

“Simple mortality risk mitigation strategies hold the promise of delivering higher household incomes along with lower fatalities from COVID-19, thus improving outcomes along both dimensions,” he said. “The downside risk remains substantial and continued execution of a granular, risk-based health policy will be critical in the months ahead.”

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- **September 18, 2020.** Remarks. [Bullard Discusses Economic Outlook, Inflation during Virtual Conference.](#)

Bullard Discusses Economic Outlook, Inflation during Virtual Conference

September 18, 2020

St. Louis Fed President James Bullard discussed his outlook for U.S. GDP growth and unemployment, the Fed's move to flexible average inflation targeting, and the possibility of seeing more inflation in the future than before the pandemic. He spoke at a virtual conference hosted by the Boeing Center for Supply Chain Innovation at Washington University in St. Louis.

Bullard noted that the unemployment rate declined dramatically from double-digit levels to 8.4% as of the last jobs report, which was for August. He said that he has penciled in an unemployment rate of 6.5% for the December jobs report. He also noted that real GDP growth in the third quarter looks like it'll be about 30% at an annual rate, which would be the biggest growth quarter of all time in the U.S.

Bullard also explained what flexible average inflation targeting means at a practical level. When inflation runs below target for a while, the central bank would make up for that by allowing inflation to run above target for a while, thereby hitting the 2% inflation target on average, he noted. While inflation has mostly been below target since 2012, he said the U.S. may start to see

some inflation in the future from several sources.

Bullard also discussed the increase in federal debt as a result of pandemic relief to households and businesses, Fed actions aimed at keeping the U.S. out of a financial crisis on top of the pandemic, and continued adjustments made by businesses to provide their products and services safely.

Having trouble with the video? [Watch it here.](<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9-rWqi7AIE>)

- **August 3, 2020.** Remarks. [Bullard Speaks at Memphis Branch Virtual Event.](#)

Bullard Speaks at Memphis Branch Virtual Event

August 3, 2020

St. Louis Fed President James Bullard gave an overview of how the U.S. economy is interacting with the progress of the COVID-19 pandemic during a virtual event hosted by the St. Louis Fed's Memphis Branch. He also outlined a scenario for how to stabilize the economy by the end of the year.

Bullard noted that the U.S. economy surprised to the upside in May and June, but that he would expect less upside surprise with July data. However, the basic story that April was way down and that May and June came back is encouraging and is something to build on in trying to stabilize the economy, he said.

He also talked about how the economy is continuing to adapt to the new mortality risk posed by COVID-19, and about the use of some basic risk mitigation strategies. Another development that likely will help is better therapeutics for treating the disease, he added.

"All of this suggests a path going forward that can lead to stabilization in the U.S. economy by the end of the year," he said. However, he cautioned that there are downside risks, which is the nature of being in a crisis.

(For additional remarks on managing the mortality risk, see Bullard's July