



Badger Poll™ #25, Release #3
University of Wisconsin Survey Center
University of Wisconsin Madison
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NOTE: When using material from this release please cite the Badger Poll™ conducted by the University of Wisconsin Survey Center. Poll results compiled by Chad J. Kniss, Project Director, UW Survey Center. ckniss@ssc.wisc.edu (office phone: 608.262.4157)

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THE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK OF WISCONSINITES: LATE FALL 2007

The findings from the most recent Badger Poll show that most Wisconsinites are not optimistic about the economic outlook for either Wisconsin or the nation over the next 12 months.

A quick run down of the findings shows that:

- For the second time in the past six months, the economy and jobs was the third most mentioned important problem facing Wisconsin today.
- Roughly 1 in 5 respondents thought the lack of jobs and/or the loss of jobs in Wisconsin is the biggest economic challenge facing state residents.
- Wisconsinites also thought that the high level of taxes (13%) and the price of gas, oil & heating fuel (12%) were challenges facing state residents. The fact that wages are not keeping up with expenses (13%) and the costs of health care (8%) were also among the top challenges that Wisconsinites perceive.
- 41% of Badger State residents said the economic conditions in Wisconsin are currently in “bad times,” 34% said “good times” and a combined total of 26% could not decide whether economic conditions are good or bad.
- Approximately 60% of Wisconsinites do not expect that there will be much change in economic conditions over the next 12 months for the state as a whole and 70% don’t expect much change in their local town and surrounding area in the next 12 months.
- 48% of Wisconsin residents think economic conditions in the U.S. will get worse in the next 12 months, while 40% expect them to stay about the same and only 12% expect them to get better.

- While the latest Badger Poll shows that many Wisconsinites worry about the economy overall, this anxiety did not show up in personal dissatisfaction with residents' current employment situation or their level of concern about job security over the next 12 months – only 7% of employed respondents reported they were either extremely or quite concerned about losing their job or having their hours significantly reduced over the next 12 months.

Additional results and analysis are presented below.

MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM FACING WISCONSIN TODAY

The latest Badger Poll finds that 11% of Badger State residents cited the economy and/or jobs as the most important problem facing the state today. That is essentially the same proportion as six months ago. Again taxes were the most mentioned problem facing Wisconsin.

Top 5 Most Important Problems Facing the State of Wisconsin

<i>Issue Areas (as coded from open-end question)</i>	June 2007	Fall 2007
1 Taxes	23%	23%
2 Health Care	12%	18%
3 The economy and jobs	11%	11%
4 Education / Schools	9%	8%
5 Crime, Drugs, & Violence	5%	5%
	(N=502)	(N=507)

BIGGEST ECONOMIC CHALLENGES FACING THE PEOPLE OF WISCONSIN TODAY

When asked what is the biggest economic challenge facing the people of Wisconsin today, Wisconsinites gave many different answers with the largest number mentioning something about the lack of jobs or the loss of jobs in the state (see table below).

Economic Challenges Facing the People of Wisconsin Today

<i>Issues/Areas (as coded from open-ended question)</i>	Percent Weighted	Number of Observations
Lack of Jobs & Employment	21%	111
Taxes	13%	84
Cost of Living, Prices, Wages	13%	34
Gas, Oil, Heating Fuel Prices	12%	65
Health care, Health Insurance, Medical Costs	8%	53
Housing / Mortgage Crisis	4%	26
Loss of Businesses, Manufacturing & Need to Attract New Businesses	4%	23
Debt / Lack of Money	3%	17
Education: Funding and Training for Skills	2%	13
Globalization / Foreign Competition	1%	7
Workforce / Labor force: Skills & Numbers	1%	6
The Economy in General	1%	5
Government Spending	1%	2
Lack of Spending on Social Programs	<1%	2
Politics: Corruption & Bickering	<1%	2
Economic Gap Between Rich Everyone Else	<1%	2
All Other (singular mentions)	3%	15
Too Many to List	<1%	1
None	<1%	1
Don't Know	9%	55
Refused	2%	9
	(N=507)	

The table on the previous page shows responses coded from an open-ended question that asked: “What would you say, if anything, is the **biggest** economic challenge facing the people of Wisconsin today? ”. The weighted percent is the estimate of the proportion of the state’s adult residents who hold such views, while the number of observations is the number of respondents who mentioned each challenge (either as a single issue or as one of multiple issues).

