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Little Progress Seen on Major Domestic Issues

For Public, Tough Year Ends on a Down Note

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Little Progress Seen on Major Domestic Issues

For Public, Tough Year Ends on a Down Note

Consistent with the mood of the nation all year, 2010 is closing on a down note. Fully 72% are dissatisfied with national conditions, 89% rate national economic conditions as only fair or poor, and majorities or pluralities think the country is losing ground on nine of 12 major issues.

The public is especially bearish about the federal budget deficit, the cost of living, the financial condition of Social Security and the availability of good-paying jobs. At least six-in-ten say the country is losing ground in each of these areas.

Smaller majorities say the nation is losing ground on the gap between rich and poor (58%), the ability to compete economically with other countries (55%) and the financial condition of Medicare (51%).

The latest national poll by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted Dec. 1-5 among 1,500 adults, finds only two issues where relatively small minorities say the United States is losing ground – international terrorism (25% losing ground) and environmental pollution (23%). Even in these areas, however, most Americans do not see progress being achieved; rather, pluralities say things are staying about the same as they have been.

Public Sees Little Progress on Major Issues

	Country is...			
	Making progress	Staying about same	Losing ground	DK
Economic issues	%	%	%	%
Budget deficit	8	20	67	5=100
Cost of living	4	28	64	3=100
Availability of good-paying jobs	11	24	63	3=100
Rich-poor gap	5	32	58	5=100
Ability to compete internationally	12	28	55	6=100
Entitlements				
Financial condition of Social Security	3	25	64	8=100
Financial condition of Medicare	9	29	51	11=100
Other issues				
Way health care system is working	22	26	47	5=100
Quality of public education	17	34	44	5=100
Illegal immigration	11	41	42	7=100
International terrorism	27	43	25	6=100
Environmental pollution	26	45	23	6=100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Yet Americans' views about how the nation is doing on several major issues have improved since December 2008, a time when Americans expressed an even more negative view of the economy than they do today. Opinions among Republicans and Democrats also have changed substantially since then, shortly before President Obama took office. On many issues, the percentage of Republicans saying the nation is losing ground has increased, while the percentage of Democrats expressing this view has declined.

This shift has been particularly dramatic in opinions about the way the health care system is working. Currently, 67% of Republicans say the country is losing ground on health care, up from 41% two years ago. Opinion among Democrats has moved as sharply in the opposite direction: 33% now say the country is losing ground, down from 67% in December 2008.

The survey finds that while the vast majority of Americans take a negative view of current economic conditions, many see recovery as a long way off. Just 17% think the economy is now recovering while 33% say recovery will occur soon. Nearly half (48%) say it will be a long time before the economy recovers, which is little changed from earlier this year.

Jobs remain the public's primary economic concern. Nearly half (47%) cite the job situation as the economic issue that worries them most; far fewer say the federal budget deficit (19%), rising prices (15%) or problems in the financial markets (14%). (*For more, see "Deficit Solutions Meet with Public Skepticism," Dec. 9, 2010*).

Partisans Trade Places in Views of Health Care System

Way the health care system is working...

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Dec 2010				
Making progress	22	8	36	20
Staying about the same	26	21	28	28
Losing ground	47	67	33	46
Don't know	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>
	100	100	100	100
Dec 2008				
Making progress	8	13	5	8
Staying about the same	33	43	26	34
Losing ground	56	41	67	56
Don't know	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100	100
08-10 change in losing ground	-9	+26	-34	-10

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q9a. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Perceptions about the availability of jobs, both locally among the public and in people's line of work among those with jobs, have worsened as the unemployment rate has risen. Nearly eight-in-ten (79%) say jobs are difficult to find in their community, while just 14% say there are plenty of jobs available. In February 2008, more than twice as many (34%) said jobs were plentiful. And 65% of those working full- or part-time say jobs in their line of work are difficult to find in their community, up from 46% in early 2008.

Moreover, 46% of Americans say there has been time in the past year when they or someone in their household has been without a job and looking for work.

The survey finds that a majority of the public (57%) says it is very difficult or difficult to afford things they really want. About the same percentage said this two years ago (55%). And for many Americans, affording basic necessities remains a struggle – 51% say it is difficult to afford health care, 48% say the same about their home heating and electric bills, and 29% say it is difficult to afford food.

Looking ahead to next year, most Americans (55%) say that 2011 will be better than 2010, while 31% say the coming year will be worse. But there was even more optimism at the start of this year: In January, 67% said that 2010 would be a better year than 2009.

Jobs Seen as Harder to Come By

	Feb 2008	Dec 2008	Dec 2010	Change Feb 08- Dec 10
<i>Jobs in your community?</i>				
Plenty available	34	19	14	-20
Jobs difficult to find	53	73	79	+26
Other (Vol.)/DK	13	8	7	
	100	100	100	
<i>Jobs in your line of work?*</i>				
Plenty available	48	38	30	-18
Jobs difficult to find	46	56	65	+19
Other (Vol.)/DK	6	6	5	
	100	100	100	

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q29-30. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.
* Based on those who are employed.

Fewer See a Better Year Ahead

% saying year ahead will be better	Jan 2010	Dec 2010	Change
Total	67	55	-12
Republican	55	41	-14
Democrat	83	67	-16
Independent	60	54	-6

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q3. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

SECTION 1: PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS ON MAJOR ISSUES

Americans are tough graders when assessing the country's progress on major issues. Since 1989, when this question was first asked, there has not been an occasion when a majority of the public said the country was making progress on any issue.

Nevertheless, beliefs about whether the nation is making progress, staying about the same, or losing ground on issues have fluctuated over the years.

While large majorities say the nation is losing ground on the budget deficit (67%) and the availability of good jobs (64%), even higher percentages expressed these negative views two years ago (79% losing ground on budget deficit, 72% on availability of good-paying jobs). Opinion on other economic issues has shown less change since 2008.

The public's outlook on both issues has shown dramatic changes since the mid- to late-1990s. In November 1997, after Bill Clinton and the GOP Congress agreed on legislation to balance the budget within five years, as many said the country was making progress (32%) as losing ground (29%) on the deficit. Just three years earlier, 60% said the nation was losing ground on the deficit.

Report Card Remains Negative on Economic Issues

	Making progress	Staying about same	Losing ground	DK
	%	%	%	%
<i>Budget deficit</i>				
Dec 2010	8	20	67	5=100
Dec 2008	3	15	79	3=100
Feb 2007	8	20	64	8=100
May 2005	6	19	65	10=100
Nov 1997	32	30	29	9=100
March 1994	11	21	60	8=100
<i>Cost of living</i>				
Dec 2010	4	28	64	3=100
Dec 2008	8	20	69	3=100
March 1994	8	32	59	1=100
<i>Availability of good-paying jobs</i>				
Dec 2010	11	24	63	3=100
Dec 2008	5	21	72	2=100
Feb 2007	16	32	47	5=100
May 2005	15	25	55	5=100
Feb 2001	33	26	36	5=100
Nov 1997	31	28	37	4=100
March 1994	10	23	63	4=100
<i>Rich-poor gap</i>				
Dec 2010	5	32	58	5=100
Dec 2008	5	32	59	4=100
Feb 2007	7	27	63	3=100
<i>Ability to compete internationally</i>				
Dec 2010	12	28	55	6=100
Dec 2008	8	30	58	4=100
March 1994	24	26	43	7=100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q9a-l. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

By the middle of the current decade, a majority (65%) once again said the nation was losing ground on the deficit. That figure rose to 79% in 2008 before declining to 67% in the current survey.

As the economy boomed in the late 1990s, the public had a relatively positive view of job availability; in both 1997 and 2001, roughly as many said the nation was making progress as losing ground on the availability of good jobs. But by 2008, 72% said the country was losing ground in this area while just 11% said it was making progress.

Changing Partisan Reactions

Just as opinions among Republicans and Democrats about whether the nation is losing ground on health care have reversed in recent years, so too have attitudes about whether the country is losing ground on the budget deficit and the availability of good-paying jobs.

