

THE GRANITE STATE POLL

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

NH CONSUMERS NOT FEELING CONFIDENT YET

FOR RELEASE

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UNH Survey Center www.unh.edu/survey-center

DURHAM, NH – New Hampshire consumers are somewhat positive about the economic prospects of the state and of the country, but feel somewhat less confident than in past months.

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 four (504) randomly selected adults were interviewed by telephone between July 7 and July 17, 2005. The margin of sampling error for the survey is +/-4.4 percent.

U.S. Business Conditions

Despite relatively strength growth over the past several quarters, New Hampshire residents are unchanged in their thoughts about the short-term prospects of the U.S. economy. In the most recent Granite State Poll, 44 percent of New Hampshire residents say they expect businesses in the U.S. will experience good times in the next 12 months, 32 percent anticipate bad times for U.S. businesses, and 23 percent think conditions will be mixed. These figures are unchanged since the Spring Granite State Poll and are at their lowest level since the February, 2003.

Granite Staters remain split about long-term prospects for the U.S. economy. Forty-one percent of New Hampshire residents believe that the U.S. economy will experience continuous good times over the next 5 years, 39 percent expect periods of widespread unemployment and depression, and 21 percent see a mix of good and bad conditions. This measure of confidence in the economy has also remained unchanged in recent months.

N.H. Business Conditions

Granite Staters remain optimistic about business conditions in New Hampshire – 54 percent of adults think New Hampshire will have good times economically in the next twelve months, 25 percent feel there will be bad times, and 22 percent foresee mixed conditions. Confidence in the New Hampshire economy has been consistently higher than confidence in the US economy since 2002, despite the prospective closing of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard by the Base Closing and Realignment Commission.

[?] We ask that this copyrighted information be referred to as *the Granite State Poll*, sponsored by the University of New Hampshire.

Personal Financial Conditions

When asked about their personal financial situations, 34 percent of Granite Staters say they are better off now than they were a year ago, 31 percent say they are worse off, and 35 percent say things are about the same. The percentage who said they were better off has dropped from 41 percent in the Spring Granite State Poll.

Turning to family finances a year from now, most people in New Hampshire think they will be in about the same financial shape as they are today. Twenty-nine percent of New Hampshire residents believe they will be better off financially a year from now, 16 percent think they will be worse off and 56 percent think they will be about the same. The percentage of Granite Staters who think they will be better off one year from now is at its lowest level since October, 2001.

When asked about making major household purchases, 63 percent of New Hampshire adults feel that it is a good time to buy things such as furniture and appliances, 22 percent think it is a bad time, and 14 percent think it depends. This measure has been slipping since February.

Subgroup Analysis

There are few demographic differences in the economic expectations of New Hampshire residents, but there are meaningful political differences. 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. Upper income residents (those earning more than \$100,000 annually) report being in better financial shape now than a year ago and also expect to be better off next year. However, lower income residents are significantly more likely than others to say they are worse off now than they were a year ago.

Republicans and conservatives are consistently more optimistic about current and future economic conditions than are Democrats and liberals.

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 July 7 to July 17, 2005. A random sample of 504 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?"

	<u>Good Times</u>	<u>Mixed</u>	<u>Bad Times</u>	<u>(N=)</u>
July '05 (Latest)	44%	23%	32%	(438)
Apr. '05	44	19	37	(450)
Feb. '05	54	20	26	(488)
July '04	52	21	26	(446)
Apr. '04	56	18	26	(468)
Feb. '04	53	16	31	(461)
Oct. '03	48	17	35	(455)
June '03	49	20	31	(491)
Apr. '03	48	15	37	(477)
Feb. '03	31	20	49	(606)
June '02	37	22	41	(599)
Apr. '02	52	22	26	(484)
Feb. '02	49	19	32	(300)
Oct. '01	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?"

	<u>Continuous Good Times</u>	<u>Mixed</u>	<u>Depression/ Unemployment</u>	<u>(N=)</u>
July '05 (Latest)	41%	21%	39%	(461)
Apr. '05	40	19	40	(455)
Feb. '05	43	19	37	(497)
July '04	49	15	36	(431)
Apr. '04	45	17	38	(467)
Feb. '04	39	22	39	(454)
Oct. '03	42	16	42	(457)
June '03	40	19	41	(479)
Apr. '03	43	20	38	(470)
Feb. '03	32	22	46	(607)
June '02	31	27	42	(603)
Apr. '02	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?"

