FACT SHEET

INFLATION A TOP CONCERN AS PRICES CONTINUE TO RISE

As Americans continue to face higher costs with no end in sight, voters consider the cost of living and inflation as the single most important issue to them leading up to the 2024 elections.

Did you know...?

More Americans may be struggling to make ends meet. **A majority, 65%, say they live paycheck to paycheck**, according to CNBC and SurveyMonkey's recent Your Money International Financial Security Survey, which polled 498 U.S. adults.

Read more at CNBC →

Americans are paying on average **$784 more each month compared with the same time two years ago** and **$1,069 more compared with three years ago**.

Read more at Fox Business→

Food insecurity is rising and low-income families are the hardest hit by soaring grocery prices, **spending 31% of their income on food**.

Read more at The Washington Post →

High inflation has created severe financial pressures for most U.S. households, which are forced to pay more for everyday necessities like food and rent. **Grocery prices are up more than 21% from the start of 2021, while shelter costs are up 18.37%**, according to FOX Business calculations. Energy prices, meanwhile, are up 38.4%.

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Inflation A Top Concern As Prices Continue To Rise

Overview

As Americans continue to face higher costs with no end in sight, voters consider the cost of living and inflation as the single most important issue to them leading up to the 2024 elections.

Americans are now paying more for everything under Biden. Prices have skyrocketed 19.4% since he took office in 2021 and are still expected to rise in 2024. Today, it costs a typical American household $1,068 more a month for goods and services since the beginning of the President's term.

Stubbornly high food costs continue to strain shoppers' wallets, with government estimates showing prices may continue to rise. Food insecurity rates are soaring as grocery prices are at the highest that they've been in the past 30 years

Nearly 21 months after President Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act, any cooling of the inflation rate cannot be attributed to the law. Economists, including Obama's Chair of the Council of Economic Advisors, are unable to point to any provision of the law that has been a factor in bringing down inflation. It's no surprise that President Biden has acknowledged the law had nothing to do with inflation and should've been called something else.

Inflation Remains The Biggest Problem Facing American Families

Inflation Is The "Most Important Financial Problem" Facing American Families. "Inflation continues to be an issue for Americans and is likely why less than half are positive about their financial situation. In addition to being named the most important financial problem facing their family, inflation also ranks as one of the domestic problems Americans worry most about. The issue trails only immigration, the government and the economy in general when Americans are asked to name the most important problem facing the country." (Jeffrey M. Jones, "Americans Continue To Name Inflation As Top Financial Problem," Gallup, 5/2/24)

A Recent Harvard CAPS/Harris Poll Finds "Inflation Is 'Far And Away' The Biggest Issue For Americans Heading Into The 2024 Election." "Inflation is 'far and away' the biggest issue for Americans heading into the 2024 election, but economic outlooks and President Biden's approval rating vary by race and ethnicity, according to a new Harvard CAPS/Harris poll. As he faces off against former President Trump, the presumptive Republican nominee, Biden has been battling negative perceptions of his handling of the economy." (Taylor Giorno, "Inflation Concerns Weigh Heavy On Voters, Vary By Race: Poll," *The Hill*, 5/20/24)

Another Poll Found 73% Of Swing State Voters Rank The Cost Of Living And Inflation As Their Top Three Issues. "New polling shows President Joe Biden's greatest weakness on Election Day could be former President Donald Trump's path to victory as voters are frustrated with the high cost of living. A Swing State Project poll found 60% of voters disapprove of Biden's economy and 73% of all voters rank the cost of living and inflation as one of their top three issues, contradicting the president's touted ability to 'build our economy from the middle out and the bottom up.'" (Emily Hallas, "Biden Economy Marred By High Cost Of Living Driving Voters Back To Trump: Poll," *The Washington Examiner*, 5/23/24)

- **The Poll Was Conducted By The Swing State Project, A Coalition Of Groups Including The Nonpartisan Cook Political Report, Democrat And Republican Polling Firms.** "The Swing State Project, a coalition of the nonpartisan Cook Political Report, Democratic polling firm BSG, and Republican polling firm GS Strategy Group, shows Trump leading Biden overall by 47% to 44% across seven swing states." (Emily Hallas, "Biden Economy Marred By High Cost Of Living Driving Voters Back To Trump: Poll," *The Washington Examiner*, 5/23/24)