Among respondents citing jobs or something to do with employment of individuals the most mentioned challenge was the lack of jobs and unemployment (29 of 111). The next most mentioned challenge was the loss of jobs (18 of 111). That is followed by the need for good paying jobs (11 of 111). One Badger Poll respondent summed this category up fairly well saying “Jobs for people so that they can have a livelihood upon which they can support a family” (respondent 100311).

Two other issues related to jobs were mentioned – lack of job security (6 of 111) and the need for quality jobs (6 of 111). Fifteen respondents also mentioned other challenges in addition to jobs including: health care (5), wages (2), mortgage crisis (2), and taxes (2).

The cost of living, prices, & wages were mentioned by 34 respondents, but once weighted based on age and gender groups to reflect the statewide numbers, it becomes the third highest economic challenge. Overall, this category reflects the difficulty that some Wisconsinites are having “making ends meet,” specifically 17 respondents said something to the effect that prices for goods and services are rising and wages are not keeping pace. It appears that respondents were expressing their anxiety about the number of jobs available in Wisconsin that give people the ability to make “good wages.”

Out of the 84 respondents who mentioned “taxes” as the biggest economic challenge facing the people of Wisconsin the adjective used most was “high” (27) followed by “property” (9).

PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN WISCONSIN AND THE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

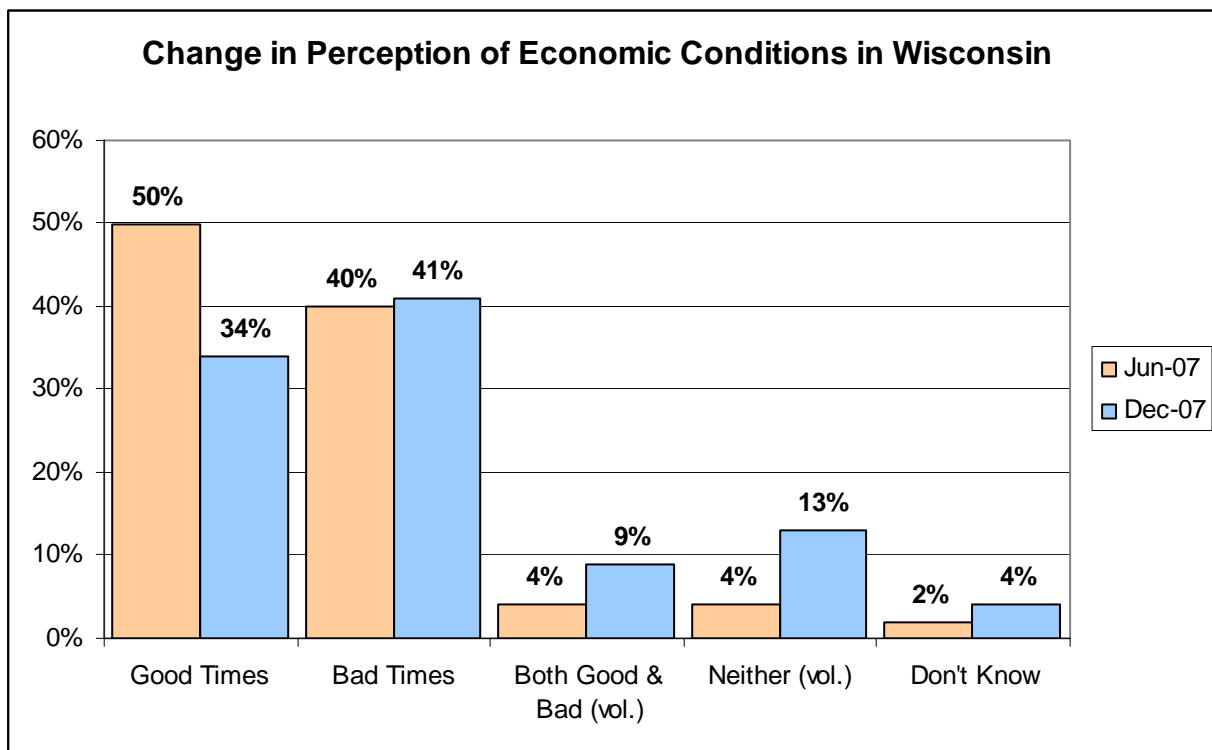
Across the state 41% of Wisconsinites say the state is currently in “bad times” economically, while 34% say the state is in “good times” economically.