In February 2007, 75% of Democrats said the nation was losing ground on the deficit, compared with 47% of Republicans. In December 2008, during the financial crisis and the final month of the Bush administration, opinions among partisans converged – 79% of Democrats and 75% of Republicans said the nation was losing ground on the budget deficit. In the current survey, 86% of Republicans see the nation falling behind on the deficit compared with 51% of Democrats.

Similarly, in 2007 far more Democrats (56%) than Republicans (29%) said the nation was losing ground on the availability of good-paying jobs. Today, more Republicans (71%) than Democrats (53%) say the United States is falling behind in this area.

Partisan Views Reflect Washington's Power Shifts

<i>% saying nation is "losing ground" on...</i>	Feb 2007	Dec 2008	Dec 2010	07-10 Change
Budget deficit	%	%	%	
Total	64	79	67	+3
Republican	47	75	86	+39
Democrat	75	79	51	-24
Independent	67	83	70	+3
R-D Gap	-28	-4	+35	
Availability of good jobs				
Total	47	72	63	+16
Republican	29	68	71	+42
Democrat	56	77	53	-3
Independent	52	70	67	+15
R-D Gap	-27	-9	+18	

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q9b, Q9j.

Among independents, 70% say the nation is losing ground on the deficit, down from 83% in 2008. The proportion of independents saying the nation is losing ground on job availability (67%) is about the same as two years ago (70%) but much higher than in 2007 (52%).

The partisan shifts in the belief that the nation is losing ground are evident on other issues as well. Republicans are now far more likely than Democrats to say the nation is losing ground on the financial condition of Social Security and Medicare. In 2005, during the Bush administration, more Democrats than Republicans said the nation was losing ground in these areas.

More Republicans Say Nation Is Losing Ground on Social Security, Medicare

<i>% saying nation is "losing ground" on...</i>	May 2005	Dec 2008	Dec 2010	05-10 Change
Social Security	%	%	%	
Total	63	63	64	+1
Republican	56	63	80	+24
Democrat	71	65	54	-17
Independent	61	66	65	+4
R-D gap	-15	-2	+26	
Medicare				
Total	56	53	51	-5
Republican	40	51	64	+24
Democrat	67	54	42	-25
Independent	58	55	53	-5
R-D Gap	-27	-3	+22	

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q9f, Q9k.

Republicans See Ground Being Lost on Most Issues

Across 12 issues included in this year's survey, there is only one on which substantially more Democrats than Republicans say the nation is losing ground – the gap between the rich and poor; 62% of Democrats say the country is losing ground on the rich-poor gap compared with 50% of Republicans. Still, the partisan difference over this issue was even larger in 2007 when 72% of Democrats and 44% of Republicans said the nation was losing ground.

Independents' views about progress on major issues tend to fall between those of Republicans and Democrats. But independents come closer to Republicans on some issues and Democrats on others.

Democrats, Independents See Worsening Rich-Poor Gap

<i>% saying nation is "losing ground" on...</i>	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	R-D Diff
	%	%	%	%	
Budget deficit	67	86	51	70	+35
Health care	47	67	33	46	+34
Int'l competitiveness	55	72	39	60	+33
Illegal immigration	42	58	26	50	+32
Social Security	64	80	54	65	+26
Medicare	51	64	42	53	+22
Cost of living	64	75	55	66	+20
Job availability	63	71	53	67	+18
Terrorism	25	32	18	28	+14
Public education	44	45	36	53	+9
Pollution	23	16	23	27	-7
Rich-poor gap	58	50	62	62	-12

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Six-in-ten (60%) independents say the nation is losing ground on its ability to compete economically with other nations, placing them much closer to Republicans (72%) than Democrats (39%). And half of independents (50%) say the nation is losing ground on illegal immigration; that compares with 58% of Republicans and just 26% of Democrats. Independents also are closer to Republicans than Democrats in evaluations of progress on job availability and terrorism.

By contrast, independents are just as likely as Democrats to say the nation is losing ground on the gap between rich and poor (62% in each group); fewer Republicans (50%) express this view. And fewer than half of independents (46%) say the country is losing ground on the way the health care system works, placing them closer to Democrats (33%) than Republicans (67%).

Rich and Poor Alike See Income Inequality

As might be expected, people with lower family incomes are more likely than those with higher incomes to say that the nation is losing ground on the cost of living. Seven-in-ten (70%) with incomes of \$30,000 or less say the nation is losing ground on the cost of living compared with 54% of those with annual incomes of \$75,000 or more.

Yet there are no differences in how higher and lower-income groups view the rich-poor gap. More than half (55%) of those with family incomes of \$30,000 or less say the nation is losing ground on the rich-poor gap; an identical percentage (55%) of those with incomes of \$75,000 or more say the same. And those in the highest income category (\$100,000 or more) express similar opinions about the rich-poor gap – 53% say the nation is losing ground, 38% say things are staying about the same and 7% say the nation is making progress.

The Poor and More Affluent Have Similar Views of Rich-Poor Gap

	Making progress	About the same	Losing ground	DK
	%	%	%	%
Total	5	32	58	5=100
College grad+	5	29	63	4=100
Some college	3	31	61	5=100
HS or less	6	34	54	6=100
<i>Family income</i>				
\$75,000+	5	37	55	3=100
\$30,000-\$75k	4	26	66	4=100
Less than \$30k	6	34	55	5=100

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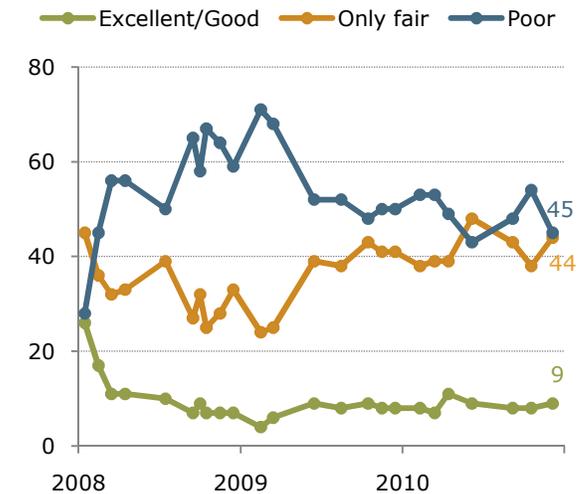
SECTION 2: NATIONAL ECONOMY, PERSONAL FINANCES, REAL ESTATE

The public continues to take a dour view of the nation's economy. Nearly nine-in-ten (89%) describe economic conditions in this country today as poor (45%) or only fair (44%). Just 9% say conditions are excellent (1%) or good (8%). The percentage saying the economy is excellent or good has remained virtually unchanged since Obama took office in early 2009.

While economic opinion is overwhelmingly negative on balance, the percentage calling the economy poor has declined nine points since October (from 54% to 45%), while the percentage saying conditions are only fair has risen six points (from 38% to 44%). As a result, about as many call conditions only fair (44%) as poor (45%); for much of the previous two years, more called the economy poor than only fair.

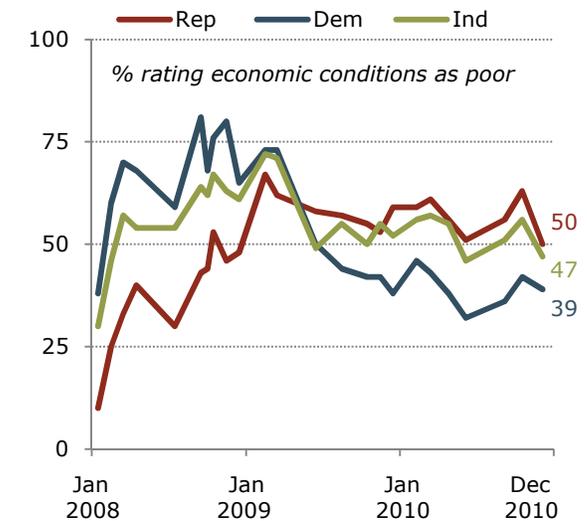
Only about one-in-ten Republicans, Democrats and independents say economic conditions are excellent or good. But Republicans and independents are more likely to view the nation's economy as poor. Half of Republicans (50%) and 47% of independents say national economic conditions are poor, compared with 39% of Democrats. In comparison, through much of the final year of the Bush administration, more Democrats than Republicans said the economy was poor.

