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### CONSUMER EXPENDITURES - 2017

Average expenditures per consumer unit<sup>1</sup> for 2017 were \$60,060, a 4.8-percent increase from 2016 levels, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. During the same period, the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) rose 2.1 percent, and average pretax incomes decreased slightly by 1.5 percent.

Eight of the 10 largest components of household spending increased during 2017. (See table A.) The 12.2-percent rise in education spending was the largest percentage increase among all major components, followed by a 10.0-percent rise in entertainment.

**Table A. Average expenditures and income of all consumer units, 2015-17**

Item	2015	2016	2017	Percent change	
				2015-16	2016-17
Average income before taxes.....	\$69,627	\$74,664	\$73,573	7.2	-1.5
Average annual expenditures.....	55,978	57,311	60,060	2.4	4.8
Food.....	7,023	7,203	7,729	2.6	7.3
Food at home.....	4,015	4,049	4,363	0.8	7.8
Food away from home.....	3,008	3,154	3,365	4.9	6.7
Housing.....	18,409	18,886	19,884	2.6	5.3
Shelter.....	10,742	11,128	11,895	3.6	6.9
Owned dwellings.....	6,210	6,295	6,947	1.4	10.4
Rented dwellings.....	3,802	4,035	4,167	6.1	3.3
Apparel and services.....	1,846	1,803	1,833	-2.3	1.7
Transportation.....	9,503	9,049	9,576	-4.8	5.8
Vehicle purchases.....	3,997	3,634	4,054	-9.1	11.6
Gasoline, other fuels, and motor oil.....	2,090	1,909	1,968	-8.7	3.1
Healthcare.....	4,342	4,612	4,928	6.2	6.9
Health insurance.....	2,977	3,160	3,414	6.1	8.0
Entertainment.....	2,842	2,913	3,203	2.5	10.0
Personal care products and services.....	683	707	762	3.5	7.8
Education.....	1,315	1,329	1,491	1.1	12.2
Cash contributions.....	1,819	2,081	1,873	14.4	-10.0
Personal insurance and pensions.....	6,349	6,831	6,771	7.6	-0.9
Pensions and Social Security.....	6,016	6,509	6,353	8.2	-2.4
All other expenditures.....	1,847	1,897	2,010	2.7	6.0

Note: Subcategories do not sum to their respective major item category.

<sup>1</sup> Consumer units include families, single persons living alone or sharing a household with others but who are financially independent, or two or more persons living together who share major expenses.

## Spending patterns, 2017

- Spending on food increased 7.3 percent. The increase was driven by both food at home spending, up 7.8 percent, and food away from home spending, up 6.7 percent.
- Housing expenditures increased 5.3 percent. Expenditures on the two primary components of shelter, owned dwellings and rented dwellings were up 10.4 percent and 3.3 percent, respectively.
- Transportation expenditures were up 5.8 percent, driven by vehicle purchases, which were up 11.6 percent, following a 9.1 percent decline in 2016. Gasoline, other fuels, and motor oil expenditures were up a modest 3.1 percent, the first increase since 2012.
- Healthcare expenditures were up 6.9 percent, following a 6.2-percent increase in 2016. The largest component of healthcare, health insurance, was up 8.0 percent, following a 6.1-percent increase in the preceding year.
- Entertainment expenditures were up 10.0 percent, following a smaller increase of 2.5 percent in 2016.
- Cash contributions remained volatile, down 10.0 percent after a 14.4-percent increase in 2016.
- Personal insurance and pensions declined by 0.9 percent, its first drop since 2013, driven by a decrease in pensions and Social Security, down 2.4 percent.

