

# GLOBAL ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

ON TRACK FOR STRONG,  
BUT UNEVEN GROWTH

**EDC Economics**

March 24, 2022

Insights on the world's key economies,  
GDP growth, commodity prices,  
interest rates and exchange rates.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# GLOBAL ECONOMIC OUTLOOK: ON TRACK FOR STRONG, BUT UNEVEN GROWTH

By Stuart Bergman

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While not all downturns are created the same, what made the COVID-19 economic crisis truly unprecedented—apart from its scale and scope—was that it was largely the result of a globally co-ordinated, self-inflicted shutdown of the entire in-person, non-essential economy. What started as a massive supply-side shock, quickly transformed into a complete collapse in demand, owing to a surge in unemployment and off-the-chart levels of uncertainty. Public support measures, including fiscal and liquidity support, quickly kicked in, amounting to some 20% of global gross domestic product (GDP) in advanced economies alone.

Facilitated by the sudden increase in personal savings and the rapid adoption of advanced communication technologies, remote working and online shopping helped the global consumer adapt. The money normally spent on leisure and hospitality services was either redirected into savings or went into purchasing more goods online. Changing what we consume and how we consume allowed the economic data to decouple from the epidemiological data, even in the face of sporadic variant flareups. If anything, global supplies were struggling to keep up.

As vaccine deployment widened, and we lurched ever-closer to that elusive state of herd-immunity, we entered 2022 with impressive momentum.

In fact, it was clear that our key challenge would be whether the global economy would have the capacity to keep pace. As co-ordinated, uniform and stable as the shutdown was, so too would be the reopening, or so the logic went. Fortified by two years of pent-up demand, and in some cases more, this would facilitate a growth surge, testing the limits of the world's supplies and global transport network.

Then, on Feb. 24, the Russian forces of President Vladimir Putin launched a widescale invasion of neighbouring Ukraine, with military assaults on key cities, including its capital, Kyiv. The war, and resulting wide-ranging sanctions and trade restrictions by both Russia and the West, dramatically increased uncertainties surrounding the outlook, bringing high levels of volatility across multiple series in our forecast.

At the time of writing, reports of progress toward a ceasefire in Ukraine served to calm markets. In our spring Global Economic Outlook, EDC Economics believes that commodity prices are in for a period of heightened volatility, with near-term prices ever disconnected from supply-demand fundamentals, and more driven by headline risk as well as the disruptive levels of liquidity sloshing around the system.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (continued)

# GLOBAL ECONOMIC OUTLOOK: ON TRACK FOR STRONG, BUT UNEVEN GROWTH



Oil and natural gas prices are a central focus, with Russia accounting for 10% of the world's oil production. However, the conflict also threatens large amounts of the world's agricultural and metals supplies, in addition to significant supplies of coal and wood.

EDC Economics expects WTI crude to average US\$113/bbl this year, before falling back to US\$92/bbl in 2023. Gas prices will follow a similar pattern, largely in response to extreme volatility around the war in Ukraine. Copper prices will continue to be driven by strong demand, thanks to the global energy transition, and near-term supply constraints; with prices averaging US\$9,393 this year, before falling back to US\$8,649 in 2023. Heightened uncertainty will keep gold prices up at US\$1,804/troy ounce in 2022, easing back to US\$1,610/troy ounce next year.

These additional upstream pricing pressures only serve to further exacerbate near-term global inflationary trends. In response, the Bank of Canada, the Bank of England and the U.S. Federal Reserve have reined in their quantitative-easing (QE) programs and started raising interest rates, for the first time since 2018.

The European Central Bank (ECB) will likely continue to weigh the potential inflationary impacts resulting from high energy prices against the impacts of any resulting hit to confidence, consumption, production, and growth from the war. We expect the ECB to focus on a downscaling of its asset purchases, before raising rates in 2023. Any interruption in gas supplies to Europe is an additional downside risk to economic growth. We expect this policy split to play out on currencies as well.

The U.S. economy is forecast to grow by 4% this year and a still-strong 3.1% in 2023. Our base case calls for Euro Area growth of 2.9% in 2022 and 2.5% in 2023, with significant risks to that outlook. The Canadian economy will see continued strength in 2022, up 4.1%, moderating to 2.6% in 2023. All told, we anticipate developed markets to post growth of 3.3% in 2022, before stabilizing at 2.8%, in 2023.

Similarly, on the developing markets front, EDC Economics expects a split in growth prospects. The weakened property and construction sectors in China, together with lower government spending and a continued adherence to its zero-COVID-19 policy, pose downside risks to the Chinese economy this year. Chinese growth will hover around 5% over our forecast horizon, a reality that has been publicly acknowledged by the Chinese authorities.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (continued)

# GLOBAL ECONOMIC OUTLOOK: ON TRACK FOR STRONG, BUT UNEVEN GROWTH



Aside from potential longer-term implications for the global economy, these historically low levels of growth in China will have a moderating impact on global commodities demand.

Developing markets that export critical commodities will continue to benefit from higher-than-average prices, and from the ongoing impacts of the post-pandemic surge in global demand, including a rebound in global tourism. However, the volatility in agricultural supplies and prices, due to the situation in Eastern Europe, and the impact of reduced planting on future yields, are a concern for major food importers. For certain markets in the Middle East and North Africa this will increase risks around political stability. EDC Economics expects developing economies to grow by a combined 4.5% in 2022, and 4.6% in 2023.

### **The bottom line?**

As the economic impacts of COVID-19 recede, the global economy was heating up. The war in Ukraine, however, has complicated the outlook significantly, triggering a break between the fortunes of the world's major economic blocs. The events of the day are a volatility overlay, which we'll monitor closely, exacerbating some trends and washing others out.

However, a tight job market and strong consumer savings will help drive growth in North America. While inflationary pressures far outweigh any fears of a growth slowdown here, we expect central banks to effectively manage any overheating, helped by a rotation in demand back toward services and additional spending on business investment.

As we move past the fog of war, this underlying momentum should provide a solid foundation for the global economy to put the COVID-induced economic crisis behind us. We expect the global economy to grow by 4.1% in 2022 and 3.9% in 2023.

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# CHANGES TO THE OUTLOOK

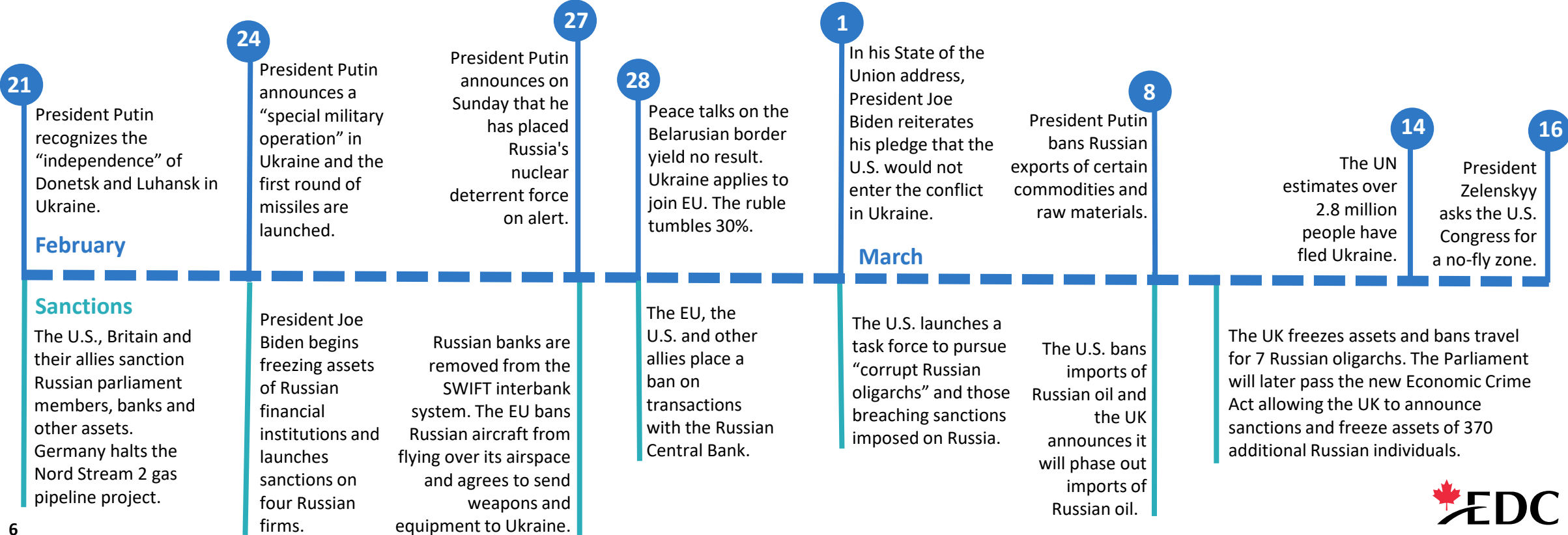
- EDC Economics rolled back its global growth outlook for 2022 (4.1%), followed by a further moderation in 2023 (3.9%). Our current view is still consistent with our previous forecast, and is adjusted to reflect recent data, ongoing supply chain disruptions, Omicron-related impacts and the Russia-Ukraine conflict.
- Underlying economic growth remains strong. We expect government spending to shift from pandemic-related support to shoring up public infrastructure. Consumers will also rotate spending to services.
- Faster growing emerging markets will continue to lead global growth in the near-term. However, certain key developing economies will see a downshift in growth prospects for a variety of reasons. China, for example, is managing a move away from credit- and public-led growth, but will have to contend with rising energy costs. Considerable geopolitical volatility and a tightening credit environment will pressure highly indebted governments to make difficult fiscal policy decisions.
- Rising commodity prices and ongoing supply chain bottlenecks continue to spur global inflationary pressures. As consumers increasingly shift spending toward services and year-over-year comparisons subside, inflation should ease. In addition, central banks will tightly monitor the normalization of monetary policy, in the context of high levels of uncertainty.
- The war in Ukraine and the impacts on commodities and risk aversion pose significant downside risks to the outlook.

# RUSSIA’S INVASION OF UKRAINE HAS LED TO NUMEROUS SANCTIONS WITH POTENTIAL LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has sparked one of the biggest active conflicts in Europe in recent times. Events are evolving quickly, with Russian forces continuing their siege and the West imposing a steadily escalating series of sanctions.

## Russia-Ukraine conflict and sanctions timeline

Notable events as of March 16<sup>th</sup> 2022

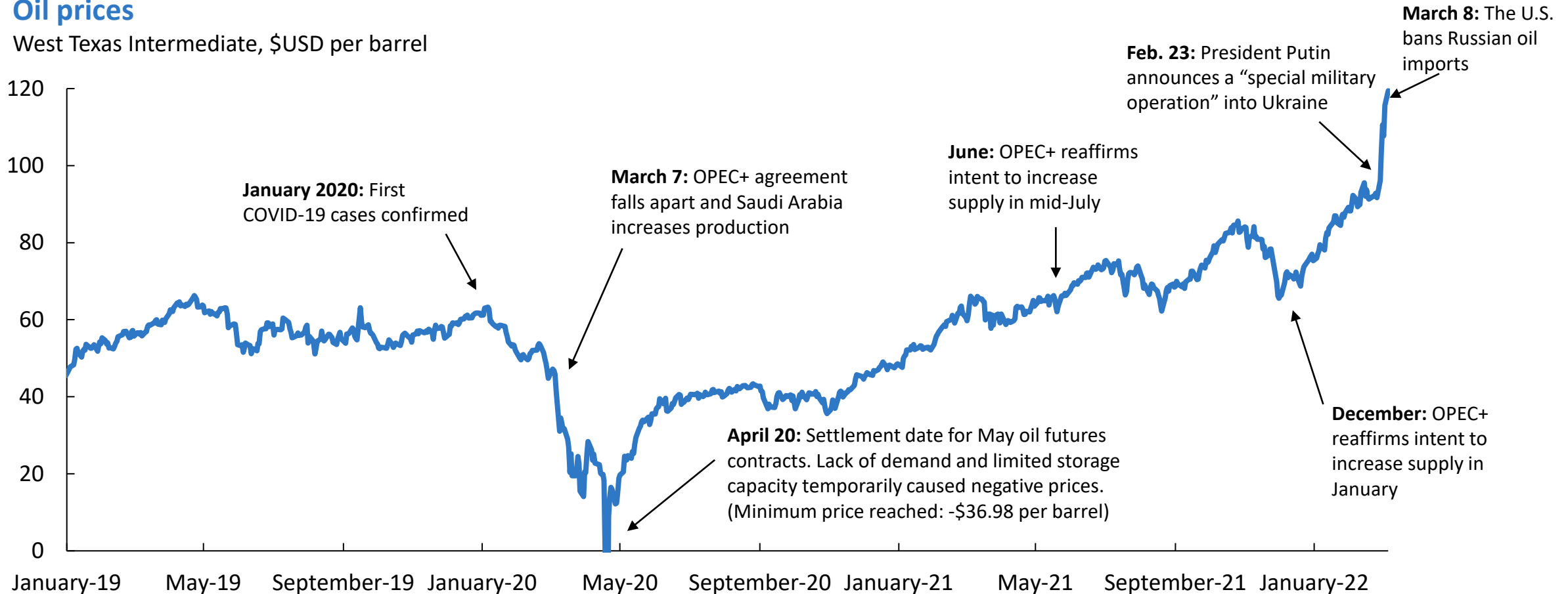


# OIL PRICES JUMP TO HIGHS NOT SEEN SINCE 2008

In addition to the price pressures caused by supply constraints, the oil market now must contend with the impact of Russia-Ukraine conflict. With Russia being one the top oil suppliers, the global oil market will likely continue to be highly volatile.