<u>A Majority Of Americans Are Struggling To Make Ends Meet</u>

65% Of Americans Are Living Paycheck To Paycheck, Up From 58% In 2023. "More Americans may be struggling to make ends meet. A majority, 65%, say they live paycheck to paycheck, according to CNBC and SurveyMonkey's recent Your Money International Financial Security Survey, which polled 498 U.S. adults. That's a slight increase from last year's results, which found that 58% of Americans considered themselves to be living paycheck to paycheck." (Gili Malinsky, "More Americans Say They Are Living Paycheck To Paycheck This Year Than In 2023-Here's Why," CNBC, 4/9/24)

According To The Federal Reserve, Inflation Continues To Devastate Americans' Livelihoods As Nearly Two-Thirds Of US Adults Are Now "Worse Off" And "Roughly 1 In 6 Couldn't Pay Their Monthly Bills." "Inflation may have slowed last year, but it continued to deal heavy blows — some devastating — on Americans' livelihoods: Nearly two-thirds of US adults were worse off because of it, and roughly 1 in 6 couldn't pay all their monthly bills, new Federal Reserve data shows." (Alicia Wallace, "High Inflation Made Finances Worse For 65% Of Americans Last Year," CNN, 5/21/24)

"Inflation Made The Financial Lives 'Worse' For 65% Of US Households, According To The Report." (Alicia Wallace, "High Inflation Made Finances Worse For 65% Of Americans Last Year," CNN, 5/21/24)

- **"Among Those, 19% Said It Was 'Much Worse.'"** (Alicia Wallace, "High Inflation Made Finances Worse For 65% Of Americans Last Year," CNN, 5/21/24)

Inflation Remains Stubbornly High And Continues To Rise

Inflation Continues To Rise Through 2024. "Their worries are not surprising. Inflation has been rising in 2024, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, even if incrementally." (Gili Malinsky, "More Americans Say They Are Living Paycheck To Paycheck This Year Than In 2023-Here's Why," CNBC, 4/9/24)

It Remains High As Consumer Prices Increased 0.3% In April. "Inflation eased slightly in April, providing at least a bit of relief for consumers while still holding above levels that would suggest a cut in interest rates is imminent. The consumer price index, a broad measure of how much goods and services cost at the cash register, increased 0.3% from March, the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported Wednesday. That was slightly below the Dow Jones estimate for 0.4%."(Jeff Cox, "CPI Report Shows Inflation Easing In April, With Consumer Prices Till Rising 3.4% From A Year Ago," CNBC, 5/15/24)

According To The Consumer Price Index, Prices Are Up 3.4% From April 2023 To April 2024. "On a 12-month basis, however, the CPI increased 3.4%, in line with expectations."

As Inflation Increased, Worker Earnings Fell 0.2%. "The inflation increase was bad news for workers, who saw earnings fall 0.2% on the month when adjusted for inflation." (Jeff Cox, "CPI Report Shows Inflation Easing In April, With Consumer Prices Till Rising 3.4% From A Year Ago," CNBC, 5/15/24)

The Cost Of Everyday Essential Items Has Skyrocketed Under Biden

Prices Continue To Rise, Up 19.4% Since Biden Took Office In 2021

CNN: "Prices Have Skyrocketed During The Biden Administration." "Prices have skyrocketed during the Biden administration, and while the rate of inflation has slowed, costs remain high. Polls show that inflation is one of Americans' main financial concerns." (Tami Luhby, "We Asked Readers Whether They Are Better Off In 2024. Here's What They Said," CNN, 5/25/24)

- **Axios: "Prices Have Been Rising Faster In 2024" Despite Declines In 2023.** "After large 2023 declines in both the inflation rate and inflation expectations, prices have been rising faster in 2024. The survey data suggests that might be creeping into both consumer and business psychology." (Neil Irwin, "Americans' Inflation Expectations Are Rising," Axios, 5/13/24)

