poultry and fish	107.7	110.9	113.0	116.7	106.1	41.6
Dairy products	110.7	111.6	112.7	112.7	92.3	49.8
Fruits and vegetables	115.9	116.7	115.8	109.5	102.5	46.3
Other foods at home	107.3	109.7	110.6	105.8	94.1	6/
HOUSING ^{3/}	116.6	116.4	116.4	114.0	104.9	6/
Rent	121.5	121.1	120.7	116.4	108.7	86.6
Gas and electricity	106.1	105.9	105.6	103.8	102.7	104.9
Solid fuels and fuel oil	123.3	123.3	123.2	117.6	107.6	56.4
Housefurnishings	108.0	107.7	108.2	110.0	97.4	53.4
Household operation	113.5	113.4	113.4	110.8	99.6	6/
APPAREL ^{4/}	104.6	104.6	105.1	106.8	96.5	52.5
TRANSPORTATION	129.1	129.3	128.9	123.7	109.9	6/
MEDICAL CARE	119.3	119.4	119.3	114.8	105.4	6/
PERSONAL CARE	112.5	112.4	112.5	111.1	99.2	6/
READING AND RECREATION	107.5	107.8	108.0	106.6	102.5	6/
OTHER GOODS AND SERVICES ^{5/}	115.8	115.9	115.9	114.4	103.7	6/

PERCENT CHANGE TO FEBRUARY 1953 FROM:

	January 1953	December 1952	February 1952	June 1950	Year 1939
ALL ITEMS	- 0.4	- 0.6	0.9	11.4	90.0
FOOD ^{2/}	- 1.4	- 2.0	- 1.0	10.9	136.7
Food at home	- 1.6	- 2.4	- 1.3	10.5	135.9
Cereals and bakery products	- 0.1	- 0.1	1.8	14.5	105.6
Meats, poultry and fish	- 2.9	- 4.7	- 7.7	1.5	158.9
Dairy products	- 0.8	- 1.8	- 1.8	19.9	122.3
Fruits and vegetables	- 0.7	0.1	5.8	13.1	150.3
Other foods at home	- 2.2	- 3.0	1.4	14.0	121.7 ^{7/}
HOUSING ^{3/}	0.2	0.2	2.3	11.2	53.2 ^{7/}
Rent	0.3	0.7	4.4	11.8	40.3
Gas and electricity	0.2	0.5	2.2	3.3	1.1
Solid fuels and fuel oil	0	0.1	4.8	14.6	118.6
Housefurnishings	0.3	- 0.2	- 1.8	10.9	102.2
Household operation	0.1	0.1	2.4	14.0	65.9 ^{7/}
APPAREL ^{4/}	0	- 0.5	- 2.1	8.4	99.2
TRANSPORTATION	- 0.2	0.2	4.4	17.5	87.4 ^{7/}
MEDICAL CARE	- 0.1	0	3.9	13.2	64.3 ^{7/}
PERSONAL CARE	0.1	0	1.3	13.4	88.8 ^{7/}
READING AND RECREATION	- 0.3	- 0.5	0.8	4.9	70.6 ^{7/}
OTHER GOODS AND SERVICES ^{5/}	- 0.1	- 0.1	1.2	11.7	64.0 ^{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)
	February 1953	January 1953	December 1952	February 1952	June 1950	February 1953 ^{2/}
U.S. AVERAGE ^{3/}	113.4	113.9	114.1	112.4	101.8	189.6
CITIES PRICED MONTHLY:						
Chicago	113.9	114.2	114.6	112.7	102.8	194.0
Detroit	115.1	115.7	116.0	113.0	102.8	194.3
Los Angeles	114.9	115.4	115.3	114.1	101.3	192.0
New York	111.1	111.7	112.0	110.6	100.9	183.9
Philadelphia	113.7	114.3	114.7	112.4	101.6	189.2
CITIES PRICED IN JAN., APR., JULY, OCT. ^{4/}						
				January 1952	April 1950	January 1953
Boston		112.1		111.8	101.2	180.5
Kansas City		114.3		113.2	101.4	184.0
Minneapolis		114.4		113.3 ^{5/}	102.1 ^{5/}	189.4
Pittsburgh		112.6		113.1	99.9	191.6
Portland, Ore.		114.6		114.9	101.5	198.5
CITIES PRICED IN MAR., JUNE, SEPT., DEC. ^{4/}						
				December 1951	June 1950	December 1952
Atlanta			117.1 ^{6/}	115.6 ^{6/}	101.3 ^{6/}	198.6 ^{6/}
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. ^{4/}						
				February 1952	May 1950	February 1953
Cleveland	112.5			112.6	100.4	191.7
Houston	116.1			114.8	103.5	196.6
Scranton	112.2			110.8	100.2	186.5
Seattle	114.6			114.3	102.0	195.9
Washington, D.C.	113.0			112.0	101.6	185.5

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

^{2/} These are the same indexes shown in columns 1, 2 or 3, converted to a base of 1935-39 = 100.

