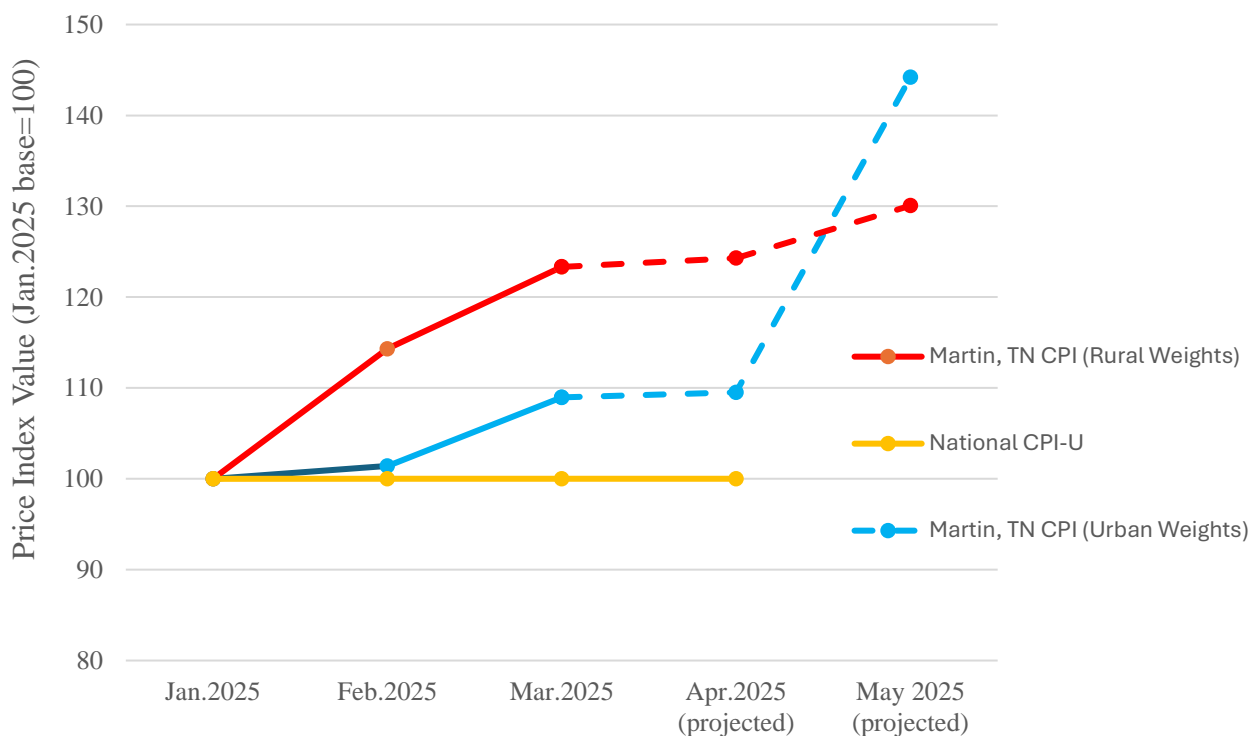


# Monthly Consumer Price Index Report for Martin, TN, March 2025

## 1. Summary

Using the base month of January 2025 (CPI=100), the Consumer Price Index value for March 2025 of 108.965 indicates an 8.97% increase in prices in Martin, TN between the first week of January and March of 2025 (7.50% since February). On a national level, the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) declined by a seasonally adjusted 0.1%, indicating that Martin, TN prices are considerably outside the national trends. This localized inflation indicates an increasing upward pressure on rural prices and potentially some preemptive response to national trade initiatives. It also continues to reflect higher transportation costs for Martin relative to urban hubs, localized scarcity in a consumption desert, and other economic features that are growing increasingly common in remote or isolated rural areas. Figure 1 demonstrates the Martin monthly index (urban and rural values) compared with the national index reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Projections for April and May are based on unweighted data collected in those respective months.

