

价格为什么上涨？ Why are prices going up?

Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Rob. And I'm Beth.

大家好。这里是 BBC 学习英语栏目的六分钟英语。我是罗布。我是贝丝。

In this programme, we're talking about money and Beth, as the old saying goes, money makes the world go round!

在本期节目中，我们将讨论钱。贝丝，老话说得好，有钱能使鬼推磨！

You mean it's very important and lots of things couldn't happen without it.

你的意思是它非常重要，很多事情没有它就不可能实现。

Well, we all need money but have you noticed how our money doesn't seem to buy so much these days?

嗯，我们都需要钱，但你有没有注意到，现在的钱似乎买不到多少东西。

Yes, I have Beth.

是的，贝丝，我注意到了。

It seems like consumers like us are being hit in the pocket at the moment – and by that, I mean we have less money to spend.

眼下，消费者的钱包似乎瘪下去了，换句话说，我们可以花的钱更少了。

Now, I'm no economist, but I know this has a lot to do with inflation – the increase in prices of things over time.

我不是经济学家，但我知道这与通货膨胀有很大关系，即随着时间推移，物价上涨的现象。

It's a big problem globally, and Beth my question for you is about inflation.

这是一个全球性的大问题。贝丝，我有个相关的问题要问你。

According to one report, what was the annual inflation rate in Venezuela between November 2017 and 2018?

根据一份报告，2017年11月至2018年11月委内瑞拉的年通货膨胀率是多少？

Was it a) 130% b) 1,300% or c) 1,300,000%?

是 a) 130% b) 1300%，还是 c) 1300%？

I'll say b) 1,300%. OK. We'll find out if you're right later on.

我觉得是 b) 1300%。好的。我们稍后揭晓答案。

But let's talk more about money and inflation now.

现在我们来讨论一下货币和通胀。

Around the world, prices of things are rising more than normal, and more worrying is that prices keep going up.

在世界各地，商品价格的涨幅都超过正常水平，更令人担忧的是价格在持续上涨。

Two things in particular are increasing in price – energy, like gas and electricity, and food.

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特别是这两样东西：能源，如天然气和电力，以及食品。

These are things we need and depend on.

这些都是我们必需的东西。

So, what's causing the rises?

那么，是什么导致了通货膨胀呢？

There seem to be two main reasons – the Covid pandemic and the war in Ukraine, which has reduced the supply in things we need.

似乎有两个主要原因：疫情和乌克兰战争，二者都导致了我們必需品的供给减少。

And when things are in short supply – available in limited quantities – prices go up.

当商品供给短缺时，价格就会上涨。

The BBC World Service programme The Real Story discussed this in much more detail.

BBC世界服务栏目《真实故事》节目对此进行了更详细的讨论。

One expert, economist, writer and broadcaster, Linda Yueh, explained how price rises could be around for a while.

岳琳达是一名经济学家、作家，也是一名广播员，是通货膨胀方面的专家。她解释了为什么价格可能持续上涨。

Even if you take out some of these volatile items like food and energy, the sustained price increases we've had, it is actually getting passed through into how companies price their goods and services.

即使不考虑食品和能源等价格波动较大的商品，价格也在持续上涨，而且它其实正在影响公司如何为自己的商品和服务定价。

And that's where it gets extremely worrying because that suggests that even if energy prices, food prices, come down, we could have inflation now in the system.

这就是它非常令人担忧的地方，因为这表明，即使能源价格和食品价格下降，我们的经济体系中也可能会出现通胀。

And I think that for advanced economies is worrying, for developing countries, that's hugely worrying.

我认为这对发达经济体来说很不妙，对发展中国家来说，更加令人担忧。

Linda Yueh used some interesting language there.

岳琳达用了一些有趣的词。

She talked about food and energy being volatile items – something that is volatile is unpredictable and can change suddenly.

她说食品和能源价格不稳定。“volatile”形容某物不可预测，可能会突然改变状态。

And that's what we've experienced with food and energy prices.

食品和能源价格的确多变。

Yes, and she said these price increases have been sustained – so, continuing at the same level for a long period of time.

