

Media Relations

UNH Survey Center: Granite Staters Remain Split On Direction Of N.H. Economy

July 28, 2011

DURHAM, N.H. – New Hampshire adults are divided in their views about the direction of New Hampshire's economy, and pessimism about business conditions in the United States remains high, according to the latest Business and Industry Association (BIA) of New Hampshire Consumer Confidence Index conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center.

Five hundred sixteen (516) randomly selected New Hampshire adults were interviewed by telephone between June 21 and July 1, 2011. The margin of sampling error for the survey is +/- 4.3 percent.

New Hampshire consumers remain divided about the shape of the short-term future of the state's economy. When asked how they believe New Hampshire businesses will do over the next year, 36 percent of Granite Staters think local business will enjoy good times financially, 32 percent think they will experience bad times, and 32 percent foresee mixed conditions.

"These results are influenced by the front page conversation raging in Washington right now over the debt ceiling," BIA President Jim Roche said. "Businesses, like families, need predictability and certainty when making plans. In light of the lack of accord on resolving the debt ceiling matter, businesses are increasingly uncertain about the economy and are therefore unlikely to hire more workers, invest in expansions or make other operational decisions that will grow their business. Survey respondents understand this fact."

Granite Staters also are still pessimistic about the national economy. Only 26 percent of adults in New Hampshire think the country as a whole is in for good times financially over the next 12 months, 48 percent think the country will have bad times, and 26 percent think the conditions will be mixed.

Nearly half of New Hampshire adults are still pessimistic about the long-term prospects for the U.S. economy. Only 17 percent of New Hampshire residents believe that the U.S. economy will enjoy continuous good times over the next five years, 49 percent expect periods of widespread unemployment and depression, and 33 percent see a mix of good and bad conditions.

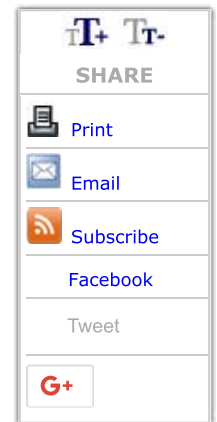
The percentage of New Hampshire adults who say they are worse off now than a year ago remains high. When asked about their household's financial condition, only 20 percent of New Hampshire adults say they are better off now than they were a year ago, 48 percent say they are worse off, and 32 percent say things are about the same.

When looking to their future household finances, most people in New Hampshire think they will be in about the same financial shape next year as they are today, a trend that has remained steady for nearly a decade. Currently, 20 percent think their family will be better off financially a year from now, 22 percent think they will be worse off and 58 percent think they will be about the same.

A good sign for New Hampshire's economy is that a plurality of New Hampshire adults continue to think that this is a good time to purchase major household items. Currently, 47 percent of Granite Staters think now is a good time to buy major household items, 33 percent think it is a bad time, and 20 percent think it depends on a person's finances.

To view the complete survey results, visit http://www.unh.edu/survey-center/news/pdf/gsp2011_summer_ccon072811.pdf.

The [UNH Survey Center](#) has conducted survey research projects at the University of New Hampshire since 1976. The center has grown rapidly during the past 30 years and now conducts approximately 40 to 50 major survey projects each year.



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PHOTO

Andrew Smith, director of the UNH Survey Center.

http://www.unh.edu/news/img/Andy_Smith.jpg

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