Wisconsinites' Views on the Current Economic Conditions in Wisconsin

Good Times	34%
Bad Times	41%
Both Good & Bad (Vol.)	9%
Neither (Vol.)	13%
Don't Know	4%
Refused	--

(N=507)

The latest Badger Poll shows that there has been a decline in the proportion of Wisconsinites who think that economic conditions in the state are in “good times” (see chart below). However, the level of residents who think the state is in “bad times” economically has not increased; rather, the proportion of those who are unsure or have a mixed view have increased.



Looking ahead over the next 12 months, most residents expect the economy of Wisconsin and that of their local area to stay about the same as it is now. However, nearly one-half expect that the economic situation in the U.S. as a whole will get worse. There is not much optimism that the economy at any level will get better over the next 12 months.

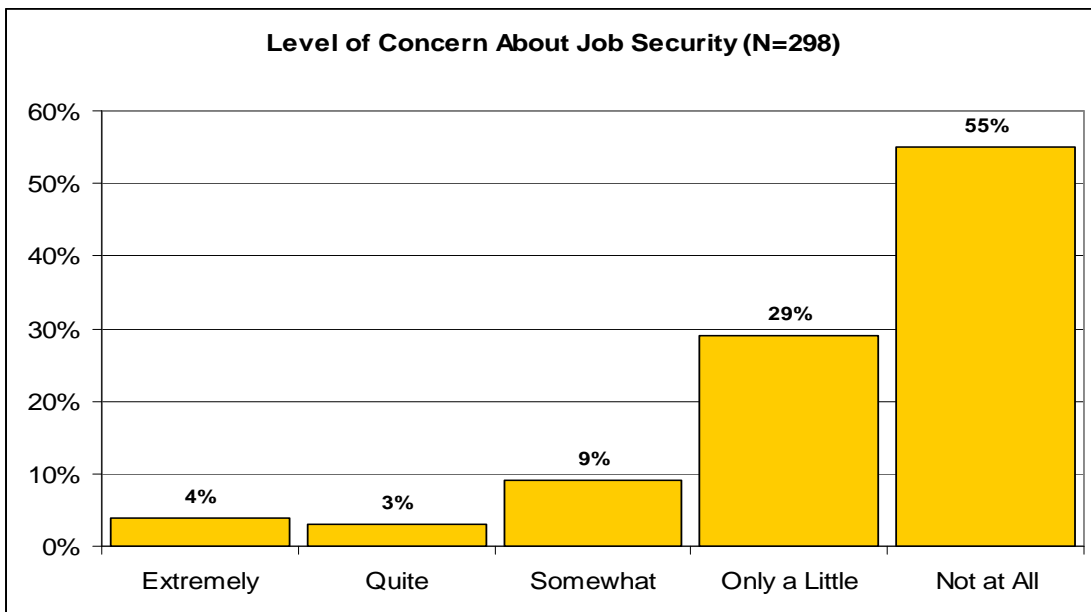
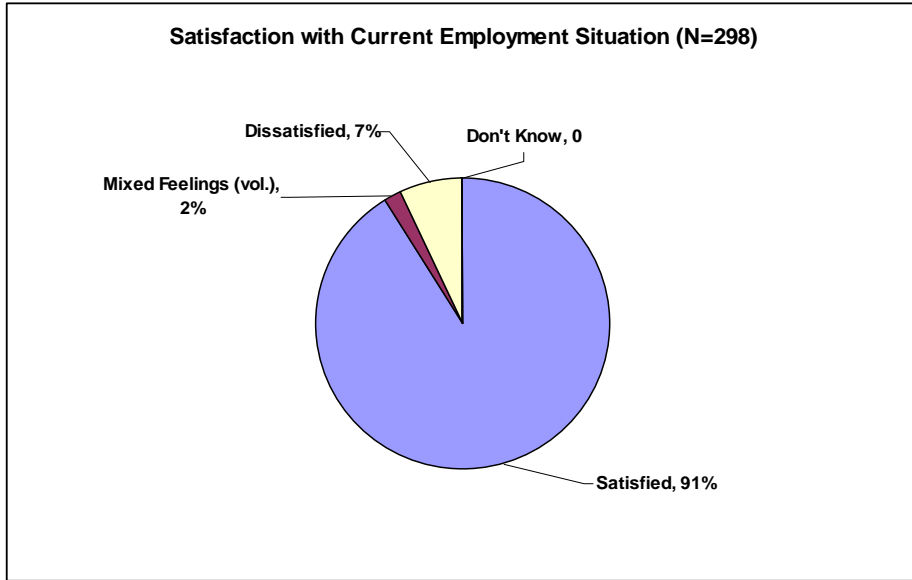
Economic Outlook Over the Next 12 Months			
	United States	Wisconsin	Local
Get Better	12%	9%	9%
Stay about the same	40%	57%	71%
Get worse	48%	33%	20%
Don't Know	<1%	<1%	<1%
Refused	--	--	--
(N=507)			