	<u>Good Times</u>	<u>Mixed</u>	<u>Bad Times</u>	<u>(N=)</u>
July '05 (Latest)	54%	22%	25%	(429)
Apr. '05	56	19	25	(433)
Feb. '05	60	21	19	(453)
July '04	59	21	20	(444)
Apr. '04	58	20	22	(457)
Feb. '04	54	17	29	(448)
Oct. '03	52	19	28	(449)
June '03	50	17	32	(485)
Apr. '03	48	16	35	(462)
Feb. '03	41	19	40	(577)
June '02	52	21	27	(588)
Apr. '02	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?"

	<u>Better Off</u>	<u>About the Same</u>	<u>Worse Off</u>	<u>(N=)</u>
July '05 (Latest)	34%	35%	31%	(500)
Apr. '05	41	29	30	(493)
Feb. '05	37	36	27	(537)
July '04	40	34	25	(495)
Apr. '04	45	32	23	(538)
Feb. '04	34	38	28	(503)
Oct. '03	36	32	32	(496)
June '03	35	28	36	(514)
Apr. '03	36	30	34	(504)
Feb. '03	30	29	40	(647)
June '02	38	33	29	(650)
Apr. '02	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?"

	<u>Better Off</u>	<u>About the Same</u>	<u>Worse Off</u>	<u>(N=)</u>
July '05 (Latest)	29%	56%	16%	(489)
Apr. '05	32	52	15	(485)
Feb. '05	36	55	9	(524)
July '04	37	54	9	(477)
Apr. '04	38	54	8	(509)
Feb. '04	37	52	10	(488)
Oct. '03	32	59	9	(486)
June '03	35	54	10	(501)
Apr. '03	42	49	9	(489)
Feb. '03	34	55	11	(622)
June '02	33	57	10	(625)
Apr. '02	38	55	7	(479)
Feb. '02	35	56	10	(305)
Oct. '01	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?"

	<u>Good Time</u>	<u>Pro-Con</u>	<u>Bad Time</u>	<u>(N=)</u>
July '05 (Latest)	63%	14%	22%	(441)
Apr. '05	64	15	21	(446)
Feb. '05	70	13	18	(478)
July '04	67	12	21	(456)
Apr. '04	71	9	20	(487)
Feb. '04	58	15	28	(462)
Oct. '03	65	14	21	(468)
June '03	63	14	23	(475)
Apr. '03	60	12	28	(487)
Feb. '03	53	16	31	(600)
June '02	68	10	22	(613)
Apr. '02	71	11	18	(480)
Feb. '02	65	10	26	(298)
Oct. '01	63	15	22	(506)

Personal Financial Condition Compared to 1 Year Ago

STATEWIDE	<u>Better Off</u> 34%	<u>About The Same</u> 35%	<u>Worse Off</u> 31%	<u>(N)</u> 500
Democrat	24	34	42	215
Independent	18	40	43	72
Republican	50	34	15	195
Liberal	20	37	43	111
Moderate	28	37	36	205
Conservative	51	32	17	151
Union household	33	41	26	71
Non-union	34	34	32	423
Employed	40	32	28	362
Not working	17	46	37	113
Unemployed	27	24	49	19
18 to 34	47	21	32	100
35 to 49	37	34	29	167
50 to 64	27	38	35	127
65 and over	21	53	26	84
Male	37	35	28	241
Female	32	35	34	259
High school or less	25	40	35	120
Some college	31	36	33	111
College graduate	37	34	29	159
Post-graduate	43	31	27	103
Less than \$30K	6	33	60	47
\$30K to \$60K	25	29	46	94
\$60K to \$75K	34	38	28	55
\$75K to \$100K	45	40	16	59
More than \$100K	59	22	19	88
Married	35	38	27	326
Divorced/separated	24	30	45	87
Never married	42	25	33	79
Protestant	35	40	25	166
Catholic	34	37	29	185
Other	33	28	39	126
North Country	18	55	26	41
Central / Lakes	37	38	25	87
Connecticut Valley	35	35	30	72
Mass Border	35	33	31	120
Seacoast	40	24	36	92
Manchester Area	31	35	34	88
1st Cong. District	37	33	31	269
2nd Cong. District	32	37	31	231
1st E.C. District	32	43	25	101
2nd E.C. District	33	39	29	105
3rd E.C. District	38	29	34	99
4th E.C. District	33	31	36	96
5th E.C. District	36	31	32	98