## Oil prices

West Texas Intermediate, \$USD per barrel

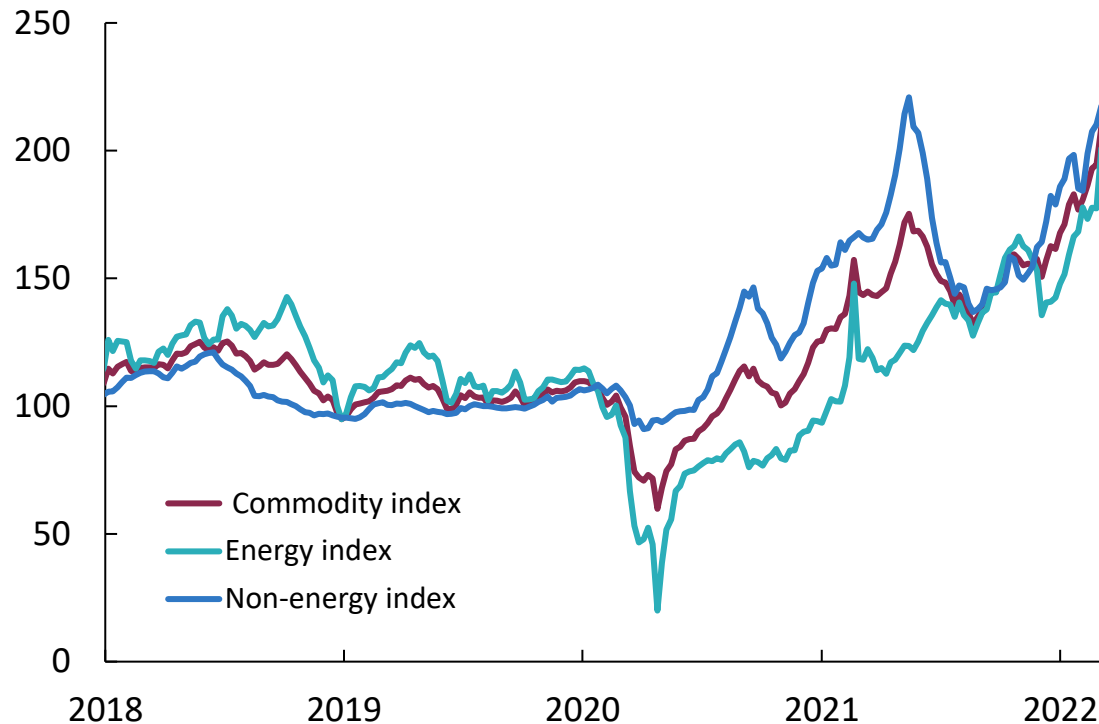


# KEY COMMODITY PRICES INCREASE DRAMATICALLY

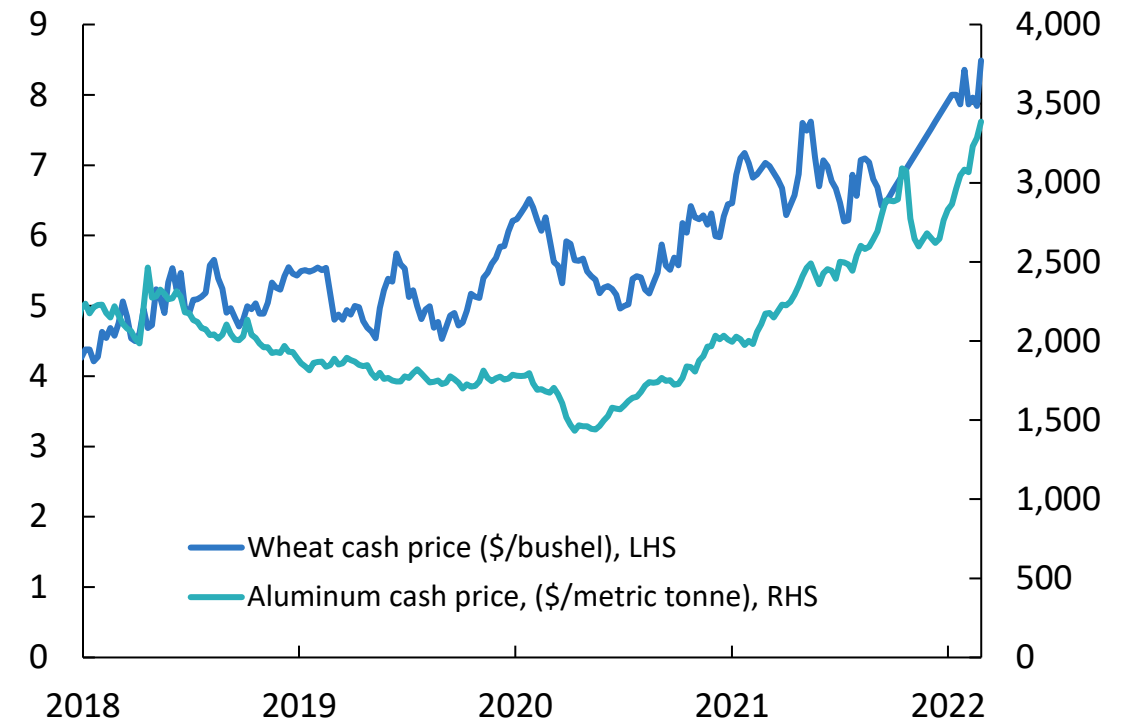
Sanctions imposed on Russia will have implications for commodities other than oil. Russia and Ukraine account for 25% of global wheat exports and Russia is the fourth-largest exporter of aluminum. The conflict will exacerbate the supply shortages that were already pushing prices upwards.

## EDC commodity price indices

Index 2017 = 100



## Aluminum and wheat prices



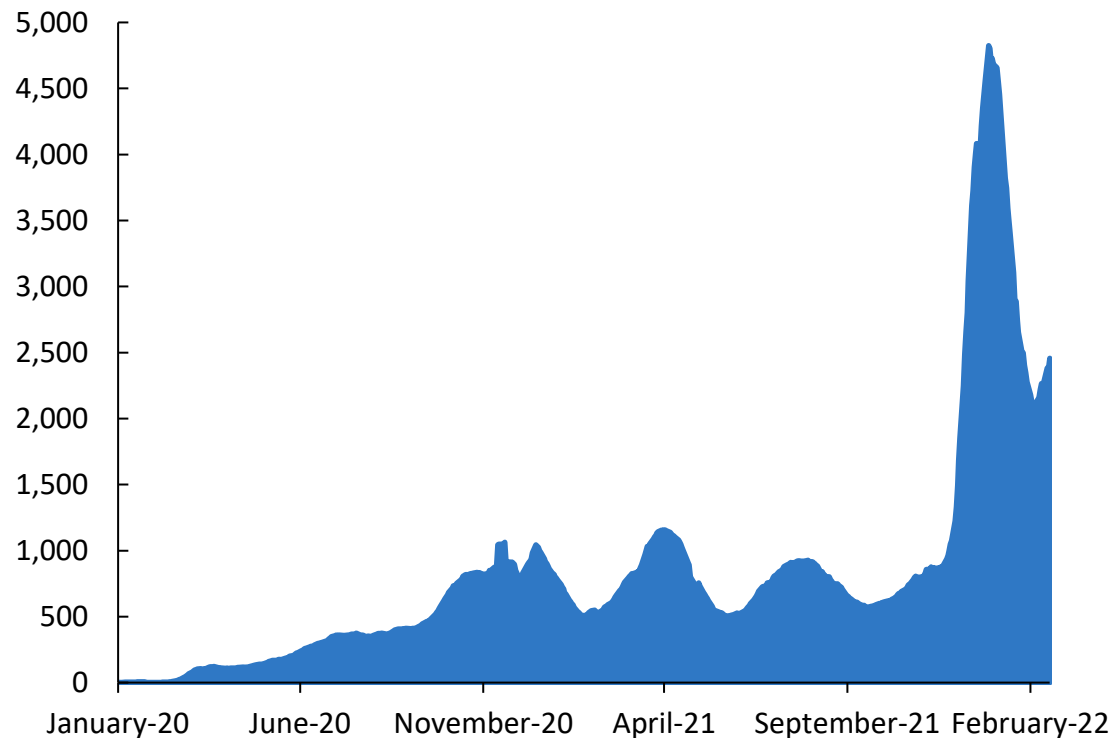


# RESTRICTIONS EASE AS OMICRON CASES FALL

Global Omicron cases have been declining after peaking in January. This has led to governments around the world easing restrictions that had been in place since the pandemic began. Several governments are rolling out plans to “live with COVID-19.”

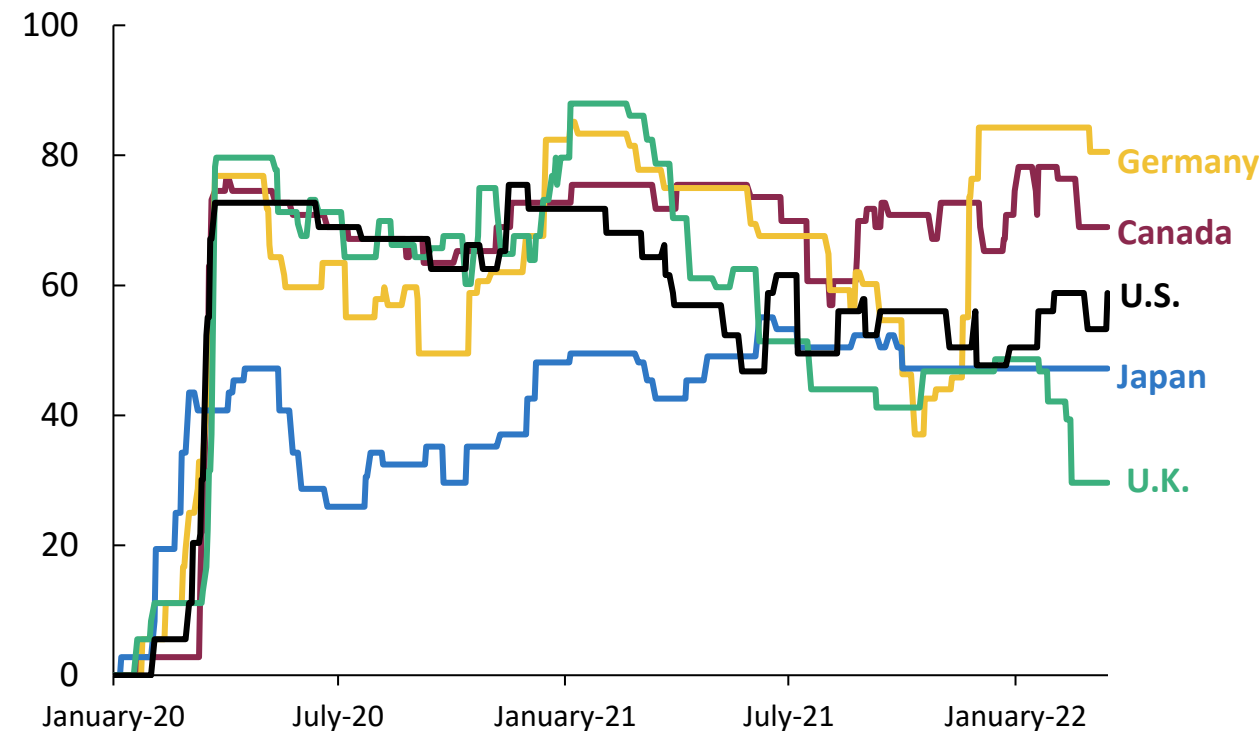
## Global confirmed new COVID-19 cases

Daily change, thousands, five-day average



## Stringency of government restrictions for G7 countries

Index value, maximum=100



Sources: EDC Economics, Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center, Oxford University.