Under Biden, Prices Are Up 19.4% Since He Took Office In 2021. "But the report – released last week – also showed that prices are up more than 19.4% since Biden took office in 2021." (Megan Henney, "Inflation Is Up 20% Since Biden Took Office," Fox Business, 5/20/24)

- **Grocery Prices Are Up 21%, Shelter Costs Are Up 18.37%, And Energy Prices Are Up 38.4%.** "High inflation has created severe financial pressures for most U.S. households, which are forced to pay more for everyday necessities like food and rent. Grocery prices are up more than 21% from the start of 2021, while shelter costs are up 18.37%, according to FOX Business calculations. Energy prices, meanwhile, are up 38.4.%." (Megan Henney, "Inflation Is Up 20% Since Biden Took Office," Fox Business, 5/20/24)

For The Month Are March, Typical American Households Are Paying $227 More For Goods And Services Than They Did One Year Ago. "The typical U.S. household needed to pay $227 more a month in March to purchase the same goods and services it did one year ago because of still-high inflation." (Megan Henney, "Inflation Is Up 20% Since Biden Took Office," Fox Business, 5/20/24)

"Americans Are Paying On Average $784 More Each Month Compared With The Same Time Two Years Ago And $1,069 More Compared With Three Years Ago." (Megan Henney, "Inflation Is Up 20% Since Biden Took Office," Fox Business, 5/20/24)

Energy and Housing Costs Continue To Rise And The Average Price For Gas Is Up More Than 50 Cents Since The First Of The Year. "Although inflation eased in April, costs for housing and energy continued to climb. Gas prices in particular have become a sticking point for voters. The average price at the pump, about $3.61 per gallon, has risen more than 50 cents since the start of the year, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration." (Abha Bhattarai, "Americans Are Down On The Economy (Again), Whit Inflation Topping Election Concerns," *The Washington Post*, 5/19/24)

According To The Latest Consumer Price Index, The Price Index, The Price Of Everyday Goods Rose 3.4% In April. "Inflation has emerged as one of the most stubborn political problems for President Biden in his re-election campaign, and price growth hit a grim new milestone this week in a blow to the White House. The consumer price index, a broad measure of the price of everyday goods including gasoline, groceries and rent, rose 3.4% in April, down slightly from March." (Megan Henney, "Inflation Is Up 20% Since Biden Took Office," Fox Business, 5/20/24)

Americans Are Paying More For Everything Under Biden

Americans Are "Paying More For Just About Everything." "Throughout the country, shoppers are paying more for just about everything, forcing many to cut unnecessary spending such as dining out, entertainment and vacations." (Nancy Loo, "Groceries Costly For Many Americans Despite Slowing Inflation," NewsNation, 5/15/24)

"Grocery Prices Are Up By Over 1% Compared To Last Year And By 25% Since The Pandemic." (Nancy Loo, "Groceries Costly For Many Americans Despite Slowing Inflation," NewsNation, 5/15/24)

- **"That Means The Average Cost To Feed A Family Of Four Is Nearly $1,000 Per Month."** (Nancy Loo, "Groceries Costly For Many Americans Despite Slowing Inflation," NewsNation, 5/15/24)

"Just Having A Place To Call Home Is Costing More. Rent Or Ownership Expenses Are Up By 5.5%." (Nancy Loo, "Groceries Costly For Many Americans Despite Slowing Inflation," NewsNation, 5/15/24)

- **"That Means A $1,000 Rent Is Now $1,055."** (Nancy Loo, "Groceries Costly For Many Americans Despite Slowing Inflation," NewsNation, 5/15/24)

Car Insurance Rates Are Up Nearly 23% From Last Year And Fixing Issues Costs Nearly 10% More. "Having a car to get around is up significantly. Insurance rates are nearly 23% higher than last year and 46% since the pandemic — and fixing any issues costs nearly 10% more." (Nancy Loo, "Groceries Costly For Many Americans Despite Slowing Inflation," NewsNation, 5/15/24)