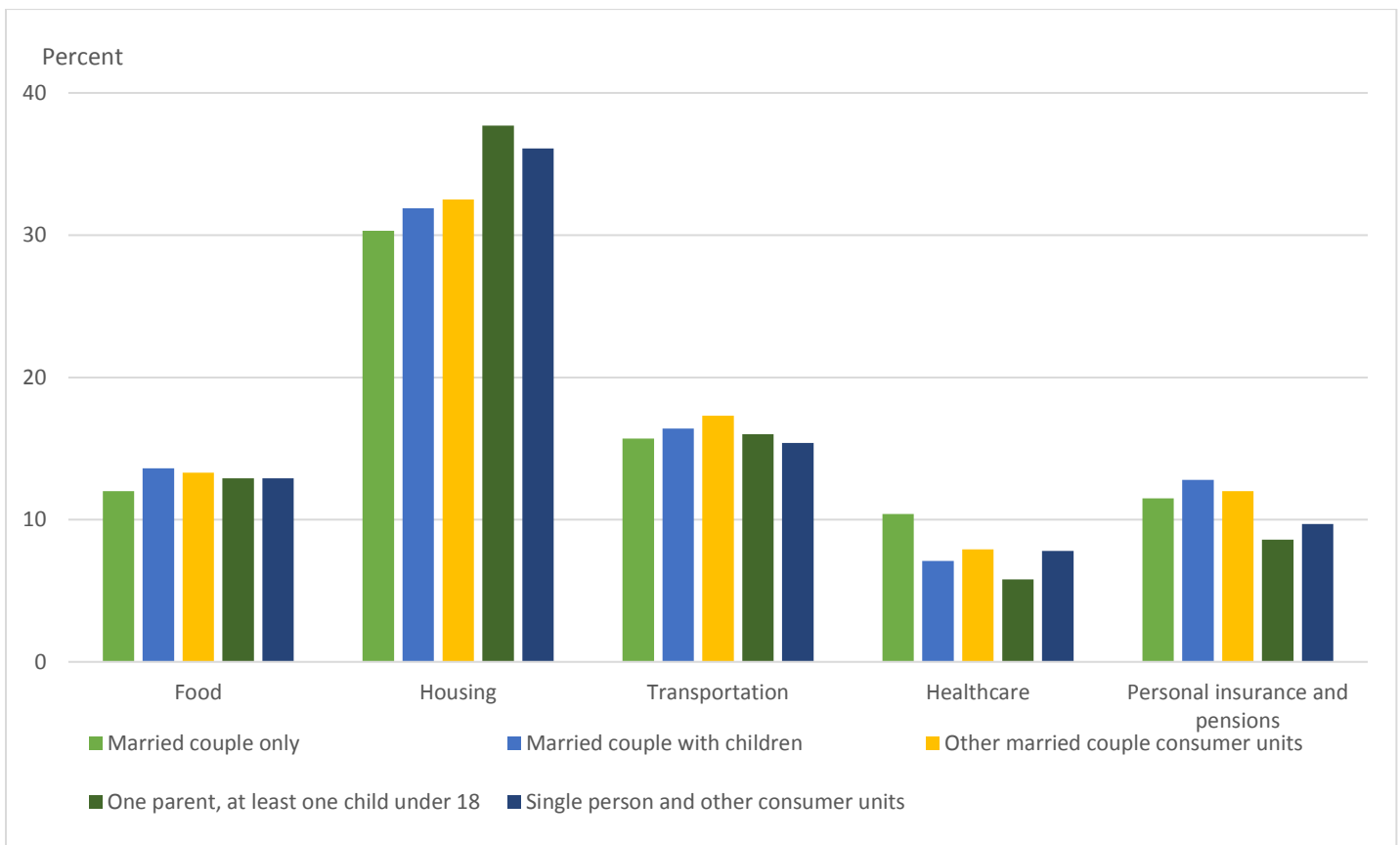
## Spending by composition of consumer unit, 2017

Data from the Consumer Expenditure Surveys (CE) measure how consumers allocate their spending among the various components of total expenditures. Table B and chart 1 compare the shares allocated to selected expenditures by composition of consumer units. Over 10 percent of total spending for married-couple-only consumer units went to healthcare, almost twice as large a share as reported by one-parent consumer units (5.8 percent). Married-couple-with-children consumer units allocated the highest share of all groups to personal insurance and pensions (12.8 percent), while other-married-couple consumer units (those with married couples and persons other than children living in the consumer unit) allocated the highest share to transportation (17.3 percent).