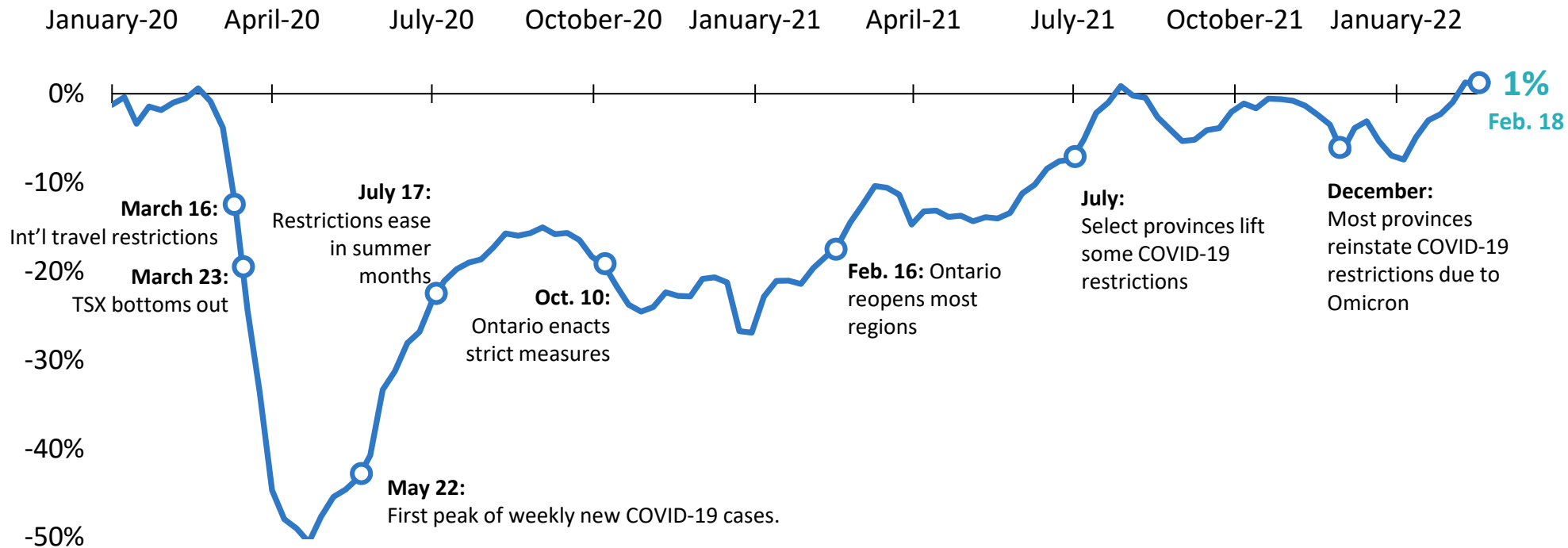
# CANADIAN ECONOMIC RECOVERY TRACKER

## TRENDING UPWARDS

EDC Economics' *Canadian Economic Recovery Tracker* highlights key trends in Canada's economic performance during the recovery. Now sitting at 1% above the pre-pandemic threshold, the reinstated restrictions, due to the Omicron variant, have been eased offering a renewed boost to the economy.

### The Canadian Economic Recovery Tracker

Deviation from pre-COVID-19 baseline

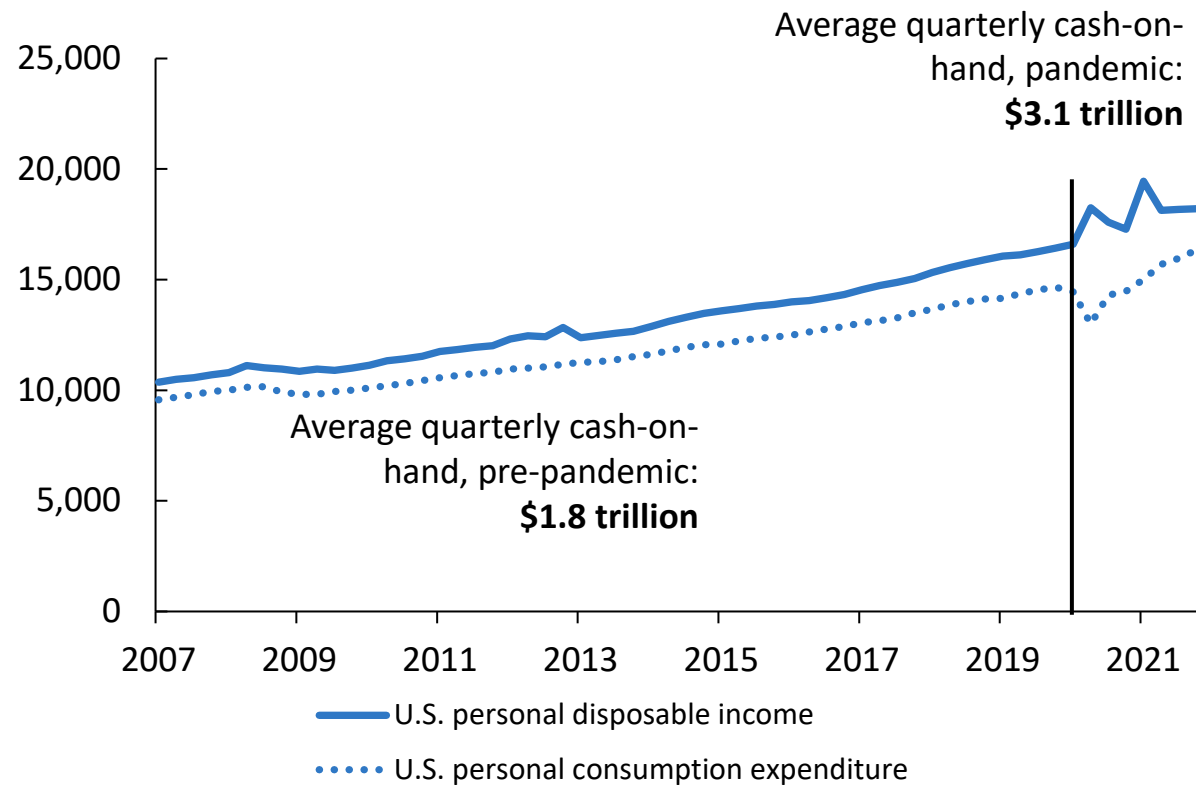


# IN ADVANCED ECONOMIES, CONSUMERS HOLDING ON TO EXCESS SAVINGS

High levels of savings acquired during the pandemic, if channelled towards fulfilling pent-up demand could support increased spending. Inflation and supply chain issues are key concerns that could erode consumer purchasing power.

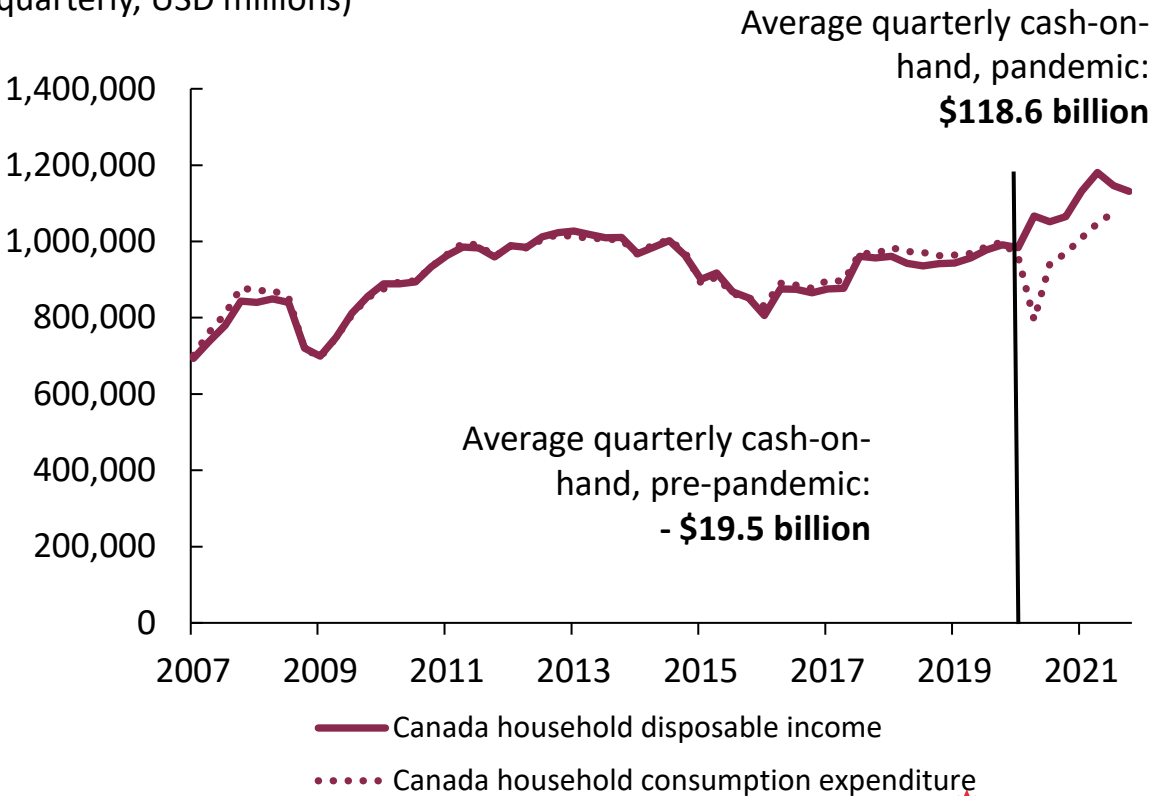
## U.S. households' cash-on-hand

Personal disposable income and consumption expenditure  
(quarterly, USD trillions)



## Canada households' cash-on-hand

Personal disposable income and consumption expenditure  
(quarterly, USD millions)

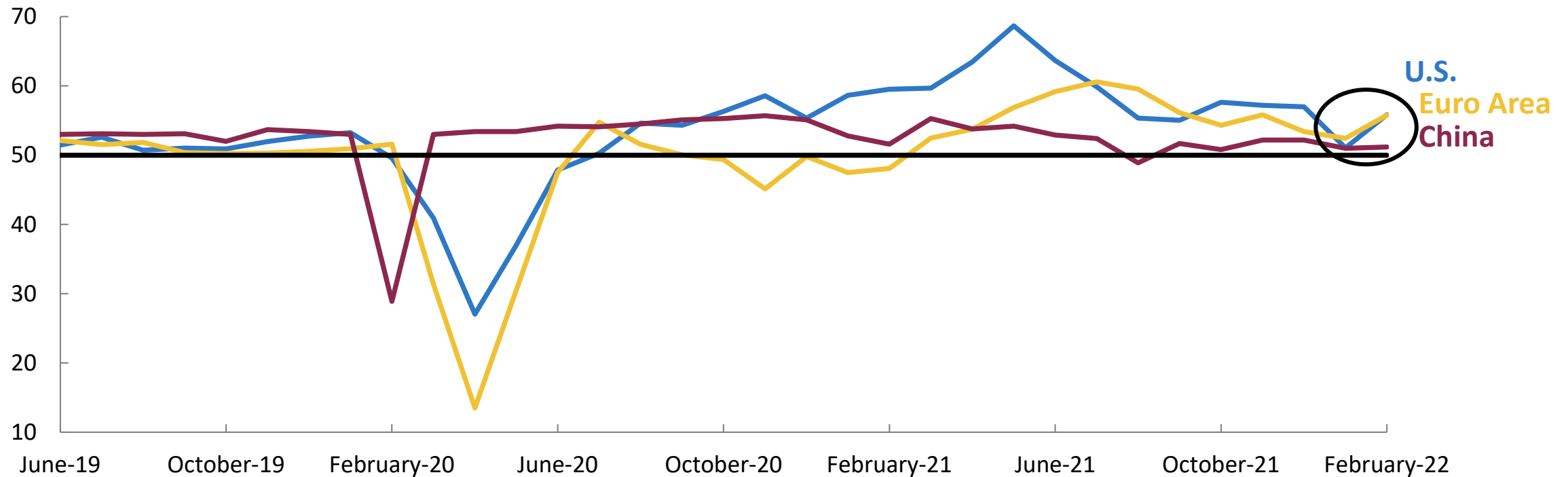


# PURCHASING MANAGERS' INDICES TICKING UP

The rise in COVID-19 cases and reinstated public health measures caused a noticeable dip in the *Purchasing Managers' Index* for the Euro area and the U.S. in January. As restrictions were eased, the PMIs for the Euro area and the U.S. are starting to edge upwards.

