

ECONOMIC UPDATE

June 10, 2022

Economic Issue in Focus: Putin's Price Hikes Continue to Push Up Prices on Food and Energy With U.S. Households Feeling These Burdens

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported the May Consumer Price Index rose 1.0% on a seasonally adjusted basis, up from 0.3% in April.

Prices remain far too high for U.S. workers and families, blunting Americans' gains from a red-hot economy. Putin's price hikes continue to push up prices on food and energy and households are feeling these burdens.

The Federal Reserve is best positioned to address inflation in the short term through using the appropriate tools to temper prices while maintaining the momentum of the economic recovery.

From [all angles](#), Democrats are working on bringing down out-of-pocket costs for U.S. workers and families. The Biden administration is increasing the oil supply and working with the FTC to boost competition in oil markets to bring down gas prices and Congressional Democrats are working to combat price gouging to ensure companies are not lining their pockets while U.S. drivers foot the bill.

The White House has led the charge to fix the supply-chain snarls that have burdened households and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is beginning to make our supply chains more resilient. President Biden recently announced a series of actions to boost food production and support farmers to lower grocery costs for U.S. shoppers. The House is considering legislation next week to directly address rising food prices.

Key Economic Indicators To Track

- **Retail Sales Data for May Are Set for Release on June 15:** The Census Bureau is scheduled to release retail sales data on Wednesday, June 15. Retail sales assess the confidence American consumers have in the economy. Macroeconomic forecasters anticipate an increase of 0.2% in retail sales from April and an increase of 0.8% excluding auto sales.
- **Federal Reserve FOMC Meeting is Scheduled for June 14-15:** The Federal Reserve's Federal Open Market Committee is [scheduled](#) to meet on June 14-15, where the Committee is expected to raise interest rates to continue to address rising inflation. The FOMC will also be releasing its updated economic projections.

JEC Spotlight: Unions Play a Critical Role in Narrowing Racial Economic Disparities

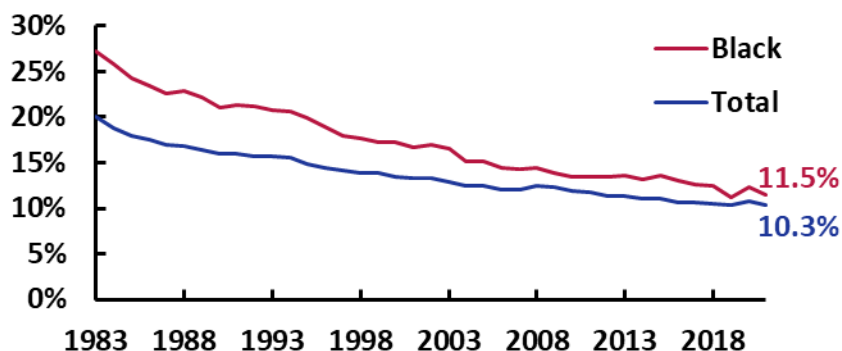
The JEC and the House Education and Labor Committee released a new [issue brief](#) which shows how unions fight racial economic disparities. Workers of color have a long history of organizing for better wages and working conditions, even when they were excluded from established unions and lacked labor protections. Today, 11.5% of Black workers are members of a union, the highest rate of any major racial group.

Union representation [narrows](#) racial pay gaps. Collective bargaining [increases](#) the power of marginalized workers by standardizing pay grades based on skill level and strengthening protections against workplace discrimination. Unionization [increases pay](#) by 17.3% for Black workers, 23.1% for Latino workers and 14.7% for Asian workers, compared to 10.9% for white workers.

Increased income thanks to unionization also narrows [racial wealth gaps](#). For example, unionization increases the median Black household's wealth by more than three times, compared to less than two times for white households.

Black Workers are More Likely to Be Members of a Union

Share of workers with union membership by race, 1983-2021



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Selected JEC Resources

- [Democrats Are Working to Fight Inflation, Lower Costs and Address Supply Shortages](#)
- [Oil Companies Are Enjoying Market Influence and Record Profits, While U.S. Families Foot the Bill for High Gas and Energy Prices](#)
- [The Economic State of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the United States](#)
- [Native American Communities Continue to Face Barriers to Opportunity that Stifle Economic Mobility](#)
- [Congress and the Biden Administration Are Putting Policies in Place to Continue the Strong Wage Gains Workers Experienced in 2021](#)

Information for Members and staff: <https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/democrats/publications>
Sign up to receive JEC publications at <https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/democrats/subscribe-to-newsletter>

Contact: nita_somasundaram@jec.senate.gov