National Economic Ratings Remain Bleak



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More Republicans Continue to Say Economy is in Poor Shape



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Some See “Green Shoots”

Nearly half of the public (48%) says that it will be a long time before the economy recovers. About as many (50%) say either that the economy is recovering (17%) or will recover soon (33%).

These evaluations are largely unchanged from earlier this year, although more say the economy is recovering than did so in September (17% now, 10% then).

There are indications of increased optimism about the economy, particularly among people with more education and higher incomes. In the current survey, 57% of college graduates say the economy is either recovering (21%) or will recover soon (35%). That compares with 42% who say it will take a long time for the economy to recover.

In September, college graduates were evenly divided over the prospects for a quick recovery (48% recovering/will recover vs. 50% long time). Opinions among those with less education have shown almost no change.

Nearly Half Say Recovery Is Long Way Off

	March 2010	June 2010	Sept 2010	Dec 2010
	%	%	%	%
Economy is recovering	13	13	10	17
Economy not yet recovering, but will recover soon	37	35	37	33
It will be a long time before the economy recovers	48	50	52	48
Don't know	2	2	2	2
	100	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q21. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Better Educated, Affluent More Likely to See Recovery on the Horizon

	Sept 2010		Dec 2010	
	Recovering/ Will soon	Long time	Recovering/ Will soon	Long time
	%	%	%	%
Total	47	52	50	48
College grad+	48	50	57	42
Some college	50	48	49	50
HS or less	44	54	46	52
<i>Family income</i>				
\$100,000+	51	49	60	39
\$75k-\$99,999	49	51	52	47
\$50k-\$74,999	47	51	56	43
\$30k-\$49,999	45	53	51	47
Less than \$30k	47	51	42	57
Republican	35	64	44	54
Democrat	61	39	60	38
Independent	43	54	47	53

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q21.

While opinions about prospects for an economic recovery remain divided along partisan lines, more Republicans (44%) say the economy is recovering now (11%) or will soon (33%) than did so in September, when 35% said that the economy was recovering (6%) or would recover soon (29%).

Personal Financial Ratings Flat

As is consistently the case, the public rates their own personal financial situation somewhat better than national economic conditions. Nonetheless, current ratings have remained stagnant over the past 12 months: Just 5% rate their own personal financial situation as excellent while another 30% call their personal financial situation good; 40% say it is only fair and 23% say poor.

Despite modest personal economic ratings, most expect at least some improvement in the coming year: 56% say they think their own economic situation will improve a lot (7%) or some (49%) over the next year. One-in-five (20%) expect their situation to get a little worse, 6% think it will become a lot worse, and 14% volunteer that they expect it to stay the same. While optimistic on balance, personal financial expectations have shown no improvement over the course of 2010.

Even among those who rate their personal financial situation as poor, about half (52%) expect at least some improvement in their financial situation in the coming year.

No Improvement in Personal Financial Ratings, Future Outlook

	Dec 2009	Mar 2010	Oct 2010	Dec 2010
<i>Personal financial situation ...</i>	%	%	%	%
Excellent	7	6	6	5
Good	28	31	33	30
Only fair	39	39	36	40
Poor	24	22	23	23
Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Next year, personal financial situation will ...</i>				
Improve a lot	9	9	9	7
Improve some	44	52	48	49
Get a little worse	19	15	16	20
Get a lot worse	8	8	6	6
Stay the same (Vol.)	15	12	17	14
Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q22-23. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Job Market Not Recovering

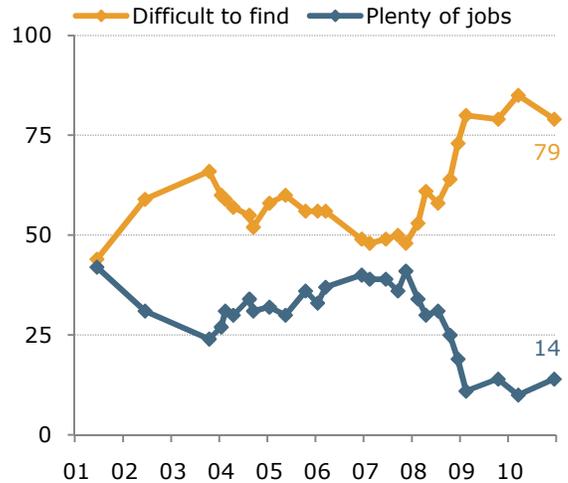
With unemployment hovering close to 10%, the public takes an overwhelmingly negative view of the job market. Nearly eight-in-ten (79%) say job opportunities in their area are difficult to find, compared with just 14% who say there are plenty of jobs available in their community.

While down six points from March, the percentage saying that jobs are difficult to find remains among the highest numbers recorded by Pew Research surveys since the question was first asked in June 2001.

Large majorities of all demographic groups evaluate the job situation as difficult, but there are significant differences across socio-economic groups. College graduates by a margin of 72%-20% say that jobs in their area are difficult to find. By comparison, the balance of opinion is more one-sided among those with some college experience (85% jobs difficult to find, 10% plenty available) and those with no college experience (82% jobs difficult to find, 12% plenty available).

A similar pattern can be seen across income groups with those at the top of the scale describing jobs as difficult to find, but by a less overwhelming margin than those at lower income levels.

Jobs Remain Hard to Find



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Republicans, Democrats Agree: Jobs Are Scarce

	Difficult to find %	Plenty of jobs %	Mixed %	DK %
Total	79	14	3	4=100
Republican	81	14	2	4=100
Democrat	79	15	2	4=100
Independent	79	14	3	3=100
College grad+	72	20	4	4=100
Some college	85	10	2	4=100
HS or less	82	12	3	4=100
<i>Family income</i>				
\$75,000 or more	71	23	3	3=100
\$30,000-\$74,999	80	13	4	3=100
Less than \$30,000	87	9	1	3=100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q29.

Working People See Tough Job Market in Their Field

Even among those currently employed, almost two-thirds (65%) say jobs in their line of work are difficult to find in their community; 30% say there are plenty of jobs available. In February 2008, as the unemployment rate began to climb, fewer than half (46%) of employed people said jobs were hard to find in their line of work. By December 2008, 56% said jobs were scarce in their field.

Those who describe the financial condition of the company they work for as only fair or poor see a more difficult job market for themselves than those who say their employer is in excellent or good shape. Nearly eight-in-ten (79%) of those who say their employer is in only fair or poor shape say that jobs in their line of work are difficult to find, compared with 58% of those who describe their employer as in excellent or good financial shape.

More Say Jobs in Their Line of Work Are Difficult to Find

<i>Asked of employed about opportunities in their line of work ...</i>	Feb 2008	Dec 2008	Dec 2010
	%	%	%
Plenty of jobs available	48	38	30
Jobs difficult to find	46	56	65
Mixed (Vol.)	3	2	2
Don't know	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q30. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.
Based on those employed full or part time.

Unemployment Affects Many Households

Almost half (46%) of Americans say that someone in their household has been without a job and looking for work over the last year. This number has fluctuated in recent months, but is up from just 28% in February of 2008, when the national unemployment rate was closer to 5%.

Young people continue to be among the most likely to experience unemployment first-hand: 62% say that they or someone in their household have been unemployed and looking for work over the past 12 months.

Socio-economic differences persist as well, with half or more of those without a college degree and those in households earning less than \$30,000 annually reporting household unemployment within the last year.

Democrats and independents (50% each) are more likely than Republicans (36%) to say that someone in their household has been unemployed over the past 12 months.