FOOD PRICES

The Cost Of Food Remains Sky High And Low-Income Families Are The Hardest Hit

"Overall, Grocery Prices Are 25% Higher Than 2020, Outpacing Inflation." (Nancy Loo, "Groceries Costly For Many Americans Despite Slowing Inflation," NewsNation, 5/15/24)

- **The Cost Of Dining Out Is Up 26% Since The Covid Pandemic.** "Food inflation also has the cost of dining out by 26% since the pandemic. Restaurants are also seeing an impact, as consumers cut back by cooking meals at home." (Nancy Loo, "Groceries Costly For Many Americans Despite Slowing Inflation," NewsNation, 5/15/24)

Food Insecurity Is Rising And Low-Income Families Are The Hardest Hit By Soaring Grocery Prices, Spending 31% Of Their Income On Food. "Low-income families have been hit hardest by rising grocery prices, and they spend 31% of their income on food, compared with 8% for wealthier ones. Food insecurity is rising and food banks around the country report significant increases in demand in the past year, particularly after the expiration of extra pandemic food stamps last February." (Abha Bhattarai and Jeff Stein, "Inflation Has Fallen. Why Are Groceries Still So Expensive," *The Washington Post*, 2/2/24)

- **"Lower-Income Workers Have Been The Hardest Hit By Higher Prices, Particularly For Food And Other Necessities."** "Lower-income workers have been the hardest hit by higher prices, particularly for food and other necessities, since those expenses account for a bigger share of the budget, studies show. Now, 76% of consumers earning less than $50,000 a year and 62% of those earning between $50,000 and $100,000 were living paycheck to paycheck in July, little changed from a year ago, LendingClub found. Of those earning $100,000 or more, only 45% reported living paycheck to paycheck." (Jessica Dickler, "60% Of Americans Are Still Living Paycheck To Paycheck As Inflation Hits Workers' Wages," CNBC, 9/27/23)

"Eating Continues To Cost More," Marking The Highest Food Prices Since The Early 1990s. "The last time Americans spent this much of their money on food, George H.W. Bush was in office, 'Terminator 2: Judgment Day' was in theaters and C+C Music Factory was rocking the Billboard charts. Eating continues to cost more, even as overall inflation has eased from the blistering pace consumers endured throughout much of 2022 and 2023." (Jesse Newman and Heather Haddon, "It's Been 30 Years Since Food Ate Up This Much Of Your Income," *The Wall Street Journal*, 2/21/24)

- ***The Wall Street Journal* Headline: "It's Been 30 Years Since Food Ate Up This Much Of Your Income"** (Jesse Newman and Heather Haddon, "It's Been 30 Years Since Food Ate Up This Much Of Your Income," *The Wall Street Journal*, 2/21/24)

Food Prices Continue To Rise And The USDA Projects An Increase Of 2.9% Throughout 2024

The U.S. Department Of Agriculture (USDA): For April 2024, "Food Prices Were 2.2% Higher Than In April 2023." "The CPI for all food increased 0.2% from March 2024 to April 2024, and food prices were 2.2% higher than in April 2023." ("Food Price Outlook, 2024: Summary Findings," U.S. Department Of Agriculture, Accessed 5/28/24)

- **USDA: "The All-Items Consumer Price Index (CPI), … Was Up 3.4% From April 2023."** "The all-items Consumer Price Index (CPI), a measure of economy-wide inflation, increased 0.4% from March 2024 to April 2024 and was up 3.4% from April 2023." ("Food Price Outlook, 2024: Summary Findings," U.S. Department Of Agriculture, Accessed 5/28/24)

- **USDA: "The Food-At-Home (Grocery Store Or Supermarket Food Purchases) CPI Increased 0.1% From March 2024 To April 2024 And Was 1.1% Higher Than April 2023."** ("Food Price Outlook, 2024: Summary Findings," U.S. Department Of Agriculture, Accessed 5/28/24)

- **USDA: "The Food-Away-From-Home (Restaurant Purchases) CPI Increased 0.3% In April 2024 And Was 4.1% Higher Than April 2023."** ("Food Price Outlook, 2024: Summary Findings," U.S. Department Of Agriculture, Accessed 5/28/24)