The 48% of Wisconsinites that expect the U.S. economy to get worse over the next 12 months is the highest percentage since the Badger Poll began asking the question in March of 2002 (see the table below).

Trend in Wisconsinites' National Economic Outlook for the Next 12 Months						
	Get Better	About the Same	Get Worse	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
December '07	12%	40%	48%	<1%	--	(507)
June '07	16%	45%	37%	1%	<1%	(502)
May '05	31%	42%	24%	3%	<1%	(509)
October '04	46%	33%	11%	9%	<1%	(545)
September '04	41%	38%	13%	7%	1%	(508)
April '04	44%	36%	17%	3%	--	(511)
March '04	43%	39%	18%	--	--	(500)
Jan./Feb. '04	50%	34%	13%	3%	--	(502)
August '03	44%	37%	17%	2%	--	(511)
February '03	33%	42%	23%	2%	<1%	(504)
January '03	33%	42%	23%	2%	1%	(514)
September '02	37%	41%	18%	4%	--	(539)
June '02	43%	46%	9%	2%	--	(524)
March '02	56%	31%	12%	1%	<1%	(597)

PERSONAL EMPLOYMENT SATISFACTION AND CONCERN

The latest Badger Poll asked Wisconsinites about their satisfaction with their current employment / job situation and their level of concern about losing their job in the next 12 months. 71% of the respondents to the Badger Poll reported that they are currently employed and 91% of those respondents with jobs said they were satisfied with their current employment situation or job. Further, when asked about how concerned they are about losing their job or having their hours significantly reduced only 7% said they were extremely or quite concerned, 38% said they were somewhat or only a little concerned, while a majority (55%) said they were not at all concerned.



While many Wisconsinites worry about the economy and are not optimistic for the entire state and nation, this anxiety does not show up in personal dissatisfaction with residents' current employment situation or their level of concern about job security.

APPENDIX:

		Current Economic Conditions in Wisconsin						
		Good Times	Bad Times	Both Good & Bad (Vol.)	Neither (Vol.)	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
Overall		34%	41%	9%	13%	4%	--	(507)
Gender	Men	38%	41%	11%	5%	5%	--	(215)
	Women	30%	41%	6%	20%	3%	--	(292)
Party ID	Democrats	35%	44%	9%	5%	7%	--	(184)
	Independents & Others	37%	45%	10%	5%	3%	--	(188)
	Republicans	27%	32%	8%	32%	2%	--	(114)
Ages	18 to 29*	36%	12%	5%	38%	10%	--	(36)
	30 to 44	29%	60%	7%	3%	1%	--	(94)
	45 to 59	40%	43%	10%	6%	<1%	--	(182)
	60 and over	30%	45%	13%	7%	5%	--	(195)
Education	High school graduate or less	31%	47%	12%	6%	4%	--	(183)
	Some college	24%	40%	6%	24%	6%	--	(138)
	College graduate or more	45%	37%	9%	7%	2%	--	(183)
Region	Milwaukee County	29%	56%	10%	5%	--	--	(102)
	SE WI, w/o Mil. Co.	33%	52%	6%	1%	9%	--	(86)
	SC WI, Greater Madison	38%	38%	11%	7%	6%	--	(91)
	NE WI, Fox Valley	44%	31%	18%	6%	1%	--	(79)
	NC Wisconsin*	17%	29%	5%	46%	3%	--	(65)
	Western & NW Wisconsin	44%	42%	6%	5%	3%	--	(84)

(*Caution should be taken when interpreting the findings of subgroups with smaller numbers of respondents due to the potential for larger variation. Data are not weighted by region. Geographical regional subgroups presented here are subgroups of the larger statewide representative RDD sample.)