Most Workers Say Employer Financially Healthy

Despite a bleak view of the job market and widespread household unemployment, most working people deem their employer to be financially healthy. Roughly two-thirds of workers (64%) say the company that employs them is in either excellent (23%) or good (41%) shape. About a third (34%) say their employer is in only fair (27%) or poor (7%) financial shape. These numbers have changed little over the past two years.

Fewer Republicans Have Experienced Joblessness

	Yes %	No %	DK %
Total	46	53	*=100
18-29	62	38	*=100
30-49	45	54	1=100
50-64	46	54	*=100
65+	31	68	1=100
College grad+	34	66	*=100
Some college	51	48	*=100
HS or less	52	48	*=100
<i>Household income</i>			
\$75,000 or more	31	68	1=100
\$30,000-\$74,999	47	53	0=100
Less than \$30,000	61	39	*=100
Republican	36	63	*=100
Democrat	50	50	*=100
Independent	50	49	1=100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q31. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Financial Condition of Employer

	Feb 2008	Dec 2008	Oct 2009	Dec 2010
	%	%	%	%
Excellent/Good	69	63	60	64
Only fair/Poor	27	35	37	34
Don't know/NA	4	2	3	3
	100	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q28. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding. Based on those employed full or part time.

Views of the Real Estate Market

About six-in-ten (63%) say that home prices in their local area have decreased over the past year. Nearly three-in-ten (29%) say home prices have gone down a lot, while about as many (34%) say they have gone down a little. Just a quarter (25%) say home prices have increased in their area over the last year. Current ratings of their local real estate market performance are similar to those in October of last year and December 2008.

Home Prices Still Seen as Going Down

	Oct 2008	Dec 2008	Oct 2009	Dec 2010
<i>Over past year, local home prices have...</i>	%	%	%	%
Gone up	33	22	21	25
Gone down	54	68	66	63
Stayed the same (Vol.)	4	5	6	5
Don't know	<u>9</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q32.
Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

There are some regional differences in views of the housing market. While 56% of those living in the East say prices have declined, this is considerably less than the proportion of those in the Midwest (70%) and West (66%) who say this; 59% of Southerners say prices have declined. In particular, Westerners and Midwesterners are more likely than others to say that prices have gone down a lot over the past year (36% of Westerners and 33% of Midwesterners say this, compared to 24% of those in both the South and the East).

Although majorities of those in all income groups say prices have decreased in the last year, as in the past, those with family incomes under \$30,000 are less likely than others to say that prices have gone down. Today, about half of those with lower incomes (52%) say home prices have decreased, compared with 70% of those with incomes of \$75,000 or more.

Across Regions, Majorities Say Prices Are Falling

<i>Over past year, local home prices have gone down</i>	Dec 2008	Oct 2009	Dec 2010	08-10 change
Total	68	66	63	-4
East	69	57	56	-13
Midwest	68	72	70	+2
South	62	61	59	-3
West	77	74	66	-11
<i>Family income</i>				
\$75,000 or more	84	77	70	-14
\$30,000-74,999	72	70	65	-7
Less than \$30,000	52	53	52	0

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q32.

Yet most Americans (57%) expect house prices to rise over the course of the next few years and just a third (32%) say that house prices in their area will go down over this period. These expectations are about the same as they were in July 2008.

There are few demographic differences in expectations about the real estate market. Those with family incomes of \$75,000 or more are more likely than others to say the prices will rise over the next few years (66%, compared with 58% of those with incomes between \$30,000 and \$74,999 and 51% of those with lower incomes).

Most Expect Home Prices to Rise Over Next Few Years

<i>Over next few years, local home prices will...</i>	Total		\$30-	<\$30k
	%	%	%	%
Go up	57	66	58	51
Go down	32	29	34	35
Stay the same (Vol.)	4	3	4	5
Don't know	<u>7</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>
	100	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q33.
Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

SECTION 3: AFFORDING THE NECESSITIES, PERSONAL DEBT

A majority of Americans (57%) say it is either very difficult (17%) or difficult (40%) to afford the things they want in life. Four-in-ten say it is either very easy (4%) or easy (36%). The percentage saying it is difficult to afford the things they want remains as high as it was in December 2008 and is on par with public sentiment in January 1992.

Most Say It Is Difficult to Afford Things They Want

	Jan 1992*	June 2001	Feb 2008	Oct 2008	Dec 2008	Dec 2010
<i>Affording the things you want is...</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very easy/Easy	39	50	52	49	43	40
Very difficult/Difficult	58	48	45	48	55	57
Don't know	3	2	3	3	2	3
	100	100	100	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q34. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding. * From US News & World Report.

As was the case two years ago, about three-quarters of those with annual family incomes under \$30,000 (76%) say it is difficult to afford the things they want. About six-in-ten (59%) of those with incomes between \$30,000 and \$74,999 say this, as do 47% of those with incomes between \$75,000 and \$99,999. Just 23% of those with incomes of \$100,000 are more say it is difficult to afford the things they want.

Majorities of Americans say they and their family struggle to save money for retirement (64% say this is very difficult or difficult) and pay taxes (57%). About half say that health care (51%), gasoline (50%) and home heating and electricity (48%) costs are difficult for to afford. Fewer (29%) say it is difficult for them to afford food.

Compared to December 2008, more now say it is difficult to afford health care (+six points), heat and electricity (+six points) and taxes (+five points).

More also say it is difficult to afford gasoline than did so two years ago, when the price of gas was falling rapidly.

Currently, 50% say gasoline is difficult to afford, up from 27% in December 2008.

About Half Struggle to Afford Health Care, Gas, Heat and Electricity

	Jan 1992*	Aug 1992*	Feb 2008	July 2008	Dec 2008	Dec 2010
<i>Percent who say it is very difficult/difficult to afford...</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%
Retirement savings	60	65	56	59	64	64
Taxes	58	60	51	52	52	57
Health care	45	51	45	46	45	51
Gasoline	--	--	60	68	27	50
Heat and electricity	38	37	44	49	42	48
Food	24	23	27	38	29	29

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q35a-f. * From US News & World Report.

Many Low-Income People Struggle to Pay for Necessities

As in 2008, there are wide differences among income groups in views of the affordability of goods and services. Most Americans, regardless of their family income, say it is difficult to save money for retirement. However, people with lower incomes are more likely to say they struggle to afford the necessities. And 44% of those with family incomes of less than \$30,000 say it is difficult to afford food, far more than those with higher incomes.

Majorities of those with family incomes of less than \$30,000 say it is difficult to afford gasoline (65%), health care (63%) and heat and electricity (62%). Even among those with somewhat higher family incomes – \$30,000 to \$74,999 – about half say it is difficult to afford these items. Less than a third of those with incomes of \$75,000 or more say it is difficult to afford gasoline, health care or heat and electricity.

Lower, Middle-Income People Feel the Pinch

<i>Easy/difficult to afford...</i>	Easy %	Difficult %	NA/DK %
Retirement savings			
\$75,000 or more	42	53	6=100
\$30k-\$74,999	22	67	11=100
Less than \$30,000	13	71	16=100
High-low diff	+29	-18	
Taxes			
\$75,000 or more	54	43	3=100
\$30k-\$74,999	40	58	2=100
Less than \$30,000	24	67	9=100
High-low diff	+30	-24	
Health care			
\$75,000 or more	67	30	2=100
\$30k-\$74,999	43	53	4=100
Less than \$30,000	29	63	8=100
High-low diff	+38	-33	
Gasoline			
\$75,000 or more	69	29	2=100
\$30k-\$74,999	44	53	2=100
Less than \$30,000	24	65	11=100
High-low diff	+45	-36	
Heat and electricity			
\$75,000 or more	73	26	1=100
\$30k-\$74,999	47	50	3=100
Less than \$30,000	33	62	5=100
High-low diff	+40	-36	
Food			
\$75,000 or more	89	11	*=100
\$30k-\$74,999	70	28	1=100
Less than \$30,000	52	44	4=100
High-low diff	+37	-33	

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q35a-f.
Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Family Income and Personal Debt

About a quarter of Americans (27%) say they owe more than they can afford on credit cards and other installment loans (not including their mortgages). This is consistent with the level of debt reported in response to a similar question in October 2008 (25%) but has increased somewhat from earlier that year (22% in February and July 2008).