## Purchasing managers' indices

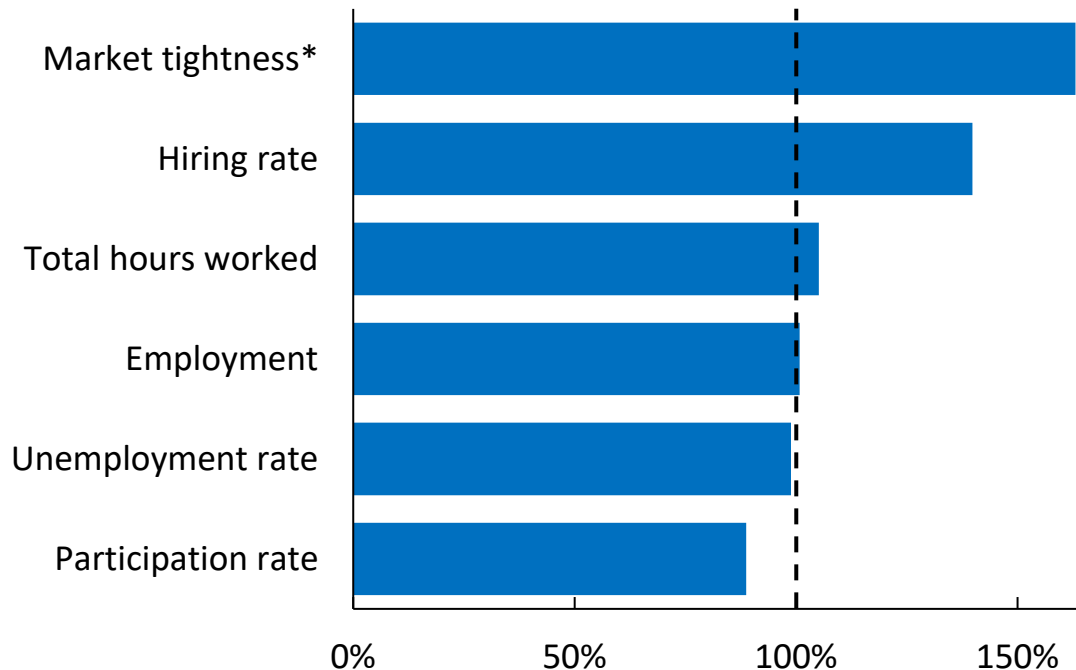
50+ = expansion



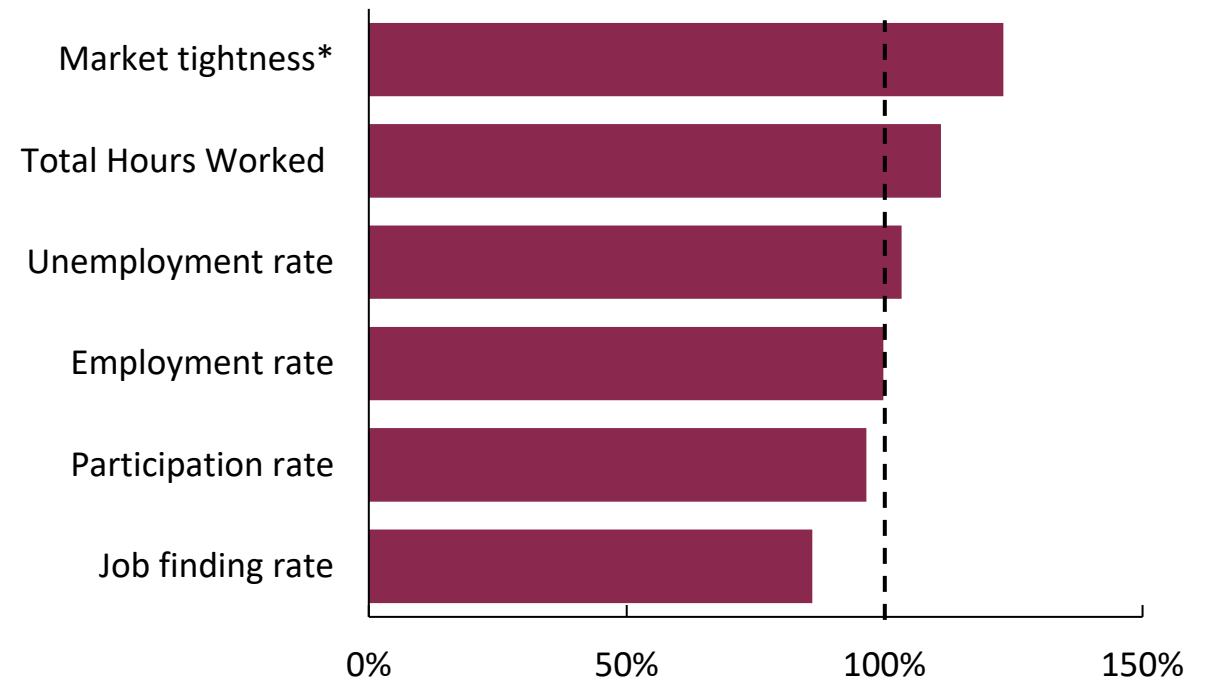
# LABOUR MARKET REMAINS TIGHT

The U.S. labour market is nearly fully recovered from the impact of the pandemic. In Canada, the lockdowns reinstated early in the year reversed some of the progress made. Labour market tightness poses a significant challenge in both countries with more job openings than there are unemployed persons.

## U.S. labour market conditions



## Canada labour market conditions



Note: The recovery of each indicator is depicted as progress bars, where the current value of a measure is compared with its crisis trough and a benchmark value (2019 monthly average). The market tightness indicator and job finding rate are lagged in the Canada chart.

\*Market tightness is computed as the ratio of job openings to total unemployed.

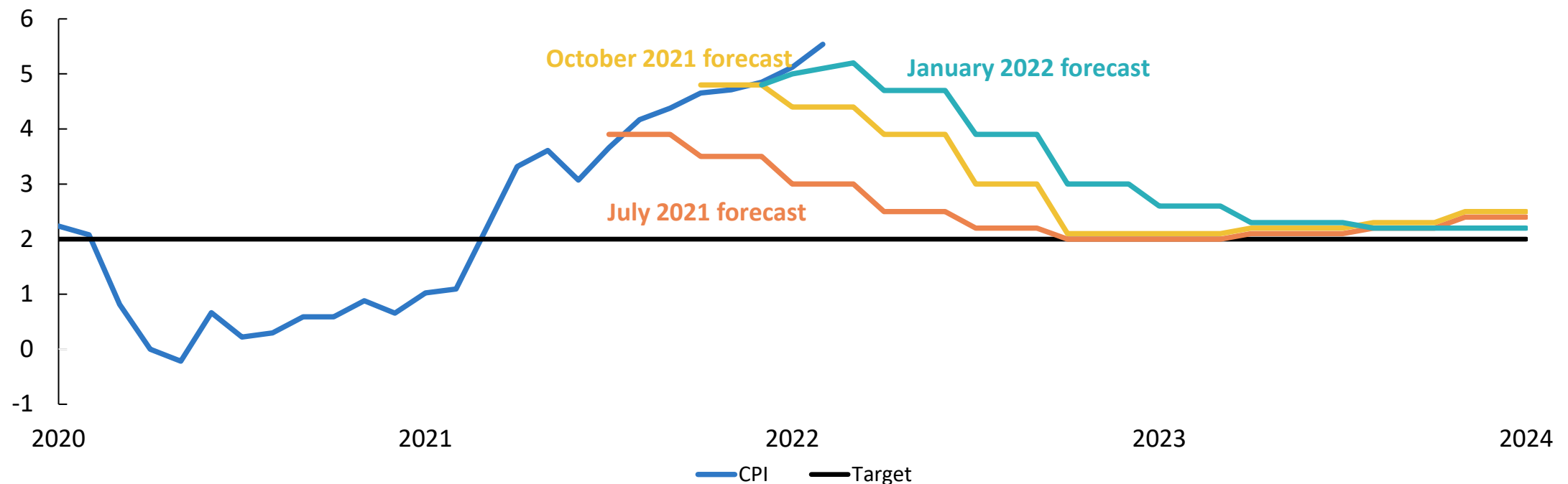


# BANK OF CANADA EXPECTS INFLATION TO LAST LONGER

The Bank of Canada has consistently raised its inflation outlook since July 2021 as transitory inflation factors proved to be more persistent than anticipated. Supply chain pressures and global shortages of key goods pushed up consumer prices following a pandemic-induced deflationary period. Inflation is anticipated to be above the 2% target throughout 2022.