HH Finances in 12 Months From Now

STATEWIDE	<u>Better Off</u> 29%	<u>Worse Off</u> 16%	<u>About</u> <u>the Same</u> 56%	<u>(N)</u> 489
Democrat	21	21	58	207
Independent	19	21	60	71
Republican	41	8	52	193
Liberal	22	20	58	112
Moderate	26	16	58	197
Conservative	40	11	49	147
Union household	35	11	54	72
Non-union	28	16	56	412
Employed	33	12	55	352
Not working	11	27	62	114
Unemployed	63	6	31	18
18 to 34	37	11	52	99
35 to 49	39	9	51	163
50 to 64	20	21	58	126
65 and over	13	23	65	79
Male	34	16	50	235
Female	24	16	60	254
High school or less	22	13	65	117
Some college	25	19	56	106
College graduate	32	13	55	159
Post-graduate	37	18	46	101
Less than \$30K	19	24	57	46
\$30K to \$60K	19	19	62	90
\$60K to \$75K	32	10	58	54
\$75K to \$100K	41	6	54	58
More than \$100K	43	19	38	88
Married	33	16	51	319
Divorced/separated	21	16	63	85
Never married	22	12	66	77
Protestant	33	11	56	161
Catholic	26	17	57	183
Other	27	19	54	122
Northern NH	25	9	66	39
Central/Lakes	29	13	58	85
Connecticut Valley	24	19	57	72
Massachusetts Border	29	20	51	118
Seacoast	42	14	44	90
Greater Manchester	22	14	64	85
1st Cong. District	31	13	56	257
2nd Cong. District	27	19	54	232
1st E.C. District	26	14	60	97
2nd E.C. District	33	9	58	104
3rd E.C. District	38	19	43	98
4th E.C. District	22	15	63	93
5th E.C. District	26	21	52	96

Business Conditions in NH 12 Months From Now

STATEWIDE	<u>Good Times</u> 54%	<u>Some Good- Some Bad</u> 22%	<u>Bad Times</u> 25%	<u>(N)</u> 429
Democrat	42	24	34	178
Independent	46	14	40	62
Republican	68	21	11	174
Liberal	40	26	33	96
Moderate	53	18	29	176
Conservative	66	19	16	132
Union household	59	11	31	61
Non-union	53	23	24	362
Employed	53	22	25	317
Not working	56	18	26	93
Unemployed	47	21	31	13
18 to 34	49	24	27	86
35 to 49	56	21	23	140
50 to 64	52	19	29	118
65 and over	60	24	16	68
Male	58	19	23	208
Female	49	24	27	221
High school or less	49	24	27	96
Some college	51	19	30	96
College graduate	57	22	21	144
Post-graduate	58	18	24	86
Less than \$30K	40	28	31	43
\$30K to \$60K	50	28	22	81
\$60K to \$75K	57	17	26	50
\$75K to \$100K	70	12	18	49
More than \$100K	55	23	22	78
Married	56	21	23	281
Divorced/separated	45	22	33	74
Never married	50	24	26	66
Protestant	63	22	15	148
Catholic	54	18	28	159
Other	45	22	33	101
Northern NH	61	13	26	35
Central/Lakes	48	27	25	75
Connecticut Valley	54	23	23	61
Massachusetts Border	54	20	26	98
Seacoast	50	20	30	80
Greater Manchester	59	21	20	80
1st Cong. District	55	21	24	233
2nd Cong. District	52	22	25	196
1st E.C. District	54	25	20	89
2nd E.C. District	54	22	25	86
3rd E.C. District	54	17	29	77
4th E.C. District	55	20	25	89
5th E.C. District	52	24	24	87

Business Conditions in US in 12 Months From Now

STATEWIDE	Good Times 44%	Some Good- Some Bad 23%	Bad Times 32%	(N) 438
Democrat	28	24	49	178
Independent	36	23	41	62
Republican	63	24	13	182
Liberal	29	22	49	97
Moderate	40	25	34	179
Conservative	59	22	19	136
Union household	47	19	33	59
Non-union	44	24	32	374
Employed	43	25	32	313
Not working	45	21	34	101
Unemployed	46	16	39	18
18 to 34	38	32	30	79
35 to 49	48	23	29	156
50 to 64	43	17	39	111
65 and over	47	26	27	73
Male	51	23	26	214
Female	37	24	38	224
High school or less	36	26	38	100
Some college	43	18	39	97
College graduate	52	26	22	146
Post-graduate	41	22	37	88
Less than \$30K	38	26	36	43
\$30K to \$60K	37	36	27	87
\$60K to \$75K	40	9	51	52
\$75K to \$100K	64	12	25	52
More than \$100K	54	20	27	80
Married	48	22	30	293
Divorced/separated	34	21	45	78
Never married	36	36	28	60
Protestant	51	21	28	151
Catholic	43	26	31	164
Other	36	20	44	105
Northern NH	52	15	34	32
Central/Lakes	40	25	34	79
Connecticut Valley	42	20	38	64
Massachusetts Border	50	20	30	102
Seacoast	37	27	36	81
Greater Manchester	46	28	26	80
1st Cong. District	47	24	29	238
2nd Cong. District	41	23	37	200
1st E.C. District	48	19	33	89
2nd E.C. District	39	23	38	90
3rd E.C. District	36	30	34	86
4th E.C. District	49	25	26	88
5th E.C. District	48	19	32	83