How Much Personal Debt?

	Total	\$75k+	\$30-75k	<\$30k
<i>On credit cards and other loans (other than mortgage)...</i>	%	%	%	%
Owe a lot more than can afford	12	6	11	19
Owe a little more than can afford	15	19	15	16
Owe about what can afford	27	31	36	14
Do not owe anything	42	43	36	48
Pay off each month (Vol.)	1	1	1	2
Don't know (Vol.)	<u>2</u>	*	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
	100	100	100	100
N	763	205	243	199

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 1-5, 2010. Q37F1. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

People with lower incomes are more likely to say they owe a lot more than they can afford on credit cards and installment loans. About one-in-five (19%) of those with incomes below \$30,000 say this, compared with 6% of those with incomes of \$75,000 or above.

About the Survey

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted December 1-5, 2010 among a national sample of 1,500 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (1,000 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 500 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 201 who had no landline telephone). Interviewing was conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. Both the landline and cell phone samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see: <http://people-press.org/methodology/>

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race/ethnicity, region, and population density to parameters from the March 2009 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landline and cell phones (for those with both), based on extrapolations from the 2009 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size within the landline sample. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Sample Size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1500	3.0 percentage points
Form 1	763	4.5 percentage points
Form 2	737	4.5 percentage points
Republican	415	6.0 percentage points
Democratic	481	5.5 percentage points
Independent	499	5.5 percentage points

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

About the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press is an independent opinion research group that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. We are sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and are one of seven projects that make up the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

The Center's purpose is to serve as a forum for ideas on the media and public policy through public opinion research. In this role it serves as an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, scholars, and public interest organizations. All of our current survey results are made available free of charge.

All of the Center's research and reports are collaborative products based on the input and analysis of the entire Center staff consisting of:

Andrew Kohut, Director

Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research

Carroll Doherty and Michael Dimock, Associate Directors

Michael Remez, Senior Writer

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PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
DECEMBER 2010 POLITICAL SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
December 1-5, 2010
N=1500

QUESTION 1 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**RANDOMIZE Q.1 AND Q.2****ASK ALL:**

Q.2 All in all, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in this country today?

	Satis- fied	Dis- satisfied	(VOL.) DK/Ref		Satis- fied	Dis- satisfied	(VOL.) DK/Ref
Dec 1-5, 2010	21	72	7	Early October, 2005	29	65	6
Nov 4-7, 2010	23	69	8	July, 2005	35	58	7
Sep 23-26, 2010	30	63	7	Late May, 2005*	39	57	4
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	25	71	5	February, 2005	38	56	6
Jun 24-27, 2010	27	64	9	January, 2005	40	54	6
May 13-16, 2010	28	64	7	December, 2004	39	54	7
Apr 21-26, 2010	29	66	5	Mid-October, 2004	36	58	6
Apr 1-5, 2010	31	63	6	July, 2004	38	55	7
Mar 11-21, 2010	25	69	5	May, 2004	33	61	6
Mar 10-14, 2010	23	71	7	Late February, 2004*	39	55	6
Feb 3-9, 2010	23	71	6	Early January, 2004	45	48	7
Jan 6-10, 2010	27	69	4	December, 2003	44	47	9
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	25	67	7	October, 2003	38	56	6
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	25	67	7	August, 2003	40	53	7
Sep 10-15, 2009 ¹	30	64	7	April 8, 2003	50	41	9
Aug 20-27, 2009	28	65	7	January, 2003	44	50	6
Aug 11-17, 2009	28	65	7	November, 2002	41	48	11
Jul 22-26, 2009	28	66	6	September, 2002	41	55	4
Jun 10-14, 2009	30	64	5	Late August, 2002	47	44	9
Apr 28-May 12, 2009	34	58	8	May, 2002	44	44	12
Apr 14-21, 2009	23	70	7	March, 2002	50	40	10
Jan 7-11, 2009	20	73	7	Late September, 2001	57	34	9
December, 2008	13	83	4	Early September, 2001	41	53	6
Early October, 2008	11	86	3	June, 2001	43	52	5
Mid-September, 2008	25	69	6	March, 2001	47	45	8
August, 2008	21	74	5	February, 2001	46	43	11
July, 2008	19	74	7	January, 2001	55	41	4
June, 2008	19	76	5	October, 2000 (RVs)	54	39	7
Late May, 2008	18	76	6	September, 2000	51	41	8
March, 2008	22	72	6	June, 2000	47	45	8
Early February, 2008	24	70	6	April, 2000	48	43	9
Late December, 2007	27	66	7	August, 1999	56	39	5
October, 2007	28	66	6	January, 1999	53	41	6
February, 2007	30	61	9	November, 1998	46	44	10
Mid-January, 2007	32	61	7	Early September, 1998	54	42	4
Early January, 2007	30	63	7	Late August, 1998	55	41	4
December, 2006	28	65	7	Early August, 1998	50	44	6
Mid-November, 2006	28	64	8	February, 1998	59	37	4
Early October, 2006	30	63	7	January, 1998	46	50	4
July, 2006	30	65	5	September, 1997	45	49	6
May, 2006*	29	65	6	August, 1997	49	46	5
March, 2006	32	63	5	January, 1997	38	58	4
January, 2006	34	61	5	July, 1996	29	67	4
Late November, 2005	34	59	7	March, 1996	28	70	2
				October, 1995	23	73	4
				June, 1995	25	73	2
				April, 1995	23	74	3
				July, 1994	24	73	3

¹ From September 10-15, 2009 and other surveys noted with an asterisk, the question was worded "Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in our country today?"

Q.2 CONTINUED...

	Satis- <u>fied</u>	Dis- <u>satisfied</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>		Satis- <u>fied</u>	Dis- <u>satisfied</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
March, 1994	24	71	5	November, 1991	34	61	5
October, 1993	22	73	5	<i>Gallup</i> : Late Feb, 1991	66	31	3
September, 1993	20	75	5	August, 1990	47	48	5
May, 1993	22	71	7	May, 1990	41	54	5
January, 1993	39	50	11	January, 1989	45	50	5
January, 1992	28	68	4	September, 1988 (RVs)	50	45	5

ASK ALL:

Q.3 Looking ahead, so far as you are concerned, do you think that 2011 will be better or worse than 2010?

	<u>Better</u>	<u>Worse</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 1-5, 2010	55	31	14
Jan 6-10, 2010	67	26	8
Jan 7-11, 2009	52	37	11
December, 2007	50	34	16
December, 2006	57	28	15
December, 1999	66	19	15
December, 1998	59	25	16
December, 1994	59	28	13
<i>Gallup</i> :December, 1993	64	20	16
<i>Gallup</i> :December, 1992	61	11	28
<i>Gallup</i> :December, 1991	61	31	8
<i>Gallup</i> :December, 1990	48	42	10
<i>Gallup</i> :December, 1986	53	25	22
<i>Gallup</i> :December, 1985	64	20	17
<i>Gallup</i> :December, 1984	61	20	19
<i>Gallup</i> :December, 1982	50	32	18
<i>Gallup</i> :December, 1981	41	44	15

QUESTION 3a PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**QUESTIONS 4-5 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****NO QUESTIONS 6-8****ASK ALL:**

Q.9 As I read a list of some issues, please tell me if you think the country is making progress, losing ground, or if things are about the same as they have been. First, **[INSERT ITEM, RANDOMIZE OBSERVE FORM SPLITS]**. Do you think the country is making progress, losing ground, or are things about the same as they have been on this issue? How about **[NEXT ITEM]**? **[IF NECESSARY: Do you think the country is making progress, losing ground, or are things about the same as they have been on this issue?]**

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=763]:	<u>Making progress</u>	<u>About the same</u>	<u>Losing ground</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a.F1 The way the health care system is working				
Dec 1-5, 2010	22	26	47	5
December, 2008	8	33	56	3
February, 2007	13	24	60	3
May, 2005	9	25	62	4
March, 2002	16	25	54	5
February, 2001	13	29	53	5
November, 1997	16	26	54	4
December, 1996	20	25	52	3
April, 1995	14	30	53	3
March, 1994	16	31	49	4

Q.9 CONTINUED...