## Bank of Canada inflation forecasts

Monthly year-over-year % change in consumer prices

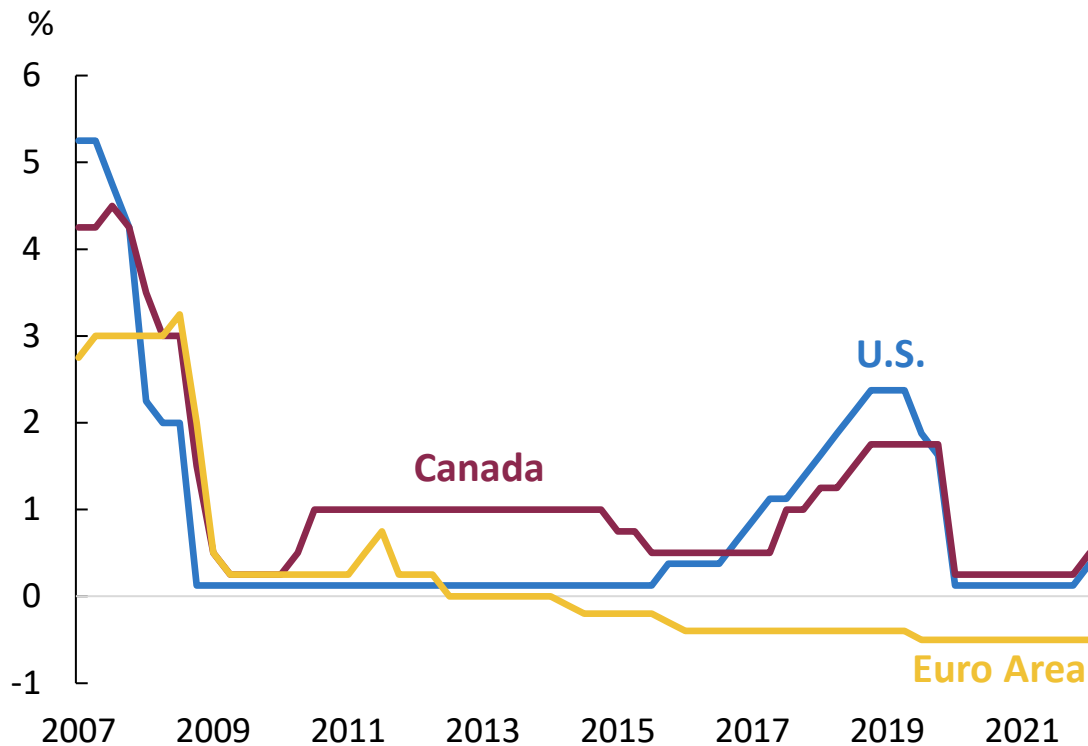


Note: CPI = Consumer Price Index

# CENTRAL BANKS SIGNAL END OF ACCOMMODATIVE MONETARY POLICY IN CANADA, U.S.

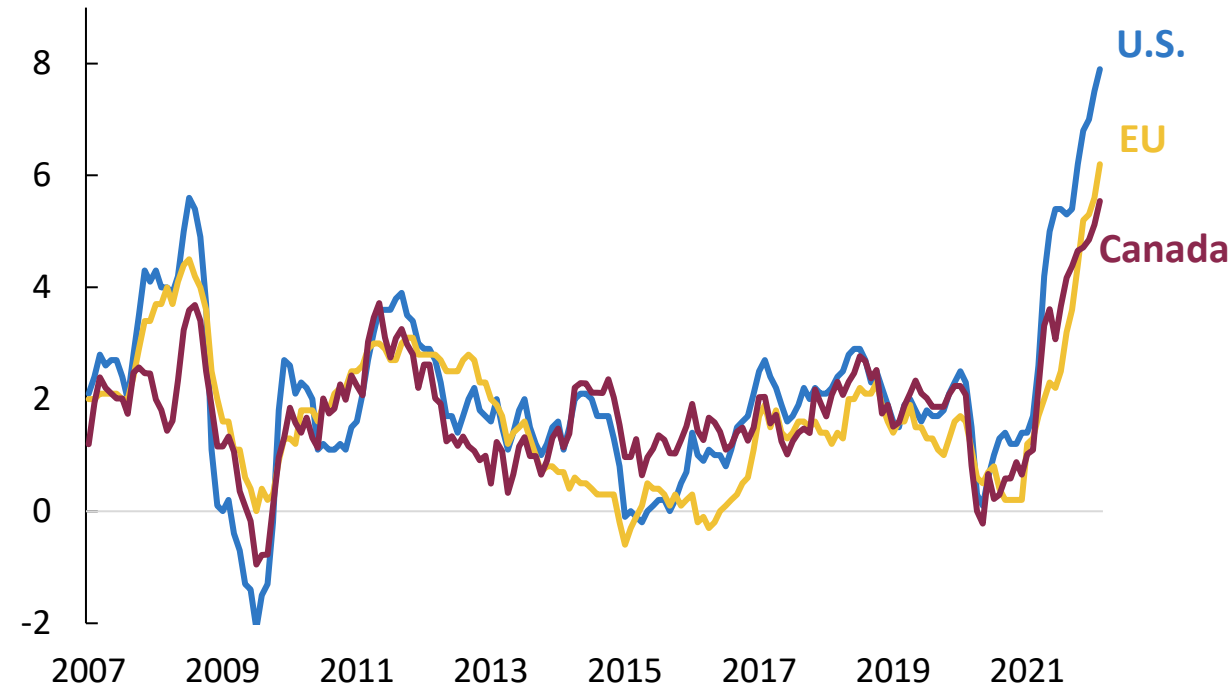
Central banks are monitoring rising inflation and have committed to addressing with their various tools, including raising rates and quantitative tightening. The Bank of Canada raised its policy interest rate by 25 basis points in March. The U.S. Federal Reserve followed suit on March 16 in their first step toward addressing inflation.

## Policy interest rates



## Inflation

Consumer Price Index (CPI), year-over-year %

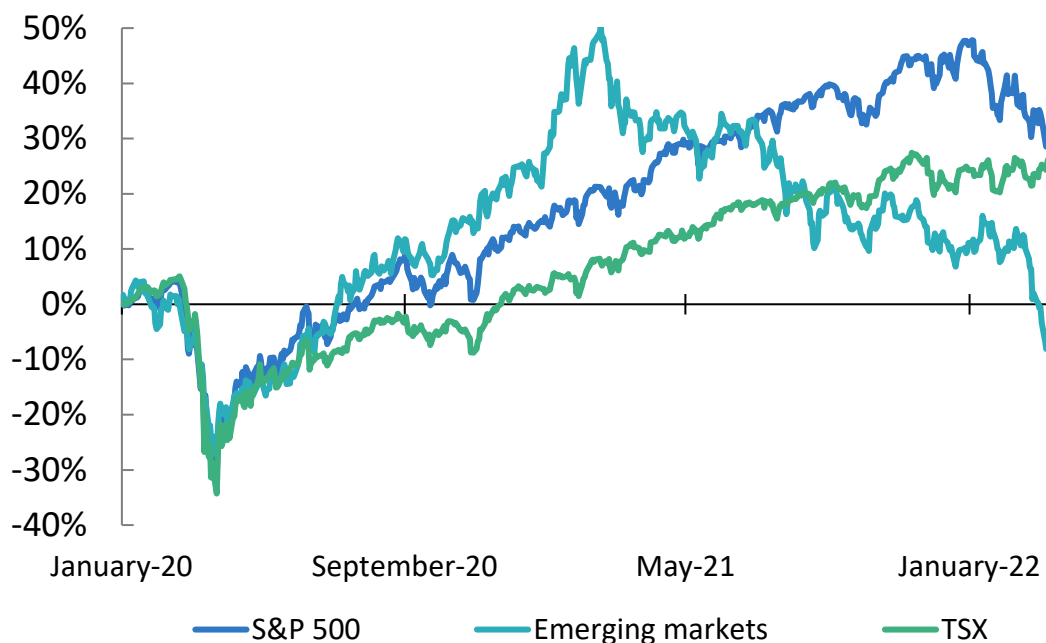


# U.S. GOVERNMENT BOND YIELDS DROP, INDICATING FLIGHT TO QUALITY

Equity markets continue to be quite volatile. Following the Omicron variant worries, the Russia-Ukraine conflict has sent shocks waves through financial markets. U.S. government bond yields have started falling, while emerging markets bond spreads are rapidly rising, indicating investors are seeking quality assets.

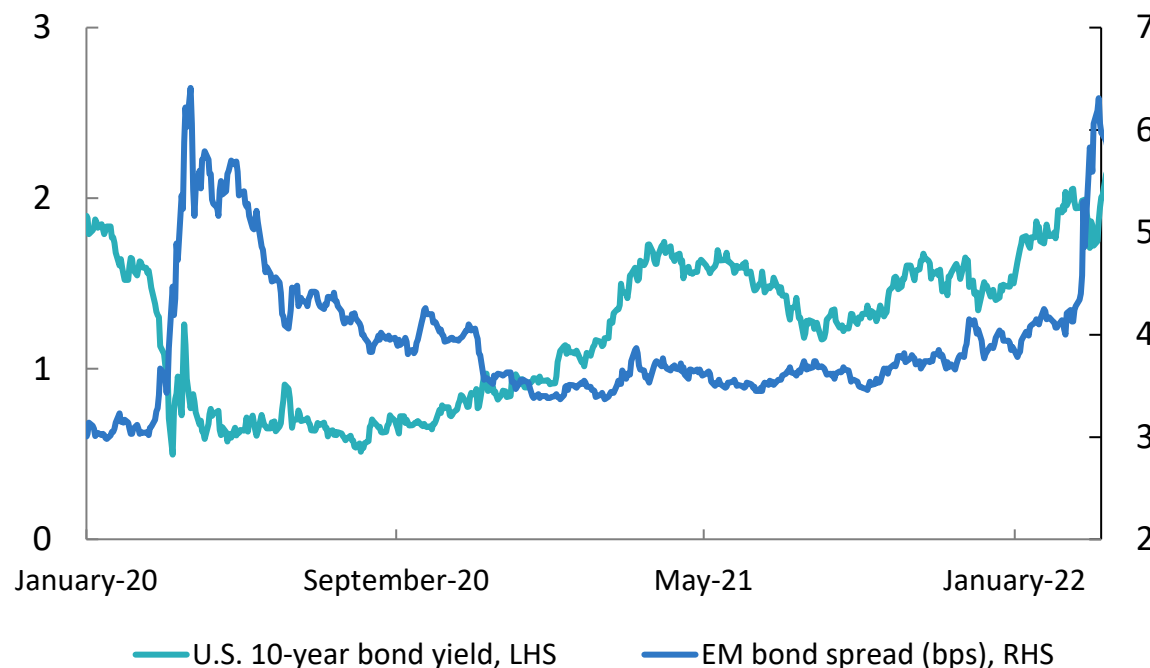
## Equity markets

% change since Jan. 1, 2020



## Debt markets

%



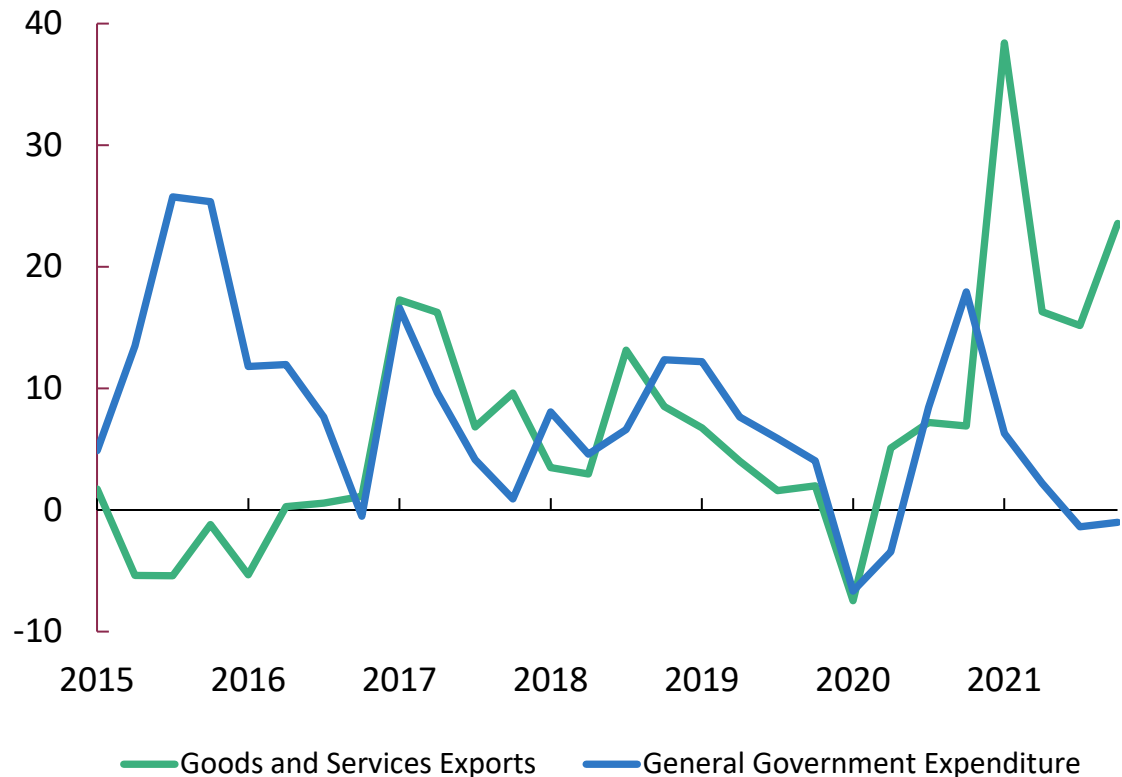
Sources: Haver Analytics, EDC Economics; *EDC Global Financial Markets*.

# CHINA'S GROWTH FUNDAMENTALS CHANGING

China's economic growth is increasingly being fuelled by exports, as government spending is scaled back. After a strong rise in early 2021, retail sales are trending downwards.

