



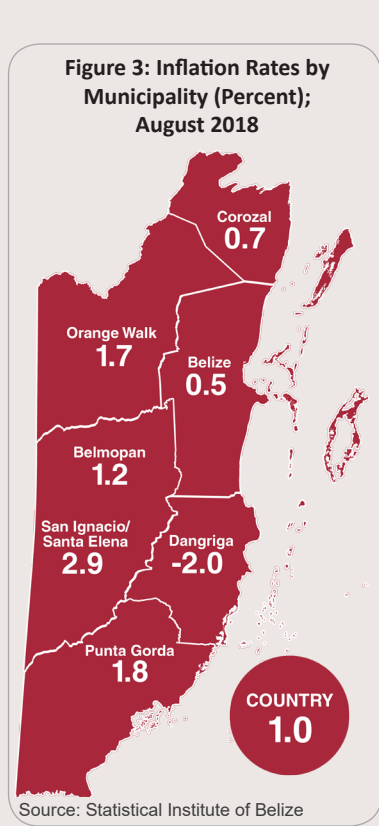
CONSUMER PRICES UP 1% IN AUGUST 2018

ALL-ITEMS: The latest results of the Statistical Institute of Belize's monthly Consumer Price Index (CPI) survey show that for the month of August 2018, the All-Items CPI stood at 105.4, an increase of 1 percent from 104.4 recorded in August 2017 (see Figure 1). This means that, on average, Belizean households experienced a 1 percent rise in the cost of regularly purchased good and services when compared to the same month last year. For the first eight months of 2018, a year to date inflation rate of 0.2 percent was recorded.

TRANSPORT: Despite decreases in the cost of new motor vehicles and prices for spare parts and accessories, the 'Transport' category remained the main contributor to the overall increase in consumer prices, as prices within this category saw an overall increase of 2.7 percent compared to August of last year. This was mainly driven by a significant increase of 9.3 percent in the 'Fuel and Lubricants' sub-category. At the pump, the average price per gallon of Premium gasoline rose by 10.2 percent from \$10.62 in August 2017 to \$11.71 in August 2018, while Regular gasoline rose by 12.7 percent from \$9.79 to \$11.03, and Diesel increased by 21.1 percent from \$8.80 to \$10.65 (see Table 1). Also contributing to the overall rise in the 'Transport' category were international airfares, which were 5.6 percent higher on average than they were in August of last year. In addition, the cost of vehicle maintenance and repairs increased by 5.3 percent when compared to the same month of 2017.

FOOD AND NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES: Across the category of 'Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages', prices were down by 0.6 percent overall in comparison to August of last year (see Figure 1). This decline was almost entirely attributable to lower prices for some products within the 'Food' sub-category, as reduced prices were observed in meat products such as pig tail and whole chicken, as well as some vegetables and fruits items, including sweet peppers and limes. These decreases were sufficient to offset increases in other food items, such as red kidney beans, pineapples, watermelons, and potatoes (see Table 1).

HOUSING, WATER, ELECTRICITY, GAS AND OTHER FUELS: Goods and services within the 'Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and Other Fuels' category saw an overall increase of 1.1 percent, mainly due to higher prices for Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and home rental costs when compared to August of last year. The average cost of a 100-pound cylinder of LPG rose by \$14.67, from \$99.92 in August 2017 to \$114.59 in August 2018 (see Table 1). Adding to the overall rise in this category, Home rental prices rose by 0.6 percent for the month, while Electricity prices recorded an average increase of 6.4 percent compared to the same period last year, following an increase in electricity tariffs earlier this year.