		<u>Making progress</u>	<u>About the same</u>	<u>Losing ground</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
b.F1	The availability of good-paying jobs				
	Dec 1-5, 2010	11	24	63	3
	December, 2008	5	21	72	2
	February, 2007	16	32	47	5
	May, 2005	15	25	55	5
	March, 2002	21	22	51	6
	February, 2001	33	26	36	5
	November, 1997	31	28	37	4
	December, 1996	19	26	51	4
	April, 1995	17	24	55	4
	March, 1994	10	23	63	4
c.F1	Environmental pollution				
	Dec 1-5, 2010	26	45	23	6
	December, 2008	32	31	33	4
	February, 2007	20	26	52	2
	May, 2005	21	35	37	7
	November, 1997	38	32	27	3
	December, 1996	42	26	30	2
	April, 1995	43	26	30	1
	March, 1994	37	26	34	3
	February, 1989	32	20	42	6
d.F1	The gap between rich and poor				
	Dec 1-5, 2010	5	32	58	5
	December, 2008	5	32	59	4
	February, 2007	7	27	63	3
	February, 1989	8	30	58	4
e.F1	Illegal immigration				
	Dec 1-5, 2010	11	41	42	7
	December, 2008	10	34	51	5
	February, 2007	11	25	59	5
	May, 2005	11	29	52	8
	November, 1997	13	29	48	10
	December, 1996	15	32	47	6
	April, 1995	9	23	62	6
	March, 1994	9	22	58	11
f.F1	The financial condition of Medicare				
	Dec 1-5, 2010	9	29	51	11
	December, 2008	6	31	53	10
	May, 2005	5	26	56	13

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=737]:

g.F2	Our ability to compete economically with other countries				
	Dec 1-5, 2010	12	28	55	6
	December, 2008	8	30	58	4
	March, 1994	24	26	43	7
h.F2	The cost of living				
	Dec 1-5, 2010	4	28	64	3
	December, 2008	8	20	69	3
	April, 1995	9	28	61	2
	March, 1994	8	32	59	1
i.F2	The quality of public education				
	Dec 1-5, 2010	17	34	44	5
	December, 2008	19	28	50	3

Q.9 CONTINUED...

	<u>Making progress</u>	<u>About the same</u>	<u>Losing ground</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
February, 2007	24	26	45	5
May, 2005	20	26	50	4
March, 2002	27	22	45	6
February, 2001	23	20	53	4
November, 1997	26	26	46	2
December, 1996	24	22	52	2
April, 1995	18	20	60	2
March, 1994	17	19	61	3
j.F2 The federal budget deficit				
Dec 1-5, 2010	8	20	67	5
December, 2008	3	15	79	3
February, 2007	8	20	64	8
May, 2005	6	19	65	10
November, 1997	32	30	29	9
December, 1996	23	24	48	5
April, 1995	15	21	60	4
March, 1994	11	21	60	8
February, 1989 ²	16	27	50	7
k.F2 The financial condition of Social Security				
Dec 1-5, 2010	3	25	64	8
December, 2008	6	23	63	8
May, 2005	6	25	63	6
l.F2 International terrorism				
Dec 1-5, 2010	27	43	25	6
December, 2008	32	37	28	3
February, 2007	30	27	38	5
May, 2005	36	28	31	5
March, 2002	40	14	40	6
April, 1995	19	40	36	5
March, 1994	20	41	35	4
February, 1989	18	24	53	5

NO QUESTIONS 10-11**QUESTIONS 12-14, 17-19 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****NO QUESTIONS 15-16****RANDOMIZE Q.20-Q.21/Q.22-Q.23 IN BLOCKS****ASK ALL:**

Now thinking about the nation's economy...

Q.20 How would you rate economic conditions in this country today... as excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
Dec 1-5, 2010	1	8	44	45	1
Oct 13-18, 2010	1	7	38	54	1
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	1	7	43	48	1
Jun 3-6, 2010	1	8	48	43	1
Apr 21-26, 2010	*	11	39	49	1
Mar 10-14, 2010	1	6	39	53	1
Feb 3-9, 2010	1	7	38	53	1
Dec 9-13, 2009	1	7	41	50	1

² In February 1989, the item was "the budget deficit."

Q.20 CONTINUED...

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	Only <u>fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	*	8	41	50	1
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	1	8	43	48	1
Aug 11-17, 2009	*	8	38	52	2
Jun 10-14, 2009	1	8	39	52	1
Mar 9-12, 2009	*	6	25	68	1
Feb 4-8, 2009	*	4	24	71	1
December, 2008	*	7	33	59	1
November, 2008	1	6	28	64	1
Late October, 2008	*	7	25	67	1
Early October, 2008	1	8	32	58	1
Late September, 2008	*	7	27	65	1
July, 2008	1	9	39	50	1
April, 2008	1	10	33	56	*
March, 2008	1	10	32	56	1
Early February, 2008	1	16	36	45	2
January, 2008	3	23	45	28	1
November, 2007	3	20	44	32	1
September, 2007	3	23	43	29	2
June, 2007	6	27	40	25	2
February, 2007	5	26	45	23	1
December, 2006	6	32	41	19	2
Early November, 2006 (RVs)	9	35	37	17	2
Late October, 2006	6	27	40	25	2
September, 2006	5	32	41	20	2
March, 2006	4	29	44	22	1
January, 2006	4	30	45	19	2
Early October, 2005	2	23	45	29	1
Mid-September, 2005	3	28	44	24	1
Mid-May, 2005	3	29	47	20	1
January, 2005	3	36	45	15	1
December, 2004	3	33	43	20	1
Early November, 2004 (RVs)	5	31	37	26	1
Mid-September, 2004	4	34	40	20	2
August, 2004	3	30	45	21	1
Late April, 2004	4	34	38	22	2
Late February, 2004 ³	2	29	42	26	1

RANDOMIZE Q.20-Q.21/Q.22-Q.23 IN BLOCKS**ASK ALL:**

Q.21 Which of these best describes your opinion: **[READ; READ CATEGORIES IN REVERSE ORDER FOR HALF THE SAMPLE]?**

Dec 1-5 <u>2010</u>		Aug 25-Sep 6 <u>2010</u> ⁴	Jun 3-6 <u>2010</u>	Mar 10-14 <u>2010</u>
17	The economy is recovering	10	13	13
33	The economy is not yet recovering but will recover soon	37	35	37
48	It will be a long time before the economy recovers	52	50	48
2	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	2	2	2

³ Earlier trends available from Gallup.

⁴ In September 2010 and earlier, the first answer choice read "The economy is now recovering."

TREND FOR COMPARISON

How would you describe economic conditions in this country? Would you say the economy is now recovering OR that we are in a recession that will pass fairly soon OR that we are in an economic depression that will last a long time?

	Jan <u>2004</u>	March <u>1994</u>	Dec <u>1993</u>	Jan <u>1993</u>	March <u>1992</u>	Jan <u>1992</u>
The economy is now recovering	45	40	37	34	16	7
We are in a recession that will pass fairly soon	33	33	27	35	41	51
We are in a depression that will last a long time	18	21	29	27	40	38
Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	4	6	7	4	3	4

RANDOMIZE Q.20-Q.21/Q.22-Q.23 IN BLOCKS**ASK ALL:**

Now thinking about your own personal finances...

Q.22 How would you rate your own personal financial situation? Would you say you are in excellent shape, good shape, only fair shape or poor shape financially?