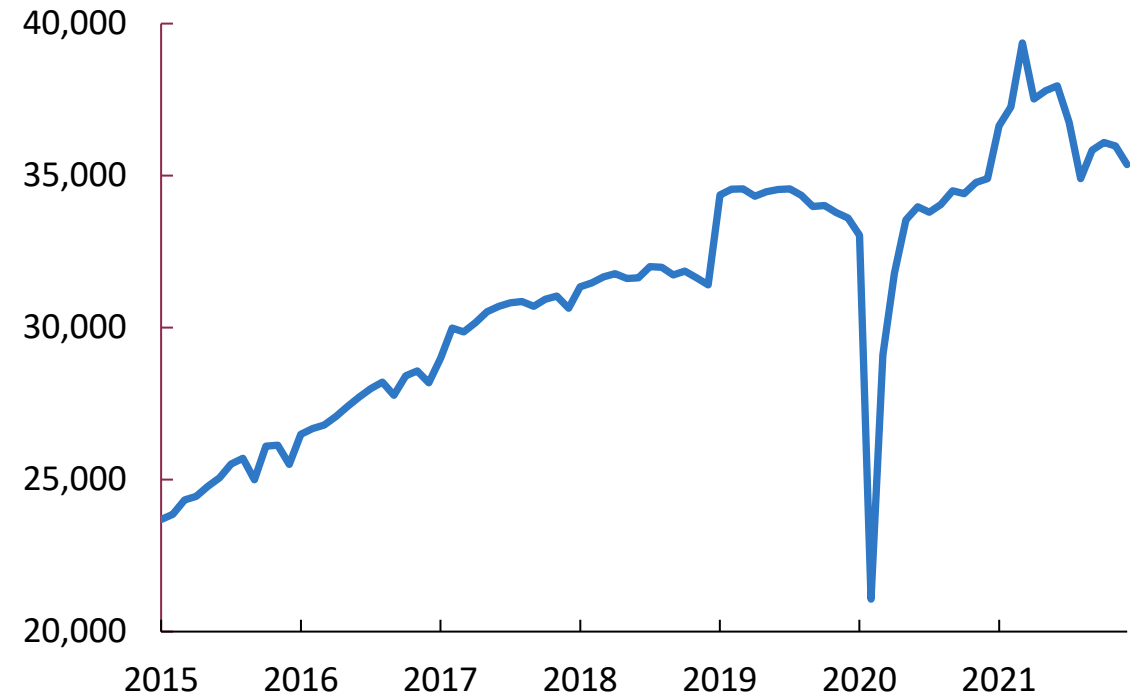
## Export growth outpacing government spending

Year-over-year % change (quarterly), Seasonally adjusted Yuan



## Retail sales

100 Mil. Yuan, Seasonally adjusted

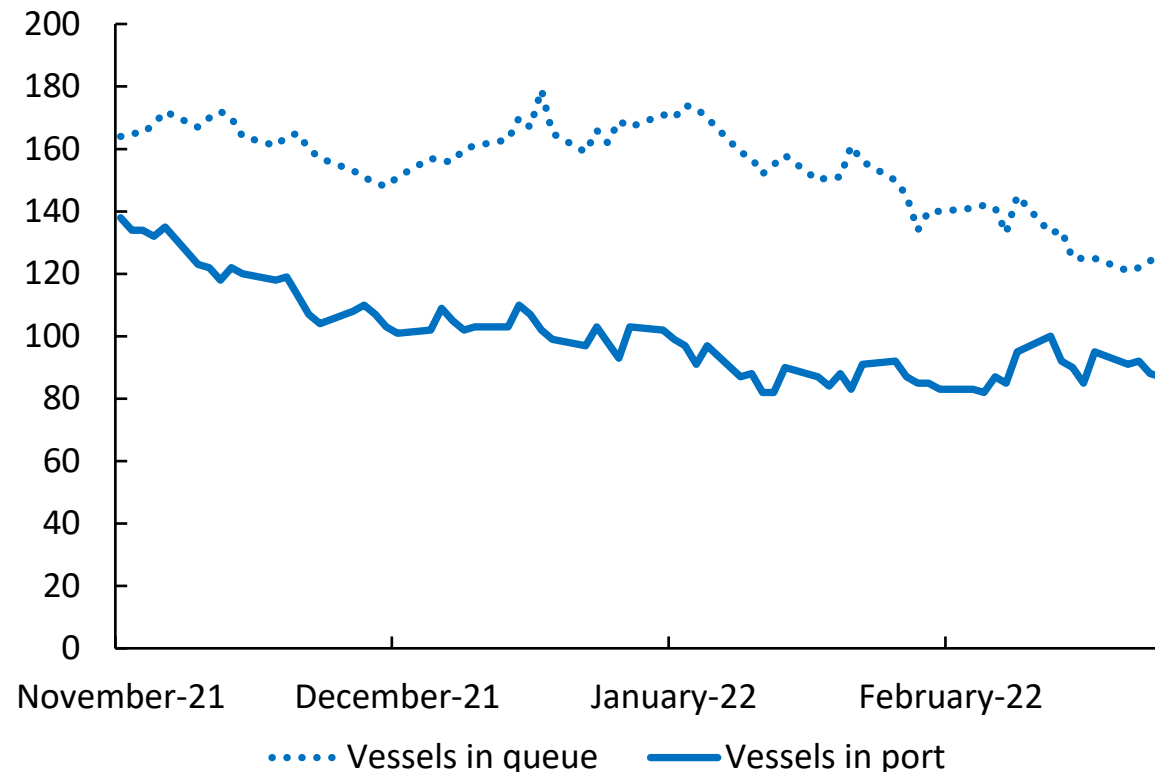


# SHIPPING COSTS SOAR ACROSS KEY OIL ROUTES

As consumer demand rises, the global shipping industry has been trying to keep pace. Supply chain issues have become more complicated on account of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. As a result, prices across major oil routes have seen dramatic spikes since late February.

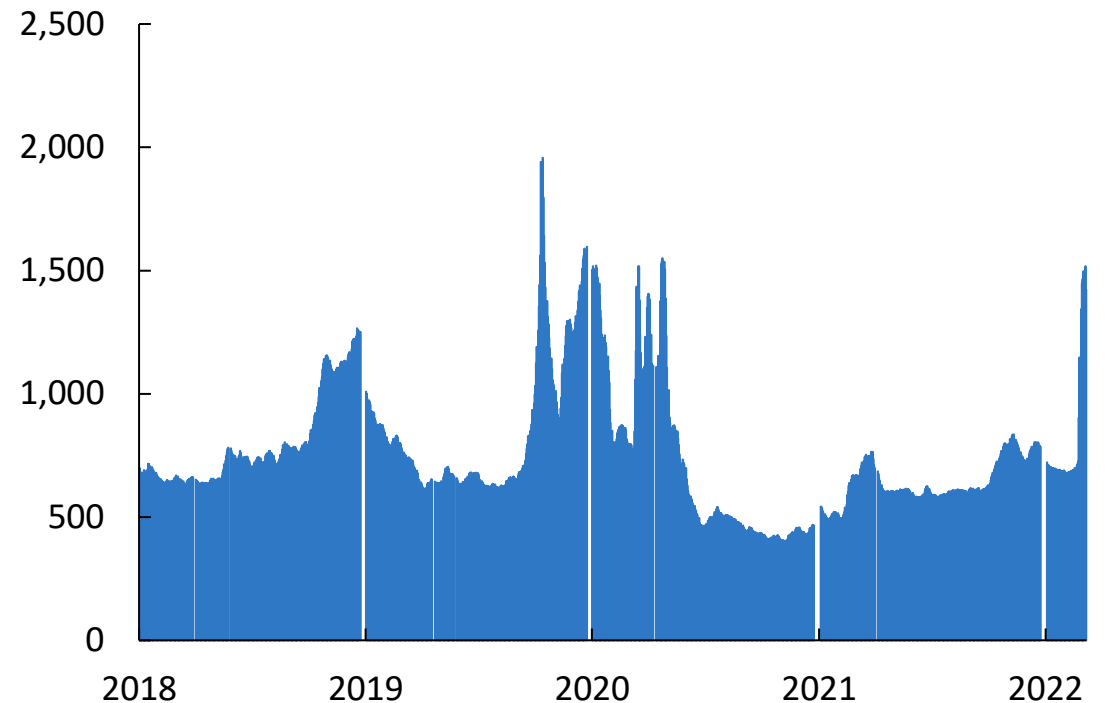
## Los Angeles/Long Beach vessel traffic\*

Number of vessels in port and queue, daily



## Baltic Exchange Dirty Tanker Index: 10 routes

Oct. 1, 2001=1077



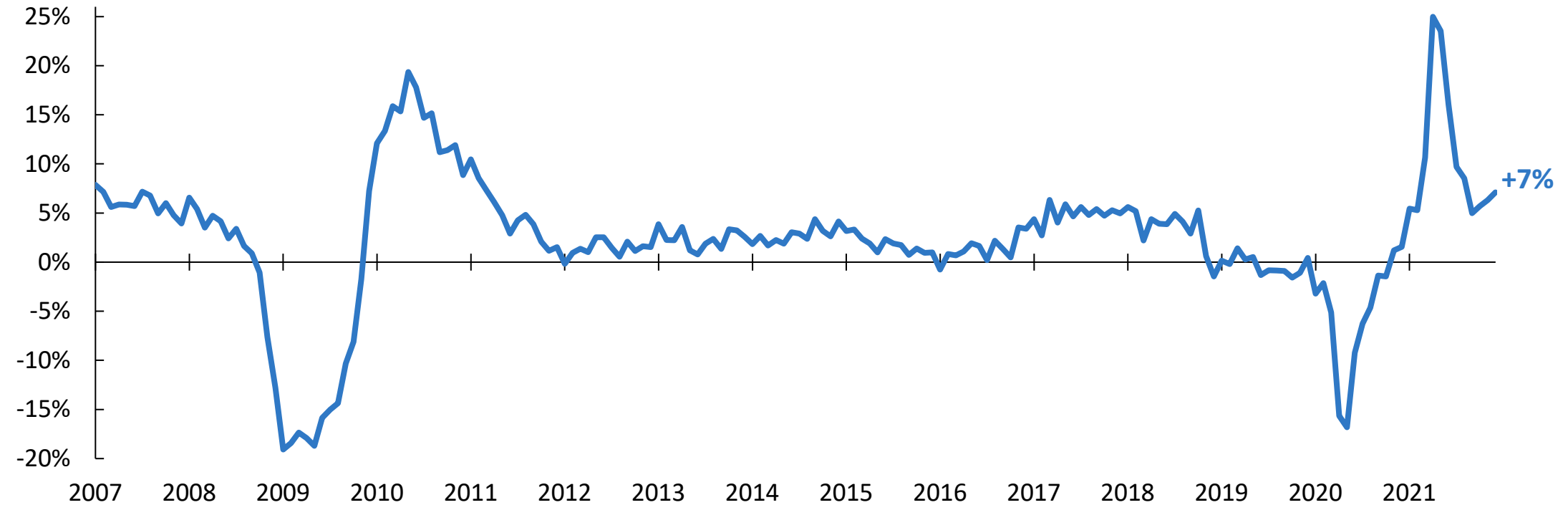


# GLOBAL GOODS TRADE TRENDING UPWARD

Global merchandise trade volumes continue to trend in growth territory. Following the catchup surge in goods trade mid-2021, volumes have returned to more normal levels. This strong growth will keep supply chains tight in the near term. As spending shifts from goods to services, goods trade growth is expected to soften.

## Global merchandise trade volumes

Annual % change



Sources: CPB Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis, World Trade Organization.