Economic Outlook for the State of Wisconsin in the Next 12 Months							
		Get Better	Get Worse	Stay about the same	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
Overall		9%	33%	57%	<1%	--	(507)
Gender	Men	10%	27%	63%	<1%	--	(215)
	Women	9%	39%	51%	1%	--	(292)
Party ID	Democrats	10%	29%	61%	<1%	--	(184)
	Independents & Others	9%	26%	64%	1%	--	(188)
	Republicans	7%	47%	46%	--	--	(114)
Ages	18 to 29*	7%	56%	37%	--	--	(36)
	30 to 44	8%	22%	70%	--	--	(94)
	45 to 59	13%	27%	60%	--	--	(182)
	60 and over	8%	32%	58%	2%	--	(195)
Education	High school graduate or less	14%	28%	57%	1%	--	(183)
	Some college	6%	52%	42%	--	--	(138)
	College graduate or more	8%	20%	71%	1%	--	(183)
Region	Milwaukee County	13%	21%	66%	--	--	(102)
	SE WI, w/o Mil. Co.	10%	24%	66%	--	--	(86)
	SC WI, Greater Madison	9%	29%	61%	--	--	(91)
	NE WI, Fox Valley	14%	15%	69%	1%	--	(79)
	NC Wisconsin*	5%	64%	30%	--	--	(65)
	Western & NW Wisconsin	5%	40%	55%	--	--	(84)

(*Caution should be taken when interpreting the findings of subgroups with smaller numbers of respondents due to the potential for larger variation. Data are not weighted by region. Geographical regional subgroups presented here are subgroups of the larger statewide representative RDD sample.)

Economic Outlook for the United States in the Next 12 Months							
		Get Better	Get Worse	Stay about the same	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
Overall		12%	48%	40%	<1%	--	(507)
Gender	Men	15%	39%	46%	--	--	(215)
	Women	9%	57%	33%	<1%	--	(292)
Party ID	Democrats	13%	52%	35%	--	--	(184)
	Independents & Others	10%	45%	46%	<1%	--	(188)
	Republicans	14%	49%	37%	<1%	--	(114)
Ages	18 to 29*	14%	59%	27%	--	--	(36)
	30 to 44	9%	38%	52%	--	--	(94)
	45 to 59	13%	46%	41%	--	--	(182)
	60 and over	11%	53%	34%	2%	--	(195)
Education	High school graduate or less	16%	40%	42%	1%	--	(183)
	Some college	8%	61%	31%	--	--	(138)
	College graduate or more	12%	43%	45%	--	--	(183)
Region	Milwaukee County	20%	37%	43%	--	--	(102)
	SE WI, w/o Mil. Co.	11%	37%	52%	--	--	(86)
	SC WI, Greater Madison	12%	52%	36%	--	--	(91)
	NE WI, Fox Valley	14%	34%	52%	--	--	(79)
	NC Wisconsin*	7%	75%	18%	--	--	(65)
	Western & NW Wisconsin	8%	50%	42%	--	--	(84)

(*Caution should be taken when interpreting the findings of subgroups with smaller numbers of respondents due to the potential for larger variation. Data are not weighted by region. Geographical regional subgroups presented here are subgroups of the larger statewide representative RDD sample.)