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	Only <u>fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 1-5, 2010	5	30	40	23	2
Oct 13-18, 2010	6	33	36	23	1
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	6	30	40	23	1
Jun 3-6, 2010	6	32	38	20	4
Mar 10-14, 2010	6	31	39	22	2
Dec 9-13, 2009	7	28	39	24	2
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	5	30	40	25	1
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	6	32	38	22	1
Aug 11-17, 2009	6	31	36	26	2
Jun 10-14, 2009	6	32	39	22	1
Feb 4-8, 2009	5	33	41	20	1
December, 2008	6	32	40	21	1
Early October, 2008	6	35	40	18	1
July, 2008	9	33	37	19	2
April, 2008	8	35	39	16	2
March, 2008	8	39	34	17	2
Early February, 2008	9	36	37	16	2
January, 2008	10	39	34	15	2
November, 2007	9	41	34	15	1
September, 2007	10	38	34	16	2
February, 2007	8	41	36	14	1
December, 2006	8	40	35	16	1
Late October, 2006	9	40	33	16	2
March, 2006	9	39	36	15	1
January, 2006	7	39	37	15	2
Mid-May, 2005	7	37	39	16	1
January, 2005	10	41	34	14	1
August, 2004	9	42	34	14	1
September, 2003	10	38	36	15	1
Late March, 2003	10	43	31	12	4
January, 2003	7	38	39	15	1
Early October, 2002	7	39	37	16	1
June, 2002	5	40	37	16	2
Late September, 2001	7	40	37	14	2
June, 2001	6	38	39	16	1
June, 2000	9	43	35	11	2
August, 1999	6	43	41	9	1
May, 1997	7	43	38	11	1
September, 1996 (RVs)	8	47	34	10	1
February, 1995	8	39	38	14	1
March, 1994	5	41	40	13	1
December, 1993	5	34	45	15	1

Q.22 CONTINUED ...

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	Only <u>fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
<i>U.S. News:January, 1993</i>	4	33	46	16	1
<i>U.S. News:October, 1992</i>	6	34	40	19	1
<i>U.S. News:August, 1992</i>	5	30	47	17	1
<i>U.S. News:May, 1992</i>	4	35	45	15	1
<i>U.S. News:January, 1992</i>	4	32	45	18	1

RANDOMIZE Q.20-Q.21/Q.22-Q.23 IN BLOCKS**ASK ALL:**

Q.23 Over the course of the next year, do you think the financial situation of you and your family will improve a lot, improve some, get a little worse or get a lot worse?

	Improve <u>a lot</u>	Improve <u>some</u>	Get a <u>little worse</u>	Get a lot <u>worse</u>	(VOL.) Stay the <u>same</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 1-5, 2010	7	49	20	6	14	4
Oct 13-18, 2010	9	48	16	6	17	5
Mar 10-14, 2010	9	52	15	8	12	4
Dec 9-13, 2009	9	44	19	8	15	4
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	6	50	19	8	13	4
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	10	49	17	6	13	4
Aug 11-17, 2009	8	47	17	8	15	5
Jun 10-14, 2009	9	54	17	7	9	4
Feb 4-8, 2009	7	47	22	7	13	4
December, 2008	7	49	21	6	13	4
Early October, 2008	8	51	20	6	9	6
July, 2008	7	44	21	7	14	7
March, 2008	10	45	20	7	13	5
January, 2008	11	49	16	6	14	4
September, 2007	10	52	14	4	16	4
February, 2007	11	52	12	3	19	3
December, 2006	10	57	13	3	14	3
January, 2006	10	51	14	5	16	4
Mid-May, 2005	10	51	15	5	15	4
January, 2005	10	54	14	4	15	3
August, 2004	13	57	9	3	12	6
September, 2003	11	53	15	4	14	3
Late March, 2003	12	51	15	4	11	7
January, 2003	9	51	18	5	13	4
Early October, 2002	10	54	13	5	12	6
June, 2002	11	55	15	4	11	4
January, 2002	12	53	15	5	11	4
Late September, 2001	9	46	16	4	17	8
June, 2001	11	52	15	4	14	4
January, 2001	11	46	18	9	12	4
January, 1999	17	55	7	3	14	4
May, 1997	12	56	10	2	17	3
February, 1995	11	53	13	3	17	3
March, 1994	10	57	11	3	16	3
<i>U.S. News:October, 1992</i>	9	51	14	3	15	8
<i>U.S. News:August, 1992</i>	6	50	20	5	14	5
<i>U.S. News:May, 1992</i>	8	49	22	4	13	4
<i>U.S. News:January, 1992</i>	9	46	19	5	16	5

QUESTION 24 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**NO QUESTIONS 25-27**

ASK ALL:

EMPLOY Are you now employed full-time, part-time or not employed?

Dec 1-5

2010

43 Full-time
15 Part time
42 Not employed
* Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

ASK OF EMPLOYED ONLY (EMPLOY=1,2) [N=828]:

Q.28 How would you rate the financial condition of the company or organization that employs you? Would you say it is in excellent financial shape, good shape, only fair shape or in poor shape?

	Excellent	Good	Only fair	Poor	(VOL.) Does not	(VOL.) DK/Ref
	<u>shape</u>	<u>shape</u>	<u>shape</u>	<u>shape</u>	<u>apply</u>	
Dec 1-5, 2010	23	41	27	7	2	1
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	18	42	27	10	2	1
Feb 4-8, 2009	15	43	29	10	*	3
December, 2008	20	43	27	8	1	1
Early October, 2008	22	44	25	5	2	2
Early February, 2008	30	39	21	6	2	2
June, 2001	31	39	20	7	2	1
U.S. News:October, 1992	27	38	23	10	--	2
U.S. News:August, 1992	23	40	26	9	--	2
U.S. News:May, 1992	25	40	22	11	--	2
U.S. News:January, 1992	22	39	24	12	--	3

ASK ALL:

Q.29 Thinking now about job opportunities where you live, would you say there are plenty of jobs available in your community or are jobs difficult to find?

	Plenty of	Jobs are	(VOL.) Lots of some jobs, few of others	(VOL.) DK/Ref
	<u>jobs available</u>	<u>difficult to find</u>		
Dec 1-5, 2010	14	79	3	4
Mar 10-14, 2010	10	85	3	2
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	14	79	3	3
Feb 4-8, 2009	11	80	3	6
December, 2008	19	73	4	4
Early October, 2008	25	64	4	7
July, 2008	31	58	4	7
April, 2008	30	61	4	5
Early February, 2008	34	53	5	8
November, 2007	41	48	4	7
September, 2007	36	50	6	8
June, 2007	39	49	5	7
February, 2007	39	48	6	7
December, 2006	40	49	5	6
March, 2006	37	56	3	4
January, 2006	33	56	6	5
Early October, 2005	36	56	4	4
May, 2005	30	60	6	4
January, 2005	32	58	5	5
Mid-September, 2004	31	52	6	11
August, 2004	34	55	4	7
Late April, 2004	30	57	4	9
Late February, 2004	31	59	5	6
Mid-January, 2004	27	60	6	7
October, 2003	24	66	5	5
June, 2002	31	59	4	6

Q.29 CONTINUED...

	Plenty of <u>jobs available</u>	Jobs are <u>difficult to find</u>	(VOL.) Lots of some jobs, <u>few of others</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
June, 2001	42	44	8	6
<i>U.S. News</i> :August, 1992	15	76	6	3
<i>U.S. News</i> :May, 1992	16	77	4	3
<i>U.S. News</i> :January, 1992	12	79	6	3

ASK IF EMPLOYED FULL OR PART TIME (EMPLOY=1,2) [N=828]:

Q.30 And what about the job opportunities available to you? Do you think there are plenty of jobs in your line of work available in your community, or are jobs in your line of work difficult to find?

	Plenty of <u>jobs available</u>	Jobs are <u>difficult to find</u>	(VOL.) Lots of some jobs, <u>few of others</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 1-5, 2010	30	65	2	3
December, 2008	38	56	2	4
Early February, 2008	48	46	3	3
<i>U.S. News</i> :May, 1992	32	63	2	3

ASK ALL:

Q.31 Over the past 12 months, has there been a time when you or someone in your household has been without a job and looking for work, or not?

