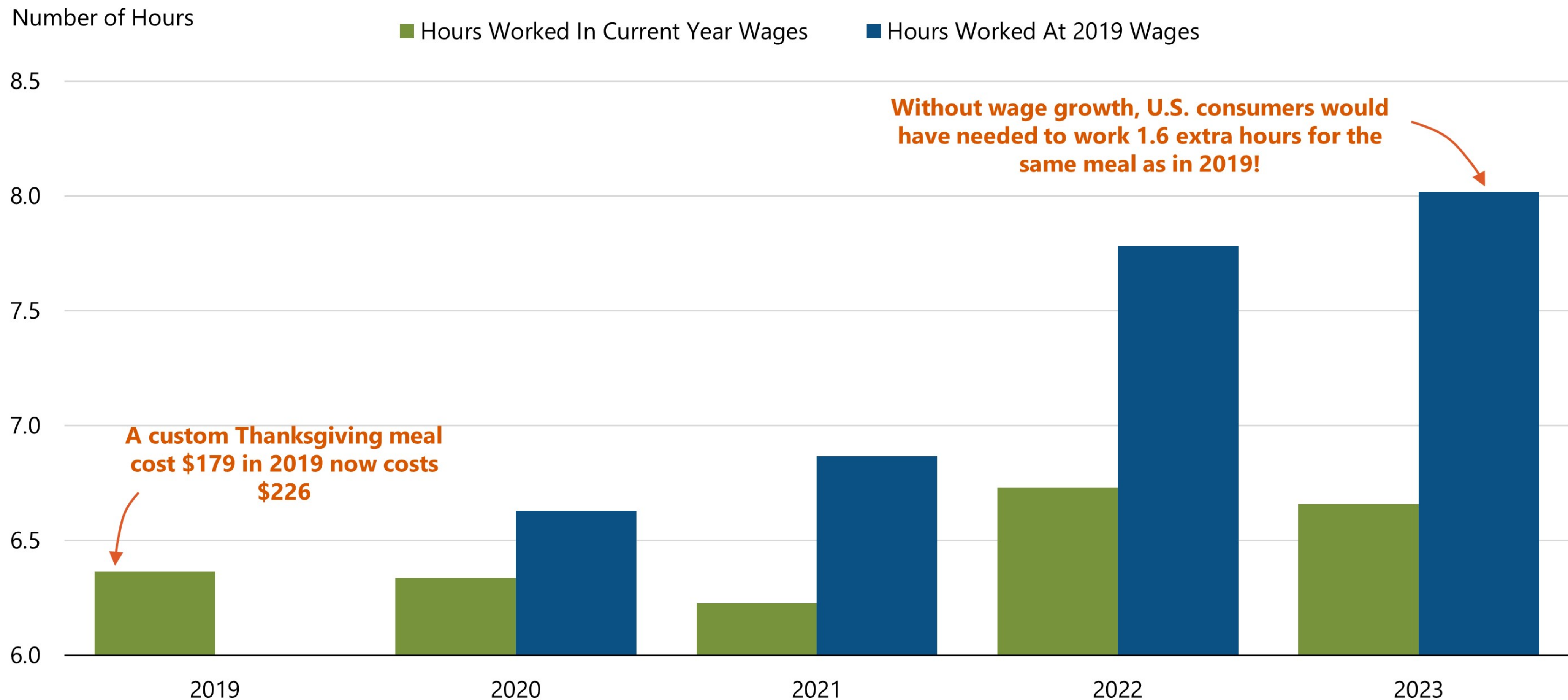


A Thanksgiving Wage

Cost Of Thanksgiving Dinner* In Number Of Hours Worked At Average Wage

For The Week Ending 11/24/2023



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Payden Calculations

*Meal includes turkey with stuffing, tofurkey, pumpkin pie, wine, ham, and other assorted dishes, for a family of four

As the festive season kicks off in the U.S. with Thanksgiving this week, we look back at the cost of an American Thanksgiving meal over time. Often, economists are criticized for too narrow a focus. We claim, "guilty as charged." We obsess over the rate of change in a set of prices ("inflation"), which makes sense as central banks maintain a rate of change target. But what matters most for the average person is the cost in "hours worked" to buy goods and services. Even if inflation slows to a 2% rate per central bank mandates, The Payden Economics Team custom Thanksgiving meal is 26% more expensive in 2023 than in 2019 (pre-Covid). Fortunately, wage growth has helped the average worker offset the nominal price increases. Adjusted for the cost of the annual meal in terms of hours worked, the average worker must clock in 18 additional minutes to enjoy the same spread as in 2019. As we gather to "give thanks," just remember: while investors and central bankers obsess over the 2% target, the average person has to put food on the table.