The USDA Predicts In 2024 That All Food Prices Will Increase 2.2%, With Food-At-Home Prices To Increase 1.2% And Food-Away-From Home Prices To Increase 4.2%. "In 2024, all food prices are predicted to increase 2.2%, with a prediction interval of 1.0 to 3.5%. Food-at-home prices are predicted to increase 1.2%, with a prediction interval of -0.7 to 3.1%, and food-away-from-home prices are predicted to increase 4.2%, with a prediction interval of 3.4 to 4.9%." ("Food Price Outlook, 2024: Summary Findings," U.S. Department Of Agriculture, Accessed 5/28/24)

The Inflation Reduction Act Failed To Bring Down Prices

The Inflation Reduction Act Has Had No Impact On Lowering Prices For Americans

"It's Increasingly Clear That Immediately Curbing Prices Wasn't The Point" Of The Inflation Reduction Act As Most Economists Say Little To No Drop In Inflation Had Come From The Law. "Even President Joe Biden has some regrets about the name of the Inflation Reduction Act: As the giant law turns 1 on Wednesday, it's increasingly clear that immediately curbing prices wasn't the point. While price increases have cooled over the past year — the inflation rate has dropped from 9% to 3.2% — most economists say little to none of the drop came from the law." (Josh Boak and Paul Wiseman, "Inflation Is Down, But The Inflation Reduction Act Likely Doesn't Deserve The Credit," *The Associated Press*, 8/16/23)

Jason Furman, Obama's Chair Of The Council Of Economic Advisors: "I Can't Think Of Any Mechanism By Which It Would Have Brought Down Inflation To Date." "'I can't think of any mechanism by which it would have brought down inflation to date,' said Harvard University economist Jason Furman, who added that the law could eventually help to lower electricity bills." (Josh Boak and Paul Wiseman, "Inflation Is Down, But The Inflation Reduction Act Likely Doesn't Deserve The Credit," *The Associated Press*, 8/16/23)

Economist Alex Arnon Of The University Of Pennsylvania's Penn Wharton Budget Model: "The IRA Has Just Not Been A Significant Factor" In Bringing Down Inflation. "Alex Arnon, an economic and budget analyst for the University of Pennsylvania's Penn Wharton Budget Model, offers a similar assessment. 'We can say with pretty strong confidence that it was mostly other factors that have brought inflation down,' he said. 'The IRA has just not been a significant factor.'" (Josh Boak and Paul Wiseman, "Inflation Is Down, But The Inflation Reduction Act Likely Doesn't Deserve The Credit," *The Associated Press*, 8/16/23)

Biden Has Admitted The Law Has Little To Do With Bringing Down Inflation

In August 2023, Biden Said "I Wish I Hadn't Called [The Inflation Reduction Act] That Because It Has Less To Do With Reducing Inflation Than It Has To Do With Providing Alternatives That Generate Economic Growth." "'I wish I hadn't called it that because it has less to do with reducing inflation than it has to do with providing alternatives that generate economic growth,' Biden said Thursday at a fundraiser in Utah, adding that he still believes that with the law 'we're literally reducing the cost of people being able to meet their basic needs.'" (Josh Boak and Paul Wiseman, "Inflation Is Down, But The Inflation Reduction Act Likely Doesn't Deserve The Credit," *The Associated Press*, 8/16/23)

Biden: "[The Inflation Reduction Act] Has Nothing To Do With Inflation." "Biden, on his three-state western swing this past week, emphasized to donors and voters how the law addresses climate change and promotes the creation of jobs as the economy moves toward renewable energy. 'It has nothing to do with inflation,' Biden said at a New Mexico fundraiser. 'It has to do with the $368 billion, the single-largest investment in climate change anywhere in the world, anywhere. No one has ever, ever spent that. And it's beginning to take hold.'" (Josh Boak and Paul Wiseman, "Inflation Is Down, But The Inflation Reduction Act Likely Doesn't Deserve The Credit," *The Associated Press*, 8/16/23)