是的，她表示，这些价格上涨是持续的。“sustain”，意为在很长一段时间内保持在同一水平。

But Linda Yueh says that even if energy and food prices eventually come down, companies will pass on the extra costs they have already faced by charging more for their goods and services.

但岳琳达表示，即使能源和食品价格最终下降，企业也会通过对产品和服务收取更高价格来转嫁已经付出的额外成本。

And this could cause inflation – there's that word again.

这可能会导致通货膨胀。这个词又出现了。

Continuing price rises aren't good for anyone but especially for people in developing economies – countries which have industry that's less developed and have lower living standards.

持续上涨的物价对任何人都没有好处，尤其对发展中国家的人民有害。发展中国家的工业欠发达，生活水平较低。

Another possible consequence of inflation is recession – this economic term describes a situation where a country's production starts going down, people's incomes go down and unemployment goes up.

通货膨胀的另一个可能后果是经济衰退。这个经济术语描述的是一个国家的产出开始下降，人民收入下降，失业率上升的情况。

This all sounds like a very bleak economic outlook. So, what can be done?

听起来经济前景非常黯淡。那么，我们能做些什么呢？

Well, that's the million-dollar question, and economists are trying to work it out.

这是一个非常重要的问题，经济学家们也正试图找到答案。

Speaking on The Real Story programme, economist Vicky Pryce gave an overview of how to control inflation.

在《真实故事》节目中，经济学家维基·普赖斯概述了如何控制通胀。

One of them, something that is actually most effective, is by slowing down demand.

方法之一就是减缓需求，其实这方法最有效。

And if you increase interest rates, what you do is you discourage people from borrowing, whether they are individuals or whether they are businesses – and of course the economy starts slowing down.

如果提高利率，个人和企业就会减少借贷活动，当然了，经济也就开始放缓。

So, she says what is most effective – meaning what works well and gets the best results – is slowing down demand.

因此，她说，最有效的办法是减缓需求。“most effective”意为最有用，效果最好的。

Increasing interest rates can do this because people will borrow less money.

提高利率可以做到这一点，因为人们借的钱会更少。

Interest rates are fees banks and financial institutions charge you for borrowing money.

利率是银行和金融机构向你收取的借款费用。

And if we borrow less money, we buy fewer things, which can reduce inflation. I think it makes sense now!

如果借贷数额减少，我们就会少买东西，进而可以缓解通胀。现在说得通了！

And if you were in Venezuela in 2018, you would really want inflation to go down, wouldn't you? Yes.

如果2018年你在委内瑞拉，你真的会希望通货膨胀率下降，不是吗？是的。

Now, earlier I asked you what one report said the inflation rate was there between November 2017 and 2018.

刚才我问过你，根据报告，2017年11月至2018年11月那里的通货膨胀率是多少。

And I said a very high 1,300%. Well, it was even higher, Beth.

我说是非常高的1300%。嗯，它甚至更高，贝丝。

According to a study by the opposition-controlled National Assembly, the annual inflation rate reached 1,300,000% in the 12 months to November 2018.

根据反对党控制的议会的一项研究，2018年11月之前的一年中，委内瑞拉年通货膨胀率达到了1,300,000%。

This extreme financial situation was known as hyperinflation. That's not good at all.

这种极端的金融状况被称为恶性通货膨胀。这一点都不好。

In this programme, we have been talking about inflation – that's the increase in prices over time.

在本期节目中，我们一直在讨论通货膨胀，也就是随着时间的推移，物价上涨的情况。

Other vocabulary we used included the expression hit in the pocket – which means you have less money to spend.

本期词汇还有“hit in the pocket”，意思是你的钱更少了。

Volatile describes something that is unpredictable and can change suddenly.

“volatile”形容某物不可预测，可能突然发生变化。

Something that is sustained continues at the same level for a long period of time.

“sustained”形容某物将在很长一段时间内保持在同一水平。

And something that is effective works well and gets the best results.

“effective”形容某物效果很好。

And interest rates are fees banks and financial institutions charge you for borrowing money.

“interest rate”是银行和金融机构向你收取的借款费用。

Well, we hope you've found our brief lesson about the economy useful.

希望这节简短的经济课能对你有所帮助。

Thanks for listening. Goodbye for now! Bye bye!

感谢倾听。下期再见！拜拜！