Economic Outlook for Your Town and Surrounding Area in the Next 12 Months							
		Get Better	Get Worse	Stay about the same	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
Overall		9%	20%	71%	<1%	--	(507)
Gender	Men	10%	22%	67%	1%	--	(215)
	Women	8%	17%	75%	<1%	--	(292)
Party ID	Democrats	12%	24%	64%	--	--	(184)
	Independents & Others	8%	20%	72%	<1%	--	(188)
	Republicans	6%	11%	83%	--	--	(114)
Ages	18 to 29*	8%	20%	72%	--	--	(36)
	30 to 44	9%	13%	78%	--	--	(94)
	45 to 59	10%	22%	68%	--	--	(182)
	60 and over	8%	24%	66%	2%	--	(195)
Education	High school graduate or less	11%	17%	70%	1%	--	(183)
	Some college	6%	27%	67%	--	--	(138)
	College graduate or more	9%	14%	77%	--	--	(183)
Region	Milwaukee County	10%	15%	75%	--	--	(102)
	SE WI, w/o Mil. Co.	6%	17%	76%	--	--	(86)
	SC WI, Greater Madison	7%	18%	75%	--	--	(91)
	NE WI, Fox Valley	10%	12%	78%	--	--	(79)
	NC Wisconsin*	6%	24%	70%	--	--	(65)
	Western & NW Wisconsin	15%	31%	54%	--	--	(84)

(*Caution should be taken when interpreting the findings of subgroups with smaller numbers of respondents due to the potential for larger variation. Data are not weighted by region. Geographical regional subgroups presented here are subgroups of the larger statewide representative RDD sample.)

Satisfaction with Personal Employment Situation

		Dissatisfied	Mixed Feelings (vol.)	Satisfied	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
Overall		7%	2%	91%	<1%	<1%	(298)
Gender	Men	7%	--	92%	1%	1%	(137)
	Women	8%	3%	89%	--	--	(161)
Party ID	Democrats	8%	2%	90%	--	--	(97)
	Independents & Others	7%	2%	91%	--	<1%	(122)
	Republicans*	6%	--	92%	2%	--	(65)
Ages	18 to 29*	4%	--	96%	--	--	(28)
	30 to 44	6%	2%	91%	--	1%	(84)
	45 to 59	9%	2%	89%	<1%	--	(137)
	60 and over*	6%	2%	92%	--	--	(49)
Education	High school graduate or less	14%	3%	83%	--	<1%	(88)
	Some college	4%	1%	93%	1%	1%	(80)
	College graduate or more	5%	1%	94%	--	--	(128)
Region	Milwaukee County*	5%	2%	93%	--	--	(56)
	SE WI, w/o Mil. Co.*	6%	--	94%	--	--	(50)
	SC WI, Greater Madison*	5%	2%	91%	2%	--	(56)
	NE WI, Fox Valley*	7%	2%	91%	--	--	(45)
	NC Wisconsin*	13%	--	87%	--	--	(38)
	Western & NW Wisconsin*	8%	4%	86%	--	2%	(53)

(*Caution should be taken when interpreting the findings of subgroups with smaller numbers of respondents due to the potential for larger variation. Data are not weighted by region. Geographical regional subgroups presented here are subgroups of the larger statewide representative RDD sample.)

The table above shows only the results of responses from the 298 respondents who reported that they were currently employed for wages.

		Level of Concern About Losing Jobs or Losing Hours							
		Extremely	Quite	Somewhat	Only a Little	Not at All	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
Overall		4%	3%	9%	29%	55%	--	--	(298)
Gender	Men	4%	3%	7%	24%	62%	--	--	(137)
	Women	5%	3%	10%	36%	46%	--	--	(161)
Party ID	Democrats	3%	2%	10%	20%	65%	--	--	(97)
	Independents & Others	7%	5%	7%	24%	56%	--	--	(122)
	Republicans*	2%	3%	7%	46%	42%	--	--	(65)
Ages	18 to 29*	1%	--	1%	62%	36%	--	--	(28)
	30 to 44	5%	4%	14%	21%	56%	--	--	(84)
	45 to 59	5%	6%	11%	14%	64%	--	--	(137)
	60 and over*	7%	--	3%	14%	76%	--	--	(49)
Education	High school graduate or less	7%	5%	12%	31%	45%	--	--	(88)
	Some college	4%	3%	10%	40%	43%	--	--	(80)
	College graduate or more	3%	2%	4%	17%	74%	--	--	(128)
Region	Milwaukee County*	2%	--	2%	18%	78%	--	--	(56)
	SE WI, w/o Mil. Co.*	5%	3%	7%	13%	72%	--	--	(50)
	SC WI, Greater Madison*	5%	6%	11%	26%	52%	--	--	(56)
	NE WI, Fox Valley*	4%	6%	14%	18%	57%	--	--	(45)
	NC Wisconsin*	1%	--	4%	70%	25%	--	--	(38)
	Western & NW Wisconsin*	10%	5%	15%	16%	54%	--	--	(53)