^{3/} 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.

^{4/} Foods, fuels, rents and a few other items priced monthly; other commodities and services priced quarterly.

^{5/} December 1951 and June 1950; formerly priced March, June, September, December.

^{6/} November 1952, November 1951 and May 1950; formerly priced February, May, August, November.

TABLE 3. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX ^{1/} -- PERCENT CHANGES FROM JANUARY 1953 TO FEBRUARY 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	- 0.4	- 1.4	0.2	0	- 0.2	- 0.1	0.1	- 0.3	- 0.1
Chicago	- 0.3	- 1.4	0.4	0.1	- 0.1	0	0.3	0.4	- 0.1
Detroit	- 0.5	- 1.9	0.1	0.1	- 0.1	0.1	0.1	- 0.5	- 0.1
Los Angeles	- 0.4	- 1.5	0	- 0.2	- 0.1	0	- 0.1	- 0.4	- 0.1
New York	- 0.5	- 1.3	0	- 0.3	- 0.4	- 0.5	0.1	- 0.5	- 0.1
Philadelphia	- 0.5	- 2.0	0.2	0.7	- 0.4	0.1	- 0.1	- 0.4	- 0.1

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

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

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						
U.S. AVERAGE	113.4	111.5	116.6	121.5	106.1	123.3	108.0	113.5	104.6	129.1	119.3	112.5	107.5	115.8
Chicago	113.9	109.6	119.6		100.0	122.0	108.2	117.5	106.1	134.4	117.1	114.7	109.2	110.4
Cleveland	112.5	107.9	115.8	124.6	102.7	120.0	104.7	107.6	104.7	123.0	119.5	113.7	114.5	114.5
Detroit	115.1	113.7	118.7		109.9	117.4	110.5	107.7	102.8	126.0	116.8	119.2	110.5	120.6
Houston	116.1	111.6	122.0	136.9	106.5		103.7	118.2	107.4	126.7	117.2	119.4	112.0	116.9
Los Angeles	114.9	112.4	122.2		108.7		110.6	106.5	104.4	125.7	118.5	117.8	104.5	111.6
New York	111.1	110.9	112.6		108.0	130.2	109.0	116.9	105.4	127.3	120.7	106.0	106.9	116.5
Philadelphia	113.7	113.2	112.9	112.4	101.8	125.4	111.3	111.2	104.6	132.8	119.6	116.2	110.2	120.4
Scranton	112.2	111.0	115.3		111.9	138.6	103.0	105.1	106.4	129.9	114.1	112.1	118.2	114.2
Seattle	114.6	110.8	117.5	128.2	98.2	113.7	108.0	108.8	107.1	129.9	123.5	111.3	107.8	123.9
Washington, D.C.	113.0	110.1	116.3		114.9	132.2	109.1	113.1	103.3	127.1	116.6	111.6	110.6	122.1

February 1953 Indexes (1947-49 = 100)

Percent Change -- November 1952 to February 1953

U.S. AVERAGE	- 0.8	- 3.0	0.8	1.7	0.7	1.4	0	0.2	- 0.6	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0
Chicago	- 1.0	- 4.9	2.6		0	0.7	- 0.1	0.2	- 0.6	0.6	0.8	0	- 0.4	0.3
Cleveland	- 1.0	- 5.4	1.5	2.9	0	0.1	- 0.5	3.8	- 0.9	0.3	0.1	- 1.0	5.2	- 0.2
Detroit	- 0.2	- 3.5	3.2		6.3	0.2	0.1	- 0.1	0.4	0	0.1	- 0.8	- 0.2	
Houston	0.1	- 1.8	0.3	0.8	0.9		- 0.6	- 0.3	- 0.3	- 0.5	3.9	0.2	4.2	- 0.3
Los Angeles	- 0.2	- 1.7	0.5		1.9		- 0.1	- 0.1	- 0.8	0.6	0	- 0.2	2.4	- 0.1
New York	- 1.6	- 4.2	0.3		0.3	3.0	0.1	- 0.5	- 0.6	- 0.4	- 0.8	0.1	1.2	- 0.1
Philadelphia	- 0.9	- 3.4	0.6	0.4	0	1.9	0.8	1.0	- 0.5	0.1	0	0	0.7	- 0.1
Scranton	- 0.8	- 2.9	1.1		0	3.8	0	2.4	0	- 0.2	2.0	0.2	- 0.4	0.1
Seattle	- 0.9	- 3.1	0.3	1.4	0	0.4	- 1.0	0	0.1	0.2	- 0.2	- 0.4	- 0.3	- 0.1
Washington, D.C.	- 0.7	- 2.9	0.3		0	3.3	- 0.5	0.2	0.8	- 0.2	0.2	- 0.2	- 0.5	- 0.7