**Figure 1. Changes in CPI for Martin, TN compared with national index January through March of 2025, projected for April and May.**



## 2. Detailed Report

Through 2025, prices for physical transportation products and energy remain high (+14.62% and +41.97%, respectively) in Martin, TN, reflecting a significant departure from the national trend both in terms of magnitude and direction. Food prices have trended upward in the first two months of 2025 (+2.55%), with larger increases exhibited in food prices away from home.

Regarding product-category weights, food was weighted nationally as 13.681% of consumer expenditures in March (8.051% for food at home and 5.629% for food away from home), closer to the January weights after a dip in February.

**Table 1. Changes in aggregated index values between February and March 2025.**

Product Category	Sub-Category	Change Feb.-Mar.2025
<b>Food</b>		<b>+0.2815%</b>
	Food At Home	+1.3972%
	Food Away from Home	+2.7379%
<b>Energy*</b>		<b>+6.6148%</b>
<b>Commodities (Less Food and Energy)</b>		<b>+10.2110%</b>
	Household Furnishings/Supplies	-0.1093%
	Apparel	+2.0390%
	Transportation (less fuel)	+10.2249%
	Medicine/Medical Equipment	-22.9978%
	Recreation Commodities	-0.6544%
	Education/Communication Commodities	0.0000%
	Alcoholic Beverages	+0.8455%
	Other Commodities	+4.4853%
<b>Services (Less Energy)</b>		<b>+1.7480%</b>
	Shelter	+2.8525%
	Water/Sewer/Trash	-0.0071%
	Medical Care Services	+2.5054%
	Transportation Services	-8.4721%
	Recreation Services	-0.3299%
	Education/Communication Services	-0.1770%
	Other Personal Services	+1.4082%

Energy accounted for 6.312% of national consumer expenditures in March 2025, down slightly from February. Compared with the +33.16% shift between January and February, inflation rates for energy were down in March at +6.61%. Commodities less energy and food – including household furnishings/supplies, apparel, transportation less fuel, medicine, recreation, alcohol, and education – accounted for 19.367% of consumer expenditures in March (down slightly from 19.392% in February). Services less energy comprised 60.64% of consumer expenditures, with the heavy subcategory weights being shelter (35.014%), medical care services (6.736%; 6.713% in February), and transportation services (6.27%; down from 6.355% in January). Table 1 illustrates monthly changes across key economic sectors. The increase in overall prices was driven largely by the increase in commodities and energy prices.

### 3. Methods

This consumer price index was initially structured similarly to the CPI from the Local Economic Indicators Project (LEIP) established by Dr. Paul Mason at the University of North Florida (University of North Florida, 2025). Modern data collection techniques and weighting processes improve the quality and accuracy of estimates (Graf, 2020; Konny, 2020); however, the rural environment of Martin, TN introduces its own unique challenges. Data were collected directly from area businesses/retailers, including grocery stores, restaurants, healthcare service providers,

utilities providers, etc., on the first Wednesday of the month. Using first-Wednesday dates rather than the first-of-the-month collection reduces any weekend price differences, store closures, or grocery prices that shift with product perishability throughout the week. This Consumer Price Index utilizes monthly weights as constructed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for urban areas (U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2025a, 2025b, 2025c, 2025d). As Martin, TN is not an urban area, the rural weights are also included in the analysis (up 26.31% since January, with 8.72% of that increase falling in February); however, the rural weights are more aggregated and do not necessarily accurately depict purchasing behavior in the region. The urban weights are more granular, though they may not accurately reflect the weights that consumers place on food, energy, and other expenditures. The BLS reports its weights on a two-month lag, so the Mar.2025 national weights were not available until the May 2025 CPI data release.

#### **4. Acknowledgements/Attribution**

This report was produced by Dr. Anthony R. Delmond, who conducted the analysis. Data were collected by Dr. Delmond, Sara Ullrich (junior in mechanical engineering), and Chayil Watkins (sophomore in agricultural business) at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

#### **5. References**

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