(*Caution should be taken when interpreting the findings of subgroups with smaller numbers of respondents due to the potential for larger variation. Data are not weighted by region. Geographical regional subgroups presented here are subgroups of the larger statewide representative RDD sample.)

The table above shows only the results of responses from the 298 respondents who reported that they were currently employed for wages.

SURVEY QUESTION WORDING

- MIPWI What would you say, if anything, is the **most** important problem facing Wisconsin today?
[INTERVIEWER: RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE, READ BACK TO R AND VERIFY]
- ECON01 Thinking about the current economic conditions in the state of Wisconsin, would you say that economically, Wisconsin is in good times or bad times right now?
- ECON04 In the next 12 months or so, do you expect economic conditions in the state of Wisconsin to get better, get worse or stay about the same?
- ECON03A In the next 12 months or so, do you expect economic conditions in the United States to get better, get worse or stay about the same?
- ECON05 In the next 12 months or so, do you expect economic conditions in your town and the surrounding region to get better, get worse or stay about the same?
- ECONMIP What would you say, if anything, is the **biggest** economic challenge facing the people of Wisconsin today? (INTERVIEWER: RECORD RESPONSE VERBATIM, AFTER TYPING RESPONSE VERBATIM, READ BACK TO R AND VERIFY, CORRECT IF NECESSARY)
- JOBSAT01_A Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your current job, or are you not employed for wages at the moment? (INTERVIEWER: IF R HAS MULTIPLE JOBS, WE WANT TO KNOW HOW SATISFIED ACROSS ALL THEIR JOBS -- OR THEIR CURRENT EMPLOYMENT SITUATION.)
- JOBSAT01_B Would you say you are very [satisfied/dissatisfied] or are you only somewhat [satisfied/dissatisfied]? [#NOTE: only asked if 'JOBSAT01_A' was satisfied or dissatisfied]
- JOBSAT02 Now I want you think about your employment situation over the next 12 months. How concerned are you that you may loose your job or have your hours significantly reduced over the next 12 months? Would you say that you are not at all concerned, a little concerned, somewhat concerned, quite concerned, or extremely concerned about this?

HOW THE POLL WAS DONE

This BADGER POLL™ was conducted by the University of Wisconsin Survey Center as part of its ongoing program of research designed to benefit the research community and the people of Wisconsin. The Director of the poll operations is Chad J. Kniss, UW Survey Center. The Faculty Director of the Poll content is Professor Katherine Cramer Walsh, Department of Political Science, UW-Madison. The BADGER POLL™ is intended to be a "poll of record" for the state, investigating matters of concern to Wisconsinites including politics, culture, and their daily lives, adhering to the highest standards of polling methodology and rigorous independence.

Results shown here are based on 507 persons who were randomly chosen within households with working landline telephone numbers and interviewed between November 27 and December 5, 2007, inclusive. During this time period, the UWSC made over 14,500 phone calls to 2,950 telephone numbers. Calls were made between 9AM and 9PM Monday through Friday and between 10AM and 5PM on Saturday and from 12 noon to 9PM on Sunday. All telephone numbers were randomly generated by computer. The UWSC made up to 10 attempts on each number in order to confirm if it was a residential number, select an eligible respondent and/or to convert first time refusals. Approximately 57% of the 507 interviews were completed in the first four days of calling.

Theoretically, results from this survey have a "margin of error" of a little over +/- 4%. This means that, had we asked every resident in Wisconsin, exactly these questions at the time the survey was conducted, there is only a one in twenty chance that the answers would differ by more than that in either direction from what we report here. There could be differences because of changes in question wording, events occurring in the meantime, or any of the practical difficulties involved in taking a scientific survey. Results based on subgroups are subject to a larger "margin of error". Results reported here are based on weighted data (weighted to reflect statewide gender and age groups).