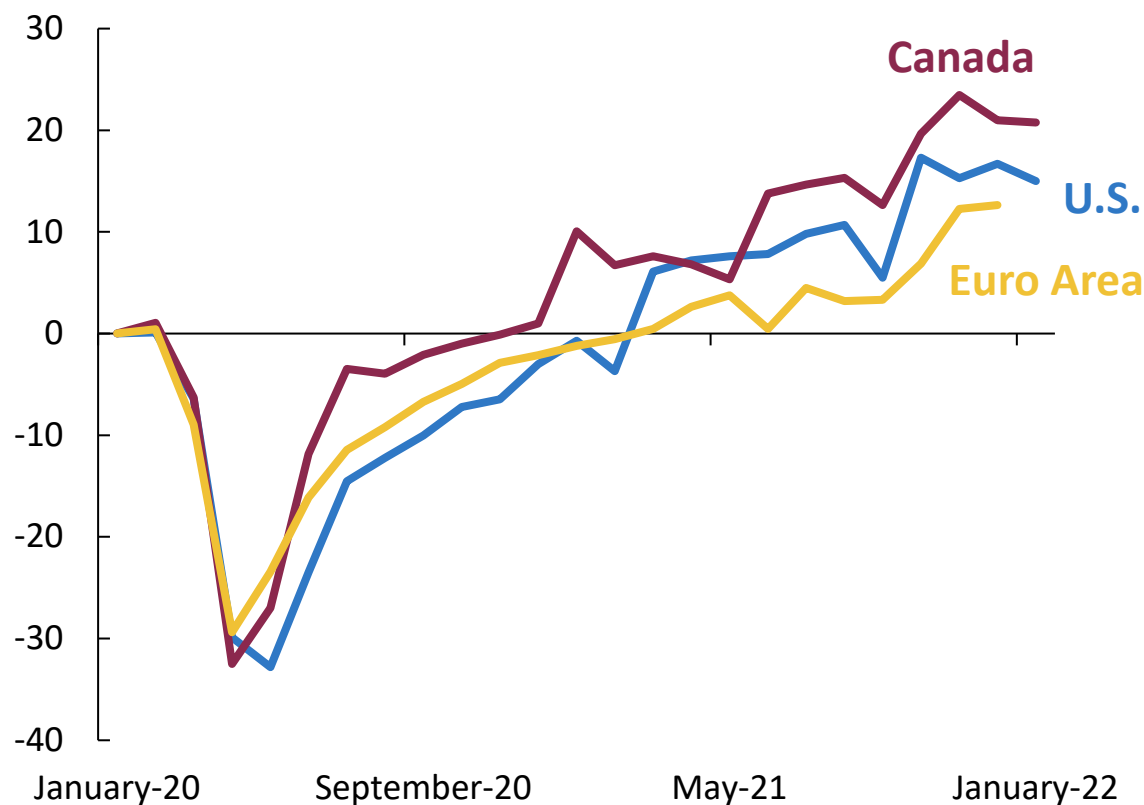
# OMICRON CAUSES SERVICES EXPORTS TO DIP IN JANUARY

Goods exports are beginning to normalize after exceeding pre-pandemic levels.

Services trade was making considerable progress, but the recent Omicron variant reversed that growth trend.

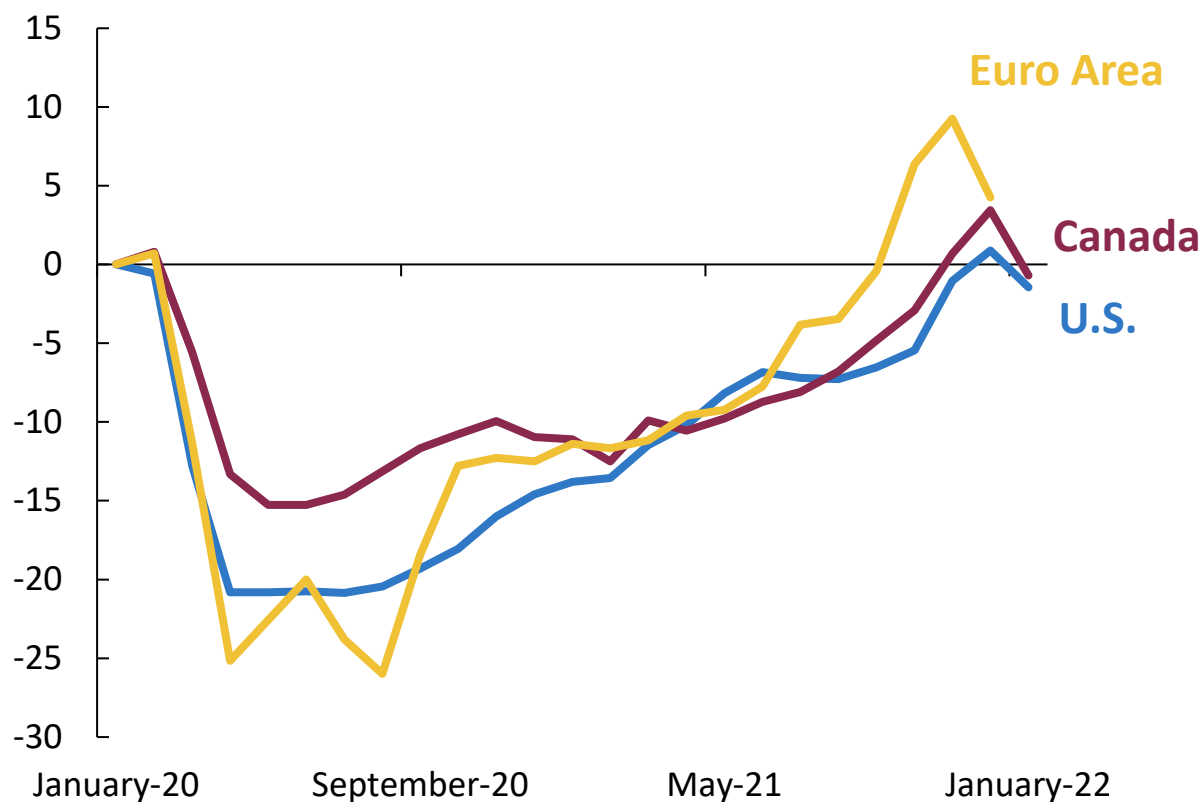
## Merchandise exports

% change since January 2020



## Services exports

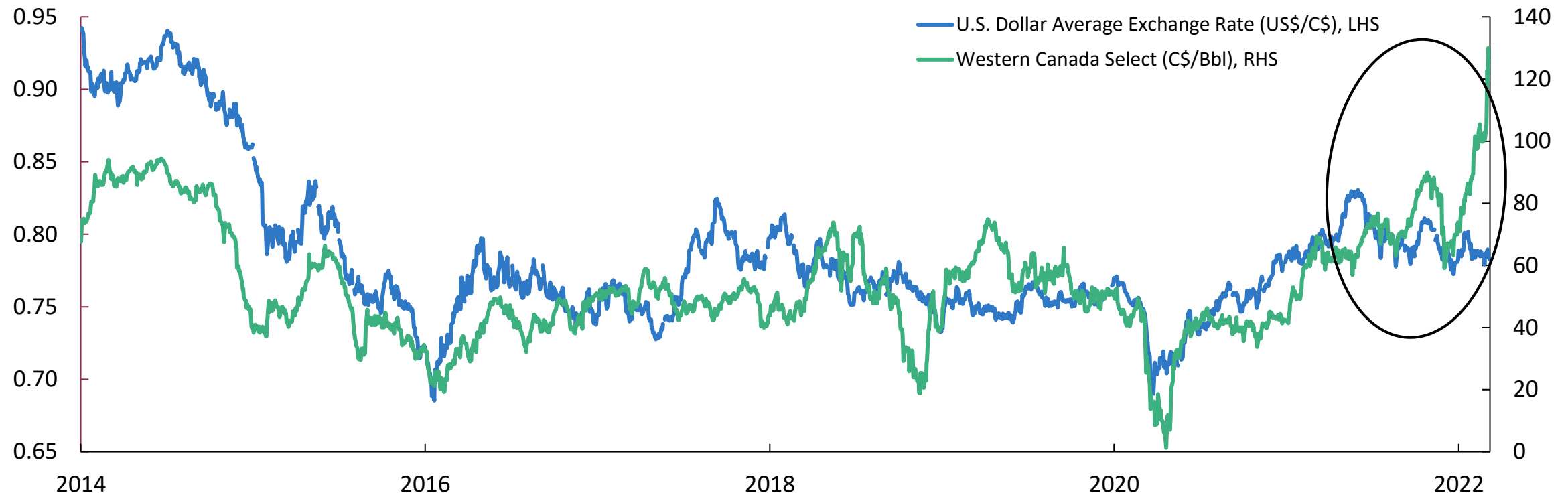
% change since January 2020



# CANADIAN DOLLAR DECOUPLING FROM RISING OIL PRICES

The Canadian dollar has depreciated since mid-2021. While the Bank of Canada was initially more hawkish in its policy stance, the Fed began messaging a tighter monetary posture. While the Russia-Ukraine crisis has pushed Canadian oil prices above \$100, the flight by investors to U.S. dollars amid the crisis put further downward pressure on the loonie relative to the U.S. dollar.