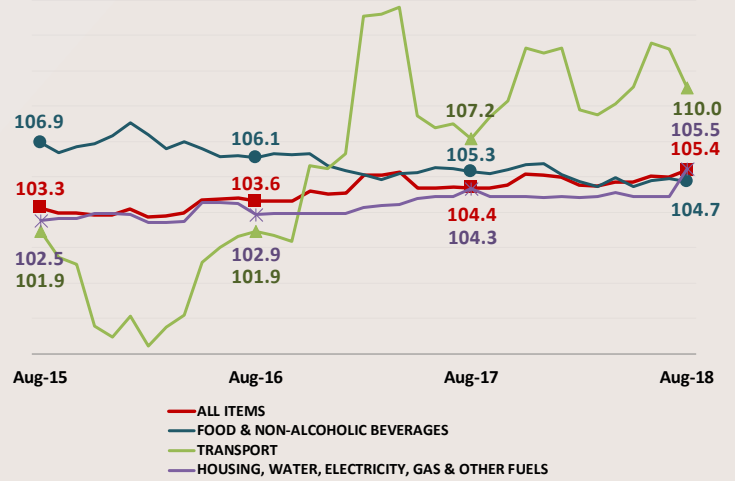
Source: Statistical Institute of Belize

decrease in home rentals cost for that town.

ALL OTHER CATEGORIES OF GOODS AND SERVICES: 'All Other Categories of Goods and Services' together experienced an overall increase of 1.2 percent compared to the same month last year. This was driven by a significant increase in the cost of some medical services, specifically doctor consultation and surgery fees. Within the 'Education' category, a 2.2 percent increase was recorded due to a rise in fees for some pre-primary and primary educational institutions, while motor vehicle insurance premiums were up 6.6 percent in comparison to August 2017.

INFLATION RATES BY MUNICIPALITY: For the first time this year, the twin towns of San Ignacio/Santa Elena experienced the highest monthly increase in consumer prices, with an inflation rate of 2.9 percent (see Figure 3), as consumers in this municipality saw higher than average increases in home rental costs. On the other hand, Dangriga reported the only decline in consumer prices for the month, with an inflation rate of negative 2 percent, attributed to a

Figure 1: Consumer Price Index by Major Categories; August 2015 - August 2018



Source: Statistical Institute of Belize

Figure 2: Inflation Rates by Major Categories; August 2018



Source: Statistical Institute of Belize

Table 1: Average Prices of Selected Foods and Fuel, August 2017 and August 2018

Item	August 2017	August 2018	% Change
Ground Beef 1 Lb	5.97	6.06	↑ 1.5
Beef Steak 1 Lb	7.93	8.04	↑ 1.4
Pork Chops 1 Lb	6.95	7.16	↑ 3.0
Pig Tail 1 Lb	4.35	4.26	↓ -2.1
Whole Chicken 1 Lb	2.69	2.67	↓ -0.7
Sugar, White 1 Lb	0.80	0.79	↓ -0.4
Sugar, Brown 1 Lb	0.52	0.51	↓ -1.8
Flour (Gitana) 1 Lb	0.94	0.92	↓ -2.3
Eggs 1 Dozen	3.11	3.19	↑ 2.5
Belikin Beer (w/out bottle) 284 ml	2.98	2.94	↓ -1.5
Natural Milk 1 Litre	2.51	2.56	↑ 2.0
Red Kidney Beans 1 Lb	1.46	1.66	↑ 13.5
Pineapple 1 Lb	1.03	1.30	↑ 25.3
Sweet Pepper 1 Lb	4.59	3.86	↓ -15.9
Cabbage 1 Lb	1.42	1.43	↑ 1.0
Limes 1 unit	0.26	0.25	↓ -2.8
Potatoes 1 Lb	1.52	1.71	↑ 12.3
Watermelon 1 Lb	0.62	0.85	↑ 37.7
Premium Gasoline 1 Gal	10.62	11.71	↑ 10.2
Regular Gasoline 1 Gal	9.79	11.03	↑ 12.7
Diesel 1 Gal	8.80	10.65	↑ 21.1
Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) 100 Lbs	99.92	114.59	↑ 14.7

Source: Statistical Institute of Belize