US 5 Year Economic Outlook

STATEWIDE	<u>Continuous Good Times</u> 41%	<u>Mixed</u> 21%	<u>Widespread Unemployment/ Depression</u> 39%	<u>(N)</u> 461
Democrat	24	23	53	196
Independent	24	29	47	67
Republican	64	16	20	182
Liberal	24	22	54	102
Moderate	35	27	38	193
Conservative	62	11	28	139
Union household	38	21	41	65
Non-union	41	20	38	391
Employed	38	23	39	337
Not working	46	16	38	103
Unemployed	49	9	42	16
18 to 34	36	16	48	95
35 to 49	43	21	36	152
50 to 64	37	23	40	117
65 and over	51	22	27	79
Male	50	24	26	221
Female	32	18	50	240
High school or less	39	12	49	108
Some college	41	16	43	103
College graduate	41	26	33	148
Post-graduate	41	28	31	97
Less than \$30K	28	10	62	46
\$30K to \$60K	43	16	41	85
\$60K to \$75K	37	9	55	51
\$75K to \$100K	45	27	28	54
More than \$100K	53	19	28	84
Married	44	22	35	295
Divorced/separated	37	16	47	83
Never married	33	21	46	76
Protestant	49	19	32	153
Catholic	43	15	41	176
Other	29	26	45	115
Northern NH	43	28	30	38
Central/Lakes	45	18	37	79
Connecticut Valley	31	23	46	66
Massachusetts Border	41	19	40	111
Seacoast	38	17	45	86
Greater Manchester	45	23	31	80
1st Cong. District	46	20	35	246
2nd Cong. District	35	21	44	214
1st E.C. District	40	23	37	92
2nd E.C. District	50	15	35	98
3rd E.C. District	38	18	43	91
4th E.C. District	38	24	37	88
5th E.C. District	35	22	43	91

Good Time To Buy Major Household Item

STATEWIDE	<u>Good Time</u> 63%	<u>Pro-Con</u> 14%	<u>Bad Time</u> 22%	<u>(N)</u> 441
Democrat	52	14	34	186
Independent	64	14	23	67
Republican	77	14	9	174
Liberal	48	16	36	94
Moderate	63	15	22	186
Conservative	75	12	13	131
Union household	69	17	14	61
Non-union	63	14	24	375
Employed	62	13	25	322
Not working	66	18	16	97
Unemployed	76	11	13	17
18 to 34	53	7	40	94
35 to 49	65	15	20	147
50 to 64	69	13	17	109
65 and over	71	19	10	70
Male	67	13	20	213
Female	60	15	25	228
High school or less	55	12	33	106
Some college	72	10	18	102
College graduate	69	16	15	141
Post-graduate	55	19	26	86
Less than \$30K	54	10	36	39
\$30K to \$60K	62	16	22	85
\$60K to \$75K	58	13	28	47
\$75K to \$100K	78	5	17	56
More than \$100K	67	14	18	80
Married	68	13	19	288
Divorced/separated	57	20	23	77
Never married	56	13	31	69
Protestant	63	16	21	146
Catholic	70	12	17	164
Other	57	16	27	107
Northern NH	71	11	18	38
Central/Lakes	68	9	23	78
Connecticut Valley	52	20	28	60
Massachusetts Border	62	17	21	111
Seacoast	58	17	25	80
Greater Manchester	72	10	18	74
1st Cong. District	68	13	19	233
2nd Cong. District	59	15	26	208
1st E.C. District	67	11	22	88
2nd E.C. District	62	13	25	95
3rd E.C. District	57	17	26	81
4th E.C. District	73	11	16	85
5th E.C. District	59	18	23	91