## Daily exchange rate and crude oil price



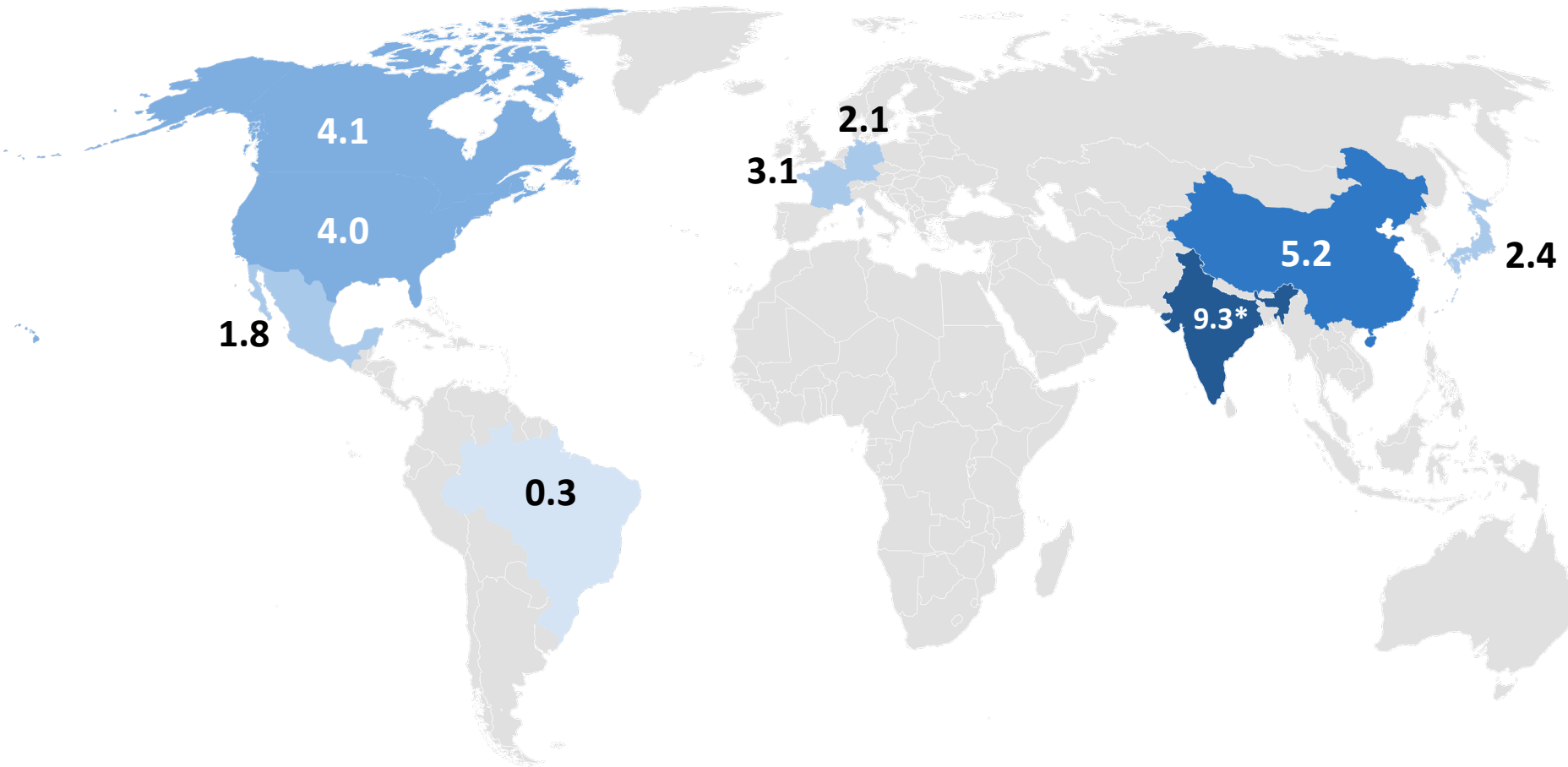
Sources: Haver Analytics, EDC Economics

# GLOBAL ECONOMIC OUTLOOK



# 2022 GROWTH OUTLOOK

Real GDP growth, %



**4.1%**

World

**3.3%**

Developed

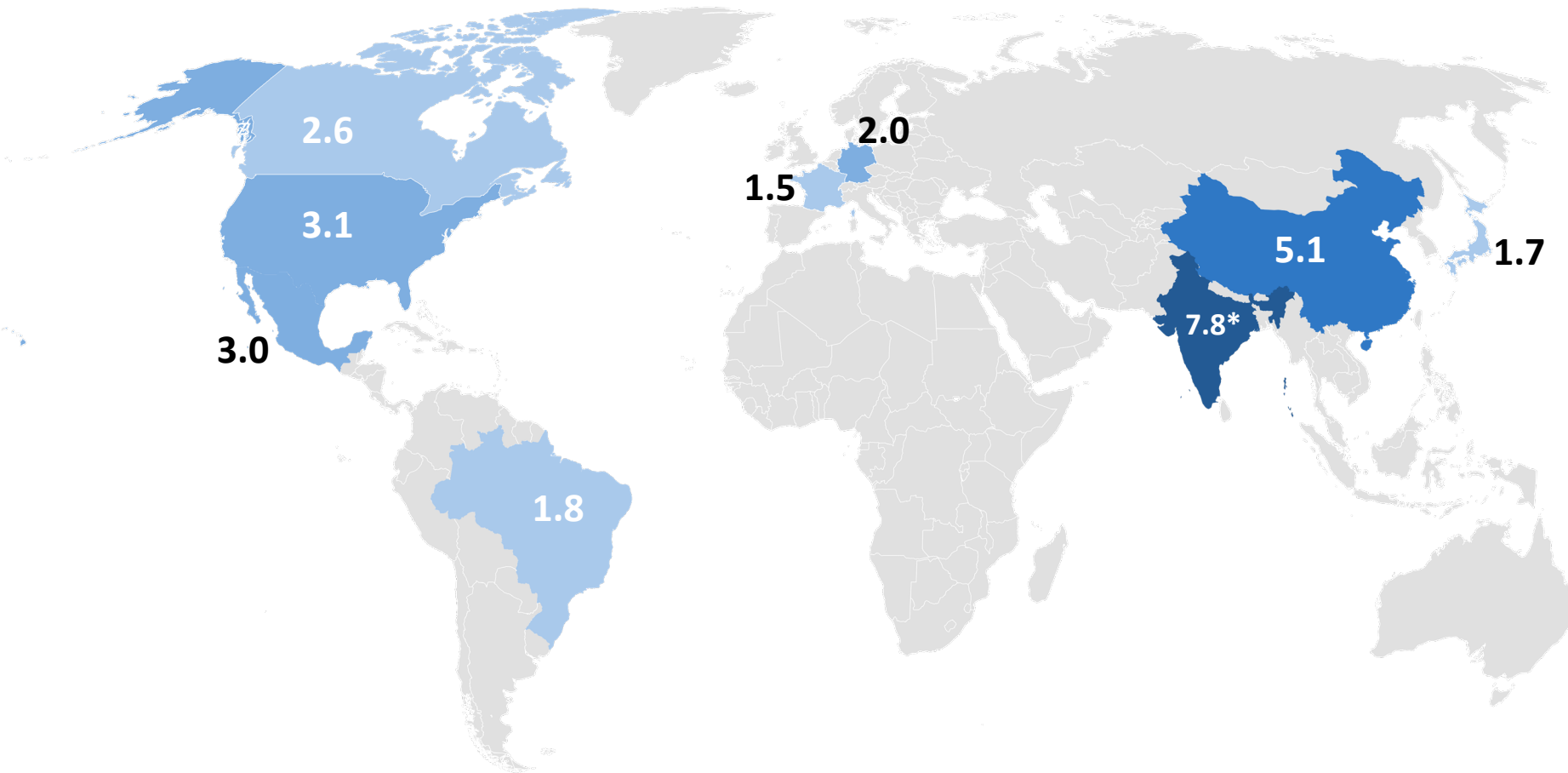
**4.5%**

Emerging



# 2023 GROWTH OUTLOOK

Real GDP growth, %



**3.9%**

World

**2.8%**

Developed

**4.6%**

Emerging

\* India's 2024 FY = Q2 2023 – Q1 2024

Source: EDC Global Economic Outlook, March 2022

# REAL GDP GROWTH

<b>Global Economic Outlook</b> (Annual % change)	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022*</b>	<b>2023*</b>
<b>Developed countries</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>2.8</b>
Canada	4.6	4.1	2.6
United States	5.7	4.0	3.1
Eurozone	5.2	2.9	2.5
Germany	2.9	2.1	2.0
France	7.0	3.1	1.5
Japan	1.7	2.4	1.7
<b>Emerging countries</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4.6</b>
China	8.4	5.2	5.1
India	9.3	9.3	7.8
Brazil	5.0	0.3	1.8
Mexico	5.0	1.8	3.0
<b>World</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>3.9</b>

Note: \* denotes the forecast period. India's forecast based on fiscal year (2023 FY = Q2 2022 – Q1 2023, 2024 FY = Q2 2023 – Q1 2024)

Source: EDC Global Economic Outlook, March 2022

# CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS FORECAST

Global Economic Outlook		2022*	2023*
Real GDP growth (percentage point change)			
<b>Developed countries</b>		<b>-0.8</b>	<b>-0.2</b>
Canada		-0.1	0.2
United States		-0.5	-0.5
Eurozone		-1.1	-0.2
Germany		-2.3	-0.4
France		-0.4	-0.2
Japan		-0.2	-0.1
<b>Emerging countries</b>		<b>-0.8</b>	<b>-0.4</b>
China		-1.6	-2.0
India		-3.4	0.8
Brazil		-0.7	-0.9
Mexico		-1.4	0.4
<b>World</b>		<b>-0.7</b>	<b>-0.4</b>

Note: \* denotes the forecast period. Green shading denotes upward adjustments; red shading denotes downward adjustments.  
Source: EDC Global Economic Outlook, March 2022 relative to January 2022.

# CURRENCIES AND INTEREST RATES

Global Economic Outlook		2021	2022*	2023*
Currencies	Exchange Rate			
U.S. dollar	USD per CAD	0.80	0.78	0.80
Euro	USD per EUR	1.18	1.12	1.19
Euro	CAD per EUR	1.48	1.44	1.49
Interest Rates, annual average				
Bank of Canada, <i>Overnight Target Rate</i>		0.25	1.00	2.30
U.S. Federal Reserve, <i>Fed Funds Target Rate (Upper limit)</i>		0.13	0.90	2.16
European Central Bank, <i>Policy Interest Rate</i>		0.0	0.0	0.12

Note: \* denotes the forecast period.

Source: EDC Global Economic Outlook, March 2022

# COMMODITY PRICES

Global Economic Outlook	2021	2022*	2023*
<b>Brent Crude Spot</b> , <i>USD / bbl</i>	70.68	116.42	91.91
<b>West Texas Intermediate</b> , <i>USD / bbl</i>	67.98	113.31	88.86
<b>Western Canada Select</b> , <i>USD / bbl</i>	54.55	96.45	73.58
<b>Natural Gas</b> , <i>USD / MMBtu</i>	3.85	4.00	3.60
<b>Gold</b> , <i>USD / troy ounce</i>	1,800	1,804	1,610
<b>Copper</b> , <i>USD / tonne</i>	9,318	9,393	8,649

Note: \* denotes the forecast period.

Source: EDC Global Economic Outlook, March 2022



# KEY FORECAST ASSUMPTIONS

## Global fiscal policy

EDC Economics expects that fiscal policy will be a drag on economic growth going forward. The release of household savings amassed during the pandemic has been a significant driver of growth so far, but may struggle to offset the decline of fiscal spending. Restoring public finances will likely continue to be a priority for countries with deteriorated public finances due to the pandemic. Increased government spending and lower tax revenues have dramatically increased debt and budget deficits. Emerging markets with limited fiscal flexibility may need to take austerity measures in order to reduce fiscal deficits at the expense of growth as the bulk of their populations remain unvaccinated. Developed countries will move away from pandemic relief and focus on public investment projects.

## Monetary policy

Supply chain disruptions, elevated energy costs, labour shortages, record amounts of stimulus spending combined with strong demand have sent inflation rates soaring to multi-decade highs on an annualized basis. This has intensified pressures on central banks to accelerate the unwinding of quantitative easing and undergo monetary policy normalization. Increase rates are expected to rise at a faster pace and potentially in larger increments than previously expected.

## Financial conditions

The overall risk in the financial system is higher than in previous quarters. Higher interest rates, geopolitical risks and slower economic growth could trigger a significant repricing of global asset prices. The base case forecast doesn't include any systemic financial crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, there are certain existing vulnerabilities that'll condition the response of financial markets to the period of monetary tightening. These will include higher corporate and personal debt, and a significant pandemic-related increase in public debt.

## Supply chain disruptions

Nearly two years into the pandemic, supply chain constraints remain a top-of-mind concern. Bottlenecks at ports, shortages of ships and containers, which combined with labour shortages, have made it difficult to source raw materials, certain key intermediate goods, most notably semiconductors, as well as finished products.

EDC Economics' base case outlook expects supply chain disruptions to improve in the second half of 2022, potentially extending beyond for sensitive markets and types of goods. Shipping prices have moderated over the past few months.

## COVID-19

As the impact of the latest variant recedes, countries will begin lifting restrictions and testing requirements. EDC Economics' baseline outlook assumes that any new COVID-19 variants are unlikely to trigger prolonged public health measures.

## Russia-Ukraine

Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which began Feb. 24, will have far-reaching consequences on the global economy. The baseline forecast envisions a short period of intense conflict contained to Ukraine. Western sanctions have been imposed on Russia, targeting its energy sector and removal from SWIFT.

# KEY RISKS TO THE FORECAST

**Given rapidly changing global events, there's a higher-than-usual degree of uncertainty around this forecast, which incorporates information available as of Feb. 25, 2022.**

## Key upside risks

- Unprecedented government support provided across advanced economies, alongside a reduced ability to spend on some services, has led to a large accumulation of household savings in many countries. Stronger drawdown of consumer savings and slow removal of macro-policy supports could result in a stronger-than-expected recovery, releasing significant pent-up demand into the economy.
- Stronger-than-expected consumer demand and business investment enables governments to reduce their spending programs more rapidly than in the base case. Increased consumer spending would more than offset the impacts of reduced fiscal stimulus.
- Inflation rises but is contained by the rise in business investment and digitization, which boosts productive capacity of the economy, preventing the economy from overheating. Additionally, monetary policy moves would be well-communicated, balanced and gradual to prevent systemic risks, like a broad financial crisis or significant asset price corrections.

## Key downside risks

- Weakness starting in late 2022 due to faster-than-anticipated U.S. monetary policy tightening. A combination of too fast or too much tightening, and poor alignment of this tightening with market expectations, has a significant negative impact on financial markets, which impacts real economic activity.
- Monetary tightening comes from both higher interest rate and quantitative tightening that's faster and greater than in the base case.
- Higher debt is an increasingly significant issue for the corporate sector, emerging markets and households. The sudden tightening of financial conditions increases default risk. This contrasts with remarkably low bankruptcy rates throughout the pandemic.
- The Russia-Ukraine crisis has presented significantly higher commodities prices, stock market volatility and flight to quality. Emerging market risks have risen. Erosion of purchasing power and financial risks spilling over into real economic activity are a key risk to the forecast.

# DISCLOSURE

Ce document est également disponible en français.

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