	Yes	No	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 1-5, 2010	46	53	*
Oct 27-30, 2010	38	60	2
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	44	56	1
Mar 10-14, 2010 ⁵	54	45	1
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	42	58	*
Feb 4-8, 2009	39	61	*
December, 2008	35	65	*
Early February, 2008	28	71	1
May, 2005	31	69	*

ASK ALL:

Q.32 What's your impression about the real estate market in your area? Over the past year, have home prices in your area gone up a lot, gone up a little, gone down a little, or gone down a lot?

Dec 1-5 <u>2010</u>		Sep 30-Oct 4 <u>2009</u>	Dec <u>2008</u>	Early Oct <u>2008</u>	July <u>2008</u>	Early Feb <u>2008</u>	Sep <u>2007</u>
8	Gone up a lot	8	11	19	20	28	28
17	Gone up a little	13	11	14	13	18	22
34	Gone down a little	35	33	29	32	23	25
29	Gone down a lot	31	34	25	24	18	15
5	Stayed about the same (VOL.)	6	5	4	5	3	3
8	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	8	6	9	6	10	7

⁵ In March 10-14, 2010 and February 4-8, 2009, those who were not employed and looking for work, identified on an earlier question, were not asked this question, but are included in "yes."

ASK ALL:

Q.33 And how about over the next few years... Do you think the price of homes in your area will go up a lot, go up a little, go down a little or go down a lot?

Dec 1-5 2010		July 2008	Early Feb 2008	Sep 2007	June 2007
10	Go up a lot	14	15	17	26
47	Go up a little	40	40	36	36
25	Go down a little	29	26	28	23
8	Go down a lot	7	8	8	5
4	Stay about the same (VOL.)	4	4	5	4
7	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	6	7	6	6

ASK ALL:

Q.34 In general, how easy or difficult is it for you to afford the things in life that you want – very easy, easy, difficult or very difficult?

Dec 1-5 2010		Early Dec 2008	Early Oct 2008	Early Feb 2008	June 2002	June 2001	U.S. News Jan 1992
4	Very easy	6	8	9	5	7	4
36	Easy	37	41	43	44	43	35
40	Difficult	40	37	33	37	36	46
17	Very difficult	15	11	12	11	12	12
3	Don't Know/Ref (VOL.)	2	3	3	3	2	3

ASK ALL:

Q.35 How easy or difficult is it for you and your family to afford **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]** – very easy, easy, difficult or very difficult? How about **[NEXT ITEM]**?⁶

		Very easy	Easy	Difficult	Very difficult	(VOL.) N/A	(VOL.) DK/Ref
a.	Food						
	Dec 1-5, 2010	10	58	22	7	*	2
	December, 2008	9	60	25	4	*	2
	July, 2008	10	50	30	8	*	2
	Early February, 2008	14	57	22	5	*	2
	U.S. News: August, 1992	11	65	18	5	*	1
	U.S. News: May, 1992	12	66	18	3	*	1
	U.S. News: January, 1992	7	68	21	3	*	1
b.	Health care						
	Dec 1-5, 2010	8	37	31	20	3	2
	December, 2008	7	44	29	16	1	3
	July, 2008	9	40	30	16	2	3
	Early February, 2008	11	39	29	16	3	2
	U.S. News: August, 1992	7	39	32	19	2	1
	U.S. News: May, 1992	10	42	29	15	3	1
	U.S. News: January, 1992	6	43	29	16	4	2
c.	Taxes						
	Dec 1-5, 2010	3	34	43	14	3	3
	December, 2008	3	38	41	11	3	4
	July, 2008	5	35	40	12	3	5
	Early February, 2008	6	36	37	14	3	4
	U.S. News: August 1992	3	32	43	17	3	2
	U.S. News: May 1992	4	30	46	15	3	2
	U.S. News: January 1992	2	33	45	13	4	3

⁶ In all 1992 surveys, the question was worded "How easy is it for you and your family to afford" the items.

Q.35 CONTINUED...

	Very <u>easy</u>	<u>Easy</u>	<u>Difficult</u>	Very <u>difficult</u>	(VOL.) <u>N/A</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
d. Savings for retirement						
Dec 1-5, 2010	3	20	35	29	11	3
December, 2008	2	23	39	25	8	3
July, 2008	5	23	37	22	10	3
Early February, 2008	5	28	34	22	8	3
<i>U.S. News</i> : August 1992	3	22	36	29	9	1
<i>U.S. News</i> : May 1992	2	21	38	24	13	2
<i>U.S. News</i> : January 1992	2	22	37	23	14	2
e. Your home heating and electric bills						
Dec 1-5, 2010	7	41	37	11	2	3
December, 2008	7	46	32	10	2	3
July, 2008	6	41	38	11	1	3
Early February, 2008	8	44	33	11	2	2
<i>U.S. News</i> : August 1992 ⁷	7	54	29	8	1	1
<i>U.S. News</i> : May 1992	9	54	28	6	1	2
<i>U.S. News</i> : January 1992	4	55	31	7	1	2
f. Gasoline						
Dec 1-5, 2010	6	38	36	14	4	2
December, 2008	10	57	21	6	5	1
July, 2008	4	23	42	26	3	2
Early February, 2008	5	30	38	22	3	2

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=737]:

Q.36F2 Thinking about the money you owe on credit cards and installment loans—not including your mortgage—would you say...**[READ IN ORDER]**

Dec 1-5 <u>2010</u>		Early	July	Early	Sept	Jan	Mid-	Late	<i>U.S. News</i>	
		Oct <u>2008</u> ⁸	<u>2008</u>	Feb <u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	May <u>2005</u>	Feb <u>2004</u>	June <u>2001</u>	Jan <u>1992</u>
12	Owe a lot more than you can afford	10	10	9	7	8	10	9	13	7
15	Owe a little more than you can afford	15	12	13	13	15	15	13	15	14
30	Owe about what you can afford	33	34	32	31	30	33	29	31	32
17	Owe less than you can afford?	22	20	22	26	24	22	23	18	19
14	Do not have any debts (VOL.)	13	16	12	15	15	13	20	12	16
10	No credit cards or loans (VOL.)	6	6	9	6	6	5	5	10	11
2	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	1	2	3	2	2	2	1	1	1

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=763]:

Q.37F1 Thinking about the money you owe on credit cards and installment loans—not including your mortgage—would you say...**[READ IN ORDER]**

Dec 1-5 <u>2010</u>	
12	Owe a lot more than you can afford
15	Owe a little more than you can afford
27	Owe about what you can afford
42	Do you not owe any money on credit cards or installment loans?
1	Pay off credit cards every month (VOL.)
2	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

NO QUESTIONS 38, 45-48

⁷ In all 1992 surveys, category was "Heating oil, gas and electric."

⁸ In 2008 and before, the question read "excluding your mortgage...."

QUESTIONS 39-44, 49-54 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	Republican	Democrat	Independent	No preference	Other party	DK/Ref	Rep	Dem
Dec 1-5, 2010	25	33	34	5	1	2	13	14
Nov 4-7, 2010	26	30	37	4	*	2	17	13
Oct 27-30, 2010	25	34	31	6	1	4	13	11
Oct 13-18, 2010	25	31	36	4	*	3	16	13
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	24	32	39	2	*	2	15	17
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	26	33	34	4	*	3	14	14
Jun 16-20, 2010	27	34	34	3	1	2	15	15
Apr 21-26, 2010	26	33	36	3	1	3	16	13
Mar 11-21, 2010	28	34	32	3	*	3	13	12
Mar 10-14, 2010	22	33	37	6	*	3	14	13
Feb 3-9, 2010	26	31	37	3	*	3	14	17
Jan 6-10, 2010	22	33	42	2	1	2	17	16
Yearly Totals								
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--