How do I check that in fact $64,000 in Boston has the same buying power as $32,000 in Kansas?

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$$\text{Real Salary} = \frac{\text{Nominal Salary}}{\text{Price Index}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Real Salary}_{\text{Kansas}} = \frac{32{,}000}{125} \times 100$$

$$\text{Real Salary}_{\text{Boston}} = \frac{64{,}000}{250} \times 100$$

= 25,600

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Same Real Value

Same buying power

CPI = 125   CPI = 250

Kansas City ————————————→ Boston

To calculate "buying power" we calculate Real Values:

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Kansas City ⟶ Boston

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Same buying power

Using the CPI: Inflation Calculator

This site finds the equivalencies for
dollars in different years
http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl