

THE GRANITE STATE POLL

CONSUMER CONFIDENCE IN NH SURGES

By: Andrew E. Smith, Ph.D. 603/862-2226
Dennis M. Junius, M.A.
UNH Survey Center
www.unh.edu/survey-center

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DURHAM, NH -- New Hampshire residents are guardedly optimistic about the future performance of the nation's and the state's business conditions. Furthermore, their expectations for personal financial conditions are surprisingly high given the economic downturn of the past year.

These findings are based on the latest **Granite State Poll**, conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center. The Granite State Poll is sponsored by the University of New Hampshire. Five hundred six (509) adults were interviewed between April 11 and April 22, 2003. The margin of sampling error for the survey is +/-4.4 percent. (For more detailed results, visit the Survey Center web site at www.unh.edu/survey-center and click on Press Releases.)

U.S. Business Conditions

With the end of the war with Iraq, the economic uncertainty it created has abated and the New Hampshire economy is beginning to show signs of life. In the most recent **Granite State Poll**, almost half (48%) of New Hampshire residents expect that businesses in the U.S. will experience good times in the next 12 months, 37 percent anticipate bad times for U.S. businesses, and 15 percent think conditions will be mixed. This marks a dramatic increase in confidence since the February Granite State Poll when only 31 percent expected good times, 49 percent expected bad times, and 20 percent had mixed feelings about businesses in the U.S. in the year to come.

When asked about the long term prospects for the U.S. economy, 43 percent of New Hampshire residents believe that the U.S. economy will experience continuous good times over the next 5 years. Thirty-eight percent expect periods of widespread unemployment and depression, and 20 percent see a mix of good and bad conditions. "Now that the economic uncertainty over Iraq has settled, more optimistic about the economy," said Andrew E. Smith, Director of the UNH Survey Center

N.H. Business Conditions

Turning to business conditions in New Hampshire over the next 12 months, 48 percent of adults think New Hampshire will have good times economically, 35 percent feel there will be bad times, and 16 percent foresee mixed conditions. Again, these figures have improved since the February, 2003 Granite State Poll 41 percent thought New

Hampshire would have good times, 40 percent thought we would have bad times, and 19 percent thought conditions would be mixed.

Personal Financial Conditions

When asked about their personal financial situations, New Hampshire residents are feeling better than they were three months ago, but are only cautiously optimistic. Thirty-six percent of Granite Staters say they are better off now than they were a year ago, 34 percent say they are worse off, and 30 percent say things are about the same. But when asked about their personal financial situations in the coming year, 42 percent of New Hampshire residents believe they will be better off financially a year from now, only 9 percent think they will be worse off, and 49 percent think they will be about the same. Both of these measures have increased since the February, 2003 Granite State Poll.

When asked about making major purchases for their household, such as appliances or furniture, 60 percent of New Hampshire residents think that it is a good time to make a major household purchase, 28 percent think it is a bad time, and 12 percent think it depends. This measure has also improved since the February, 2003 Granite State Poll but remains below last years level. In the April, 2002 Granite State Poll, 71 percent thought it was a good time to make a major household purchase, 18 percent thought it was a bad time, and 11 percent weren't quite sure.

Subgroup Analysis

There are few demographic differences in economic expectations of New Hampshire residents, but there are meaningful political differences.

- Republicans and conservatives are more optimistic about current and future economic conditions than are Democrats and liberals.
- Younger adults are more likely to say they are better off financially than they were a year ago and that they expect to be better off a year from now than are older adults, many of whom have recently retired or expect to retire soon.

Granite State Poll Methodology

These findings are based on the most recent Granite State Poll conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center from April 11 to April 22, 2003. A random sample of 509 New Hampshire adults was interviewed by telephone. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates will be accurate to plus or minus 4.4 percent. Results reported for other subgroups have potential for somewhat larger variation than those for the entire population.

The data have been weighted to adjust for numbers of adults and telephone lines within households, respondent sex, and region of the state. In addition to potential sampling error, all surveys have other potential sources of non-sampling error including question order effects, question wording effects, and non-response.

Business Conditions in U.S. in 12 Months

"Turning to business conditions in the country as a whole --do you think that during the next twelve months we'll have good times financially, or bad times, or what?"

	Good Times	Mixed	Bad Times	(N)
April 2003 (Latest)	48%	15%	37%	(477)
February 2003	31	20	49	(606)
June 2002	37	22	41	(599)
April 2002	52	22	26	(484)
February 2002	49	19	32	(300)
October 2001	25	27	49	(493)

5 Year Economic Outlook - U.S.

"Looking Ahead, which would you say is more likely – that in the country as a whole we will have continuous GOOD TIMES during the next FIVE YEARS or so, or that we will have periods of WIDESPREAD UNEMPLOYMENT or DEPRESSION, or what?"

	Continuous Good Times	Mixed	Depression/ Unemployment	(N)
April 2003 (Latest)	43%	20%	38%	(470)
February 2003	32	22	46	(607)
June 2002	31	27	42	(603)
April 2002	41	22	37	(463)

Business Conditions in New Hampshire in 12 Months

"Turning to business conditions in the New Hampshire as a whole --do you think that during the next twelve months we'll have good times financially, or bad times, or what?"

	Good Times	Mixed	Bad Times	(N)
April 2003 (Latest)	48%	16%	35%	(462)
February 2003	41	19	40	(577)
June 2002	52	21	27	(588)
April 2002	58	20	22	(462)

Household Financial Condition Compared to 12 Months Ago

"We are interested in how people are getting along financially these days. Would you say that you (and your family living there) are BETTER OFF or WORSE OFF financially than you were a year ago?"

	Better Off	About the Same	Worse Off	(N)
April 2003 (Latest)	36%	30%	34%	(504)
February 2003	30	29	40	(647)
June 2002	38	33	29	(650)
April 2002	40	29	31	(507)

Household Financial Condition 12 Months From Now

“Now, looking ahead – do you think that a year from now you and your family will be better off financially ... or worse off ... or just about the same?”

	Better Off	About the Same	Worse Off	(N)
April 2003 (Latest)	42%	49%	9%	(489)
February 2003	34	55	11	(622)
June 2002	33	57	10	(625)
April 2002	38	55	7	(479)
February 2002	35	56	10	(305)
October 2001	26	62	13	(500)

Good Time to Buy Major Household Item

“Now thinking about the big things people buy for their home -- such as furniture, a refrigerator, a stove, television and things like that. Generally speaking, do you think now is a good time or a bad time for people to buy major household items?”

	Good Time	Pro-Con	Bad Time	(N)
April 2003 (Latest)	60%	12%	28%	(487)
February 2003	53	16	31	(600)
June 2002	68	10	22	(613)
April 2002	71	11	18	(480)
February 2002	65	10	26	(298)
October 2001	63	15	22	(506)

Personal Financial Condition Compared to 1 Year Ago

STATEWIDE	<u>Better Off</u> 36%	<u>About</u> <u>The Same</u> 30%	<u>Worse Off</u> 34%	<u>(N)</u> 504
Registered Democrat	27	30	44	92
Undeclared	34	26	40	158
Registered Republican	41	36	22	142
Not registered	39	27	34	105
Democrat	27	25	48	170
Independent	30	31	39	100
Republican	46	33	21	216
Liberal	33	28	39	98
Moderate	28	28	43	213
Conservative	50	33	17	153
Union household	39	30	32	64
Non-union	36	30	34	436
5 Years or less in NH	47	29	25	66
6 to 10 years	35	24	41	38
11 to 20 years	39	23	37	95
More than 20 years	33	33	34	299
18 to 34	49	20	31	112
33 to 49	40	27	34	184
50 to 64	36	30	34	119
65 and over	12	52	36	72
Male	45	25	30	242
Female	28	34	38	262
High school or less	35	33	32	139
Some college	34	33	33	133
College graduate	35	32	33	143
Post-graduate	42	18	40	86
Less than \$30K	30	29	41	77
\$30K to \$60K	35	30	34	159
\$60K to \$75K	36	26	38	42
\$75K to \$100K	49	26	25	68
More than \$100K	47	27	25	67
Married	36	29	34	311
Divorced/separated	31	37	32	98
Never married	40	26	35	93
Protestant	34	31	34	201
Catholic	35	32	34	165
Other	40	26	34	127
Northern NH	32	26	43	65
Western NH	29	42	29	48
Central/Lakes	38	33	29	79
Hillsborough County	33	27	41	153
Seacoast	42	30	28	159
1st Cong. District	40	26	33	269
2nd Cong. District	31	34	35	235
1st E.C. District	30	29	42	109
2nd E.C. District	39	35	27	94
3rd E.C. District	39	29	32	109
4th E.C. District	37	29	34	80
5th E.C. District	35	29	36	108

HH Finances in 12 Months From Now

STATEWIDE	<u>Better Off</u> 42%	<u>Worse Off</u> 9%	<u>About the Same</u> 49%	<u>(N)</u> 489
Registered Democrat	24	15	62	88
Undeclared	37	11	52	155
Registered Republican	52	4	43	138
Not registered	51	7	43	101
Democrat	30	13	57	162
Independent	43	11	46	103
Republican	49	5	45	210
Liberal	32	11	57	95
Moderate	40	11	48	209
Conservative	50	3	47	148
Union household	42	10	49	62
Non-union	43	9	49	424
5 Years or less in NH	59	1	40	65
6 to 10 years	41	11	48	37
11 to 20 years	44	9	47	92
More than 20 years	38	10	51	290
18 to 34	55	3	41	108
33 to 49	42	11	47	179
50 to 64	48	10	42	114
65 and over	13	11	76	72
Male	46	9	44	236
Female	38	8	53	253
High school or less	46	8	46	136
Some college	37	8	55	128
College graduate	43	9	48	138
Post-graduate	44	11	45	85
Less than \$30K	39	8	53	75
\$30K to \$60K	42	9	49	157
\$60K to \$75K	46	4	50	41
\$75K to \$100K	41	9	50	65
More than \$100K	55	11	34	66
Married	42	9	48	300
Divorced/separated	31	12	57	97
Never married	54	3	43	91
Protestant	43	9	48	193
Catholic	40	7	53	160
Other	42	11	48	124
Northern NH	39	7	54	65
Western NH	18	14	68	44
Central/Lakes	43	11	46	73
Hillsborough County	49	8	43	152
Seacoast	43	8	49	154
1st Cong. District	48	8	44	264
2nd Cong. District	36	9	55	225
1st E.C. District	37	12	51	106
2nd E.C. District	44	7	49	89
3rd E.C. District	37	10	53	104
4th E.C. District	55	4	41	81
5th E.C. District	42	8	51	104

Business Conditions in NH 12 Months From Now

	<u>Good Times</u> 48%	<u>Some Good- Some Bad</u> 16%	<u>Bad Times</u> 35%	<u>(N)</u> 462
STATEWIDE				
Registered Democrat	32	16	52	81
Undeclared	47	17	36	147
Registered Republican	65	15	21	132
Not registered	42	18	40	95
Democrat	34	13	53	156
Independent	50	25	25	89
Republican	60	13	27	202
Liberal	32	17	51	90
Moderate	43	18	39	198
Conservative	67	12	21	143
Union household	48	13	39	60
Non-union	49	17	35	398
5 Years or less in NH	56	10	34	62
6 to 10 years	47	8	45	35
11 to 20 years	48	15	36	87
More than 20 years	46	19	35	273
18 to 34	48	10	42	106
33 to 49	46	17	37	169
50 to 64	51	17	32	108
65 and over	48	24	29	64
Male	52	18	31	230
Female	45	15	40	233
High school or less	53	19	28	126
Some college	45	15	40	121
College graduate	51	14	36	133
Post-graduate	41	19	40	81
Less than \$30K	48	13	39	70
\$30K to \$60K	47	14	39	151
\$60K to \$75K	55	9	36	37
\$75K to \$100K	50	18	33	64
More than \$100K	54	17	29	60
Married	49	16	35	280
Divorced/separated	46	18	36	94
Never married	47	15	38	86
Protestant	50	16	34	188
Catholic	54	15	31	147
Other	38	19	43	117
Northern NH	52	8	41	60
Western NH	49	23	27	44
Central/Lakes	43	19	37	73
Hillsborough County	44	16	40	137
Seacoast	54	16	30	149
1st Cong. District	49	19	31	248
2nd Cong. District	47	13	40	214
1st E.C. District	48	15	37	99
2nd E.C. District	54	13	33	86
3rd E.C. District	48	20	32	105
4th E.C. District	56	12	32	74
5th E.C. District	39	19	42	95

Business Conditions in US in 12 Months From Now

	<u>Good Times</u> 48%	<u>Some Good- Some Bad</u> 15%	<u>Bad Times</u> 37%	<u>(N)</u> 477
STATEWIDE				
Registered Democrat	36	10	54	84
Undeclared	43	18	39	152
Registered Republican	64	14	23	134
Not registered	43	17	40	101
Democrat	30	12	59	160
Independent	46	26	28	97
Republican	62	13	26	204
Liberal	34	14	52	95
Moderate	42	18	40	204
Conservative	68	12	20	144
Union household	58	10	32	61
Non-union	46	16	38	412
5 Years or less in NH	51	6	43	64
6 to 10 years	53	14	33	34
11 to 20 years	49	17	35	92
More than 20 years	45	17	38	280
18 to 34	44	13	43	104
33 to 49	48	12	41	176
50 to 64	52	22	26	115
65 and over	46	16	38	67
Male	54	14	31	233
Female	42	16	43	244
High school or less	55	17	29	130
Some college	41	16	43	126
College graduate	51	14	35	137
Post-graduate	42	14	44	82
Less than \$30K	48	9	43	73
\$30K to \$60K	47	17	36	155
\$60K to \$75K	46	15	39	39
\$75K to \$100K	42	16	42	63
More than \$100K	52	13	35	61
Married	45	16	39	289
Divorced/separated	54	16	30	98
Never married	52	10	39	88
Protestant	48	20	32	191
Catholic	53	10	37	154
Other	38	15	47	121
Northern NH	43	16	41	61
Western NH	48	17	35	44
Central/Lakes	43	17	40	75
Hillsborough County	49	11	39	143
Seacoast	51	16	33	153
1st Cong. District	50	15	35	257
2nd Cong. District	46	15	39	220
1st E.C. District	43	18	39	101
2nd E.C. District	48	16	36	91
3rd E.C. District	47	16	37	107
4th E.C. District	51	13	36	76
5th E.C. District	51	11	38	99

US 5 Year Economic Outlook

	<u>Continuous Good Times</u> 43%	<u>Mixed</u> 20%	<u>Widespread Unemployment/ Depression</u> 38%	<u>(N)</u> 470
STATEWIDE				
Registered Democrat	26	18	56	82
Undeclared	36	19	44	154
Registered Republican	63	16	21	132
Not registered	40	26	34	95
Democrat	23	21	56	157
Independent	39	24	37	95
Republican	61	15	23	203
Liberal	32	21	48	89
Moderate	36	22	41	201
Conservative	60	16	25	144
Union household	43	12	45	61
Non-union	43	21	36	405
5 Years or less in NH	48	19	32	64
6 to 10 years	55	19	26	35
11 to 20 years	41	25	34	89
More than 20 years	41	18	41	276
18 to 34	42	18	41	107
33 to 49	40	22	38	170
50 to 64	50	22	28	116
65 and over	39	12	48	61
Male	52	19	29	231
Female	33	21	46	239
High school or less	49	14	38	128
Some college	35	22	43	124
College graduate	50	20	30	137
Post-graduate	33	25	43	79
Less than \$30K	37	22	41	70
\$30K to \$60K	37	18	46	155
\$60K to \$75K	58	13	28	39
\$75K to \$100K	44	27	29	62
More than \$100K	54	22	24	63
Married	43	21	36	288
Divorced/separated	37	20	43	91
Never married	47	15	39	89
Protestant	41	21	38	185
Catholic	48	17	35	153
Other	39	19	42	121
Northern NH	37	26	38	61
Western NH	46	14	40	43
Central/Lakes	45	19	36	75
Hillsborough County	37	21	41	141
Seacoast	47	18	35	149
1st Cong. District	43	17	40	252
2nd Cong. District	42	23	35	218
1st E.C. District	37	25	38	102
2nd E.C. District	55	12	33	87
3rd E.C. District	45	19	36	104
4th E.C. District	40	24	37	75
5th E.C. District	39	19	42	99

Good Time To Buy Major Household Item

STATEWIDE	<u>Good Time</u> 60%	<u>Pro-Con</u> 12%	<u>Bad Time</u> 28%	<u>(N)</u> 487
Registered Democrat	52	10	37	85
Undeclared	57	12	31	155
Registered Republican	69	12	19	138
Not registered	58	12	30	102
Democrat	51	12	37	162
Independent	51	14	35	98
Republican	71	11	18	209
Liberal	48	11	41	90
Moderate	59	13	28	209
Conservative	70	9	21	149
Union household	64	9	27	64
Non-union	59	12	28	419
5 Years or less in NH	61	10	30	63
6 to 10 years	64	5	31	36
11 to 20 years	73	6	20	93
More than 20 years	56	15	30	288
18 to 34	62	10	29	107
33 to 49	60	9	31	177
50 to 64	63	18	19	117
65 and over	52	14	33	70
Male	61	14	24	234
Female	60	9	31	253
High school or less	63	11	26	130
Some college	60	12	28	132
College graduate	64	12	25	142
Post-graduate	52	12	36	80
Less than \$30K	60	9	31	73
\$30K to \$60K	59	11	30	157
\$60K to \$75K	53	21	25	41
\$75K to \$100K	55	12	33	61
More than \$100K	70	12	18	63
Married	62	11	27	298
Divorced/separated	52	15	33	98
Never married	65	8	27	89
Protestant	58	13	29	191
Catholic	66	9	25	158
Other	57	14	30	126
Northern NH	60	11	28	65
Western NH	51	20	29	44
Central/Lakes	60	14	26	77
Hillsborough County	61	10	29	148
Seacoast	63	10	27	152
1st Cong. District	61	13	27	262
2nd Cong. District	60	10	30	225
1st E.C. District	56	17	26	107
2nd E.C. District	64	10	27	93
3rd E.C. District	63	11	27	104
4th E.C. District	60	9	31	78
5th E.C. District	61	11	28	102