

# [***Hunger Has Increased Under Joe Biden***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BVY-1MH1-JBR6-90M2-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** The growing number of U.S. households struggling to afford enough food could pose a problem for Biden at the November election.

**Body**

The number of Americans struggling to put enough food on the table for themselves and their families has been growing in recent years, reaching a rate of 12.8 percent of households in 2022, according to data from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

This increase is now likely to pose a thorny problem for [*Joe Biden*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/joe-biden?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) as he runs for reelection in November, especially as inflation remains higher than expected—though far below its peak in June 2022.

There were about 17 million American households in 2022 which experienced difficulties at some point during the year providing enough food for all their family members due to a lack of resources. The situation was worse among households with children, single parents, and those led by ethnic minorities.

The number of Americans struggling to afford food was higher in 2022 than the year before, when the rate of households experiencing food insecurity was 10.2 percent (13.8 million households). In 2020 and 2019, it was 10.5 percent (13.8 million households), slightly higher than in 2021 but still below 2022 levels.

Historic data shows that hunger rates in the U.S. declined during [*Donald Trump*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/donald-trump?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)'s presidency: in 2016, 12.3 percent of American households experienced food insecurity (15.6 million households); in 2017, the rate dipped to 11.8 percent (15.0 million households); in 2018, it continued sliding to 11.1 percent (14.3 million households).

While the rise of food insecurity in the nation can be linked to the rise of inflation which followed the end of the pandemic and the end of federal support for struggling families, Biden is likely to take the brunt for the growing problem—despite his efforts to boost initiatives like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

In late February, the [*Biden administration announced a $1.7 billion package to fund initiatives*](https://www.newsweek.com/joe-biden-pledges-1-7billion-end-hunger-us-white-house-1873734#:~:text=The%20Biden%20administration%20has%20announced,141%20projects%20across%20the%20nation.?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) aimed at ending hunger across the United States by 2030. *Newsweek* contacted the White House for comment by email on Tuesday morning.

"Biden can't win the battle against food insecurity without winning the war against inflation," Thomas Gift, founding director of the Centre on U.S. ***Politics*** at University College London, told *Newsweek*.

"Food assistance programs like SNAP can help the most disadvantaged. Yet they often leave out millions of Americans who are struggling to make ends meet but who don't qualify for state or federal entitlement programs," he continued. For Gift, many Americans struggle to afford enough food is "one more reason why many voters are convinced that the economy isn't doing well."

"The White House wants to tout the success of Bidenomics. The risk is that it rings hollow for many households that continue to struggle under the weight of the administration's policies," Gift added.

[*A recent Gallup analysis found that the U.S. had the highest rate of people struggling*](https://www.newsweek.com/hunger-stat-shames-america-1892071#:~:text=The%20U.S.%20had%20the%20highest,to%20a%20recent%20Gallup%20survey.?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) to buy enough food than any other G7 countries, with one in four Americans saying there had been times in the past 12 months when they did not have enough money to procure the food they needed.

"The data on food insecurity across the G7 and in particular in the United States are indeed very troubling," Todd Landman, a professor of political science at the School of ***Politics*** and International Relations at the University of Nottingham in the U.K., told *Newsweek*.

"There are multiple and intersecting drivers for food insecurity based on household income, race and ethnicity, and the erosion of wages owing to persistent inflation despite an overall improving economic picture," he added.

"The existing measures such as SNAP provide remedial comfort and support at best, but there are larger structural issues in the U.S. economy related to tax and government resources required to help the least well off," Landman continued.

According to the professor and international consultant, the fact that 16 to 17 percent of American households are facing food poverty "has become an electoral liability and certainly leads to the perception that the economy is not working for many Americans."

The rise of food insecurity in the U.S. "is literally a 'bread and butter' issue that could hurt both parties in the run-up to the November election, but it is likely to hurt the [*Democrats*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/democrats?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) more through the combination of having a Democratic president currently in charge and running for office, and the perception that [*Democratic Party*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/democratic-party?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) is typically the one that cares more about these issues," Landman said.

**Are you struggling with food insecurity? Tell us your experience by contacting** [***g.carbonaro@newsweek.com***](mailto:g.carbonaro@newsweek.com)

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2382059/joe-biden.jpg)

**Graphic**

Joe Biden

Celal Gunes/Anadolu via Getty Images

U.S. President Joe Biden deliver remarks on Earth Day event at Prince William Forest Park in Virginia., United States on April 22, 2024.

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