**Table B. Shares of average expenditures on selected major components by composition of consumer unit, 2017**

Item	Married couple only	Married couple with children	Other married couple consumer units	One parent, at least one child under 18	Single person and other consumer units
Food	12.0	13.6	13.3	12.9	12.9
Housing	30.3	31.9	32.5	37.7	36.1
Transportation	15.7	16.4	17.3	16.0	15.4
Healthcare	10.4	7.1	7.9	5.8	7.8
Personal insurance and pensions	11.5	12.8	12.0	8.6	9.7

**Chart 1. Shares of average annual expenditures on selected major components by composition of consumer unit, 2017**



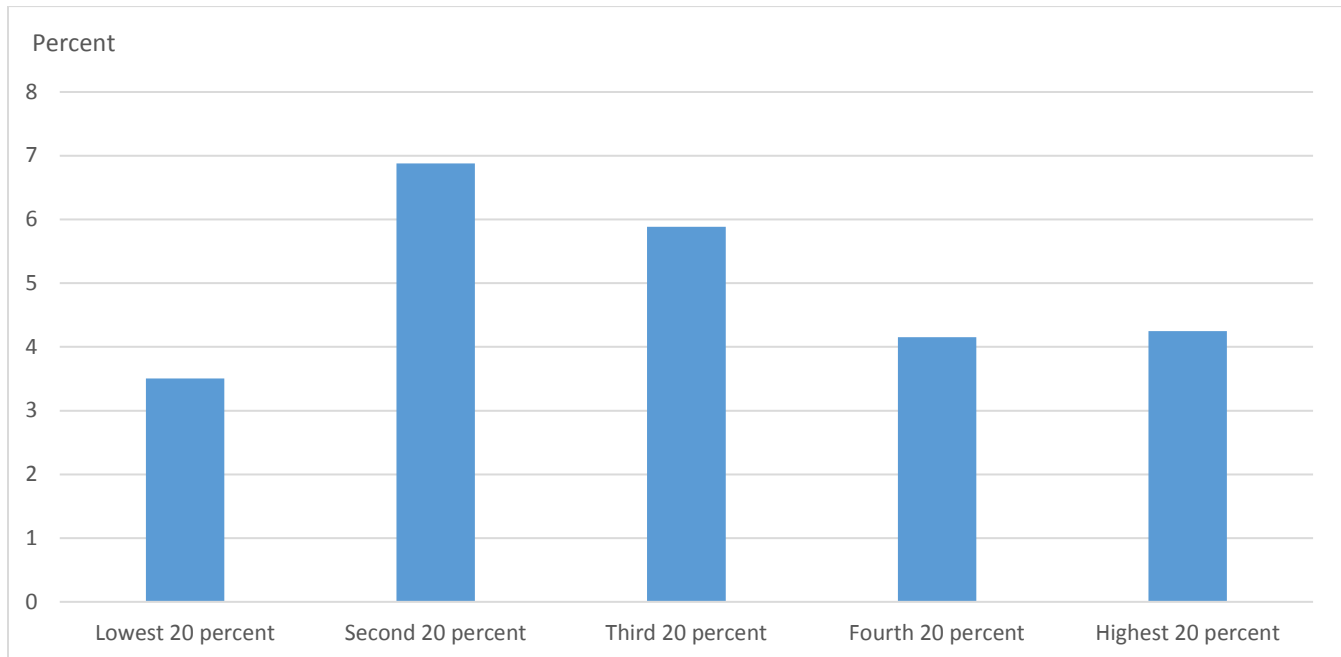
## Spending by income quintile, 2017

Table C and Chart 2 show the percent change for expenditures by income quintile. Overall spending increased in all five quintiles, ranging from 3.5 percent in the lowest quintile to 6.9 percent in the second quintile. Food at home, food away from home, housing, healthcare, and entertainment, rose for all five quintiles. Apparel and services and transportation expenditures rose in four of five quintiles. Personal insurance and pensions spending rose in three of five quintiles. Cash contributions fell in three of five quintiles.

**Table C. Dollar change and percent change in average annual expenditures on major components by income quintile, 2016-17**