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

TABLE 5. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX 1/ -- FOOD AND ITS SUBGROUPS
February 1953 Indexes and Percent Changes, January 1953 to February 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	111.5	- 1.4	111.1	- 1.6	117.6	- 0.1	107.7	- 2.9	110.7	- 0.8	115.9	- 0.7	107.3	- 2.2
Atlanta	111.6	- 0.8	111.3	- 1.0	115.5	0.3	112.2	- 0.9	114.4	- 0.5	117.4	- 1.3	101.4	- 1.6
Baltimore	111.1	- 1.4	110.6	- 1.8	116.5	- 0.3	108.1	- 3.6	111.1	- 0.4	115.0	- 0.8	105.4	- 2.0
Boston	109.5	- 1.6	109.0	- 2.0	116.8	- 0.3	102.1	- 5.2	111.8	- 0.4	115.4	- 0.9	103.1	- 0.6
Chicago	109.6	- 1.4	109.3	- 1.5	115.4	- 0.3	102.7	- 2.7	109.2	- 2.2	114.0	0.6	113.2	- 2.0
Cincinnati	112.2	- 1.2	111.9	- 1.4	116.7	- 0.8	108.6	- 3.0	109.9	- 0.1	115.5	- 0.2	112.6	- 1.5
Cleveland	107.9	- 2.6	107.4	- 3.0	113.8	- 0.5	102.8	- 4.6	106.2	- 5.4	109.4	- 1.5	108.0	- 1.4
Detroit	113.7	- 1.9	113.2	- 2.2	115.1	0.3	106.6	- 4.7	111.1	- 1.5	125.3	- 1.1	108.5	- 1.3
Houston	111.6	- 1.9	111.1	- 2.3	114.5	- 0.2	105.3	- 3.8	113.2	- 2.5	117.7	- 1.3	109.2	- 2.2
Kansas City	109.5	- 0.6	108.9	- 0.7	117.4	0	105.9	- 2.2	106.8	- 0.3	112.2	0.6	105.2	- 0.8
Los Angeles	112.4	- 1.5	111.9	- 1.8	117.4	0.2	110.5	- 2.4	113.0	0	110.6	- 2.0	109.2	- 3.0
Minneapolis	112.8	- 1.0	112.5	- 1.1	119.0	0	105.8	- 1.9	108.7	- 1.8	122.0	- 0.2	114.1	- 0.9
New York	110.9	- 1.3	110.5	- 1.5	120.6	- 0.4	109.2	- 4.0	105.7	- 0.6	114.2	1.4	106.7	- 1.5
Philadelphia	113.2	- 2.0	112.7	- 2.3	117.9	- 0.1	108.6	- 4.2	113.4	- 0.5	118.8	- 2.1	107.0	- 2.2
Pittsburgh	112.0	- 0.9	111.6	- 1.1	117.5	0	104.6	- 1.8	112.9	- 0.2	114.7	- 1.1	114.2	- 1.0
Portland, Ore.	111.3	- 1.2	111.0	- 1.4	113.5	0.1	112.4	0.2	110.3	- 0.4	111.9	- 2.0	108.0	- 4.3
St. Louis	112.8	- 0.6	112.4	- 0.7	112.6	0.6	107.7	- 1.7	110.8	- 0.4	119.4	1.2	114.5	- 1.8
San Francisco	112.2	- 1.8	111.6	- 2.3	123.3	0.5	108.7	- 3.0	111.9	- 0.1	115.9	- 0.9	105.0	- 5.2
Scranton	111.0	- 1.1	110.7	- 1.2	116.2	0	106.8	- 1.5	111.0	- 0.2	114.9	- 1.3	106.5	- 2.1
Seattle	110.8	- 2.2	110.2	- 2.7	118.7	- 0.2	105.8	- 3.1	109.9	- 1.9	118.3	- 0.8	104.4	- 5.3
Washington, D.C.	110.1	- 1.3	109.7	- 1.5	112.2	- 0.3	104.8	- 4.6	113.4	- 0.1	114.8	1.9	105.9	- 1.6

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, these indexes are also shown on the base 1935-39=100. Note that they are calculated using the new samples, items and weights). 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.