Item	Lowest		Second		Third		Fourth		Highest	
	Dollar	Percent	Dollar	Percent	Dollar	Percent	Dollar	Percent	Dollar	Percent
<b>Average annual expenditure change:</b>										
Total.....	\$881	3.5	\$2,530	6.9	\$2,806	5.9	\$2,694	4.2	\$4,767	4.2
Food.....	208	5.4	693	13.9	837	13.4	321	3.8	566	4.5
At home.....	80	3.2	510	16.4	341	9.2	155	3.3	484	7.8
Away from home.....	128	9.4	183	9.8	496	19.6	165	4.5	82	1.3
Housing.....	146	1.4	543	4.0	1,147	7.0	1,557	7.5	1,581	4.7
Apparel and services.....	18	2.1	88	7.6	-171	-11.3	93	4.7	122	3.5
Transportation.....	-270	-7.2	580	9.7	68	0.8	168	1.5	2,076	12.9
Healthcare.....	336	15.6	361	10.2	376	8.8	322	5.9	180	2.3
Entertainment.....	124	10.8	90	5.0	173	7.4	61	1.8	1,001	17.0
Cash contributions.....	92	16.5	-239	-16.7	184	14.1	-18	-1.0	-1,063	-20.3
Personal insurance and pensions.....	10	1.6	655	37.1	109	2.6	-47	-0.6	-1,049	-5.4
All other expenditures	217	11.6	-241	-9.4	83	2.8	237	6.1	1,353	16.2

**Chart 2. Percent change in average annual expenditures by income quintile, 2016-17**



## **Additional information**

Consumer Expenditure (CE) data include the expenditures and income of consumers, as well as the demographic characteristics of those consumers. Tables with more expenditure detail are available at [www.bls.gov/cex](http://www.bls.gov/cex). Published tables provide 2017 CE data by standard classifications that include income quintile, income decile, income class, age of reference person, size of consumer unit, number of earners, composition of consumer unit, region of residence, housing tenure, type of area (urban-rural), race, Hispanic origin, occupation, and highest education level of any member. These annual tables include means, shares, and standard errors. Other tables available on the website include expenditures by age, region, size, or gender cross-tabulated by income before taxes and other demographic variables. Historical tables back to 1984 and selected metropolitan area tabulations are also available.

Standard CE midyear tables, which are similar to the annual tables but cover the third quarter of a given year through the second quarter of the next year, are also available and can be found at [www.bls.gov/cex/midyear.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cex/midyear.htm). Data tables with the most detailed subcategories of expenditures can be obtained by sending a request to [cexinfo@bls.gov](mailto:cexinfo@bls.gov).

The 1996 through 2017 CE public-use microdata, including Interview Survey data, Diary Survey data, and paradata (information about the data collection process), are available on the CE website for free electronic download at [www.bls.gov/cex/pumd\\_data.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cex/pumd_data.htm). The Interview Survey files contain expenditure data in two different formats: MTBI files that present monthly values in an item-coding framework based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) pricing scheme, and EXPN files that organize expenditures by the section of the Interview questionnaire in which they are collected. Expenditure values on EXPN files cover different time periods depending on the specific questions asked, and the files also contain relevant non-expenditure information not found on the MTBI files. For releases prior to 1996, users can continue to purchase USB flash drives using the public-use microdata order form at [www.bls.gov/cex/pumd\\_doc.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cex/pumd_doc.htm).

The change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) cited in the text was calculated as the percentage change between the 12-month average CPI-U for all items from January – December 2016 (240.007) and the 12-month average CPI-U for all items from January – December 2017 (245.120).

The 2017 Data Quality Profile, which reports quality metrics and indicators for the Interview and Diary Surveys regarding measurement, nonresponse, and processing error, will be available shortly after this release.

Recent CE-specific articles in the BLS Beyond the Numbers web report series provide analyses of topical economic issues and long term spending trends, as well as comparisons of CE data to other data series at [www.bls.gov/cex/csxwebarticles.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cex/csxwebarticles.htm) and [www.bls.gov/cex/cecomparison.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cex/cecomparison.htm). Additional methodological and analytical articles using CE data will be published in 2018.

Also available are the Diary Survey questionnaire and a modified version of the computer assisted personal interview (CAPI) instrument used to collect the Interview Survey data at [www.bls.gov/cex/csxsurveyforms.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cex/csxsurveyforms.htm).

Information on the methodology used to calculate and collect CE data is available at [www.bls.gov/cex/ce\\_methodology.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cex/ce_methodology.htm). General articles and research papers using CE data are in the CE research library at [www.bls.gov/cex/research\\_papers/research-paper-catalog.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cex/research_papers/research-paper-catalog.htm).

For further information, contact the Division of Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Office of Prices and Living Conditions at (202) 691-6900 or by email at [cexinfo@bls.gov](mailto:cexinfo@bls.gov). 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.