



UW Badger Poll™ #27, Release #3
University of Wisconsin Survey Center
University of Wisconsin Madison
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PERCEPTIONS ON ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN WISCONSIN

The findings from the most recent Badger Poll show that over 90% of Wisconsinites now think that the United States is in bad times economically and nearly 80% feel the same way about economic conditions in Wisconsin. A quick run down of the findings shows that:

- The economy and jobs are the most important problem facing the state, according to Wisconsinites. 43% of residents mentioned this issue as the most important problem, nearly double the proportion that said so in April of 2008.
- **42%** of state residents think that **the national economy will get worse** over the next 12 months, while 28% think it will get better. This is a slight improvement over the April 2008 Badger Poll findings.
- Most Badger State residents (56%) think that **the state's economy will stay about the same as it is now** over the next 12 months, while 19% think it will get better.
- **17%** of Wisconsinites said they are either extremely or quite worried about paying their bills, while 30% said they are not at all worried about being able to pay their bills.
- **24%** of all respondents who own their home said they are either extremely or quite worried about seeing the value of their home decline – up from 13% in April of 2008.
- **45%** of all respondents said that the price of gasoline was either extremely or quite problematic – down from 91% in April 2008.
- **60%** of state residents said that the amount of property taxes home owners pay are either extremely or quite problematic, essentially the same level as in April of 2008 (58%).

Additional results follow.

Economic Conditions and the Economic Outlook over the Next 12 Months

Top 5 Most Important Problems Facing the State of Wisconsin *

<i>Issue Areas (as coded from open-end question)</i>	Oct. 2008	April 2008
1 The economy and jobs	43%	23%
2 Taxes	15%	19%
3 Health Care	9%	11%
4 State Budget Issues	7%	6%
5 Education	4%	4%
	(N=538)	(N=521)

(* Ranked on the percent of respondents from the October 2008 Badger Poll)

Current Economic Conditions		
	Wisconsin	United States
Good Times	12%	1%
Bad Times	78%	97%
Both Good & Bad (vol.)	5%	1%
Neither (vol.)	3%	<1%
Don't Know	2%	1%
Refused	<1%	<1%
	(N = 538)	

Economic Outlook Over the Next 12 Months			
	United States	Wisconsin	Local
Get Better	28%	28%	19%
Stay about the same	29%	42%	56%
Get worse	42%	28%	24%
Don't Know	2%	2%	1%
Refused	--	<1%	<1%
	(N=538)		

Trend in Wisconsinites' National Economic Outlook for the Next 12 Months

	Get Better	About the Same	Get Worse	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
October '08	28%	29%	42%	2%	--	(538)
April '08	19%	25%	55%	1%	<1%	(521)
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)

Trend in Economic Outlook for Wisconsin over the Next 12 Months

	Get Better	About the Same	Get Worse	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
October '08	28%	42%	28%	2%	<1%	(538)
April '08	15%	44%	40%	2%	--	(521)
December '07	9%	57%	33%	--	--	(507)
June '07	16%	69%	15%	--	--	(502)
March '05	28%	44%	27%	1%	--	(501)
September '04	33%	47%	13%	5%	1%	(508)
Jan./Feb. '04	35%	48%	14%	3%	--	(502)
May '03	44%	40%	14%	2%	--	(503)
February '03	28%	47%	23%	2%	--	(504)
September '02	28%	49%	18%	5%	--	(539)
March '02	33%	41%	24%	2%	--	(597)

Wisconsinites' worries about paying bills, home values and their employment

How Worried are You About Being Able to Pay Your Bills?		
	Oct. 2008	Apr. 2008
Extremely	7%	7%
Quite	10%	10%
Somewhat	22%	25%
Slightly	30%	26%
Not at all	30%	32%
Don't Know	--	<1%
Refused	<1%	--
	(N = 538)	(N = 521)

How Worried are You About Seeing the Value of Your Home Decline? *		
	Oct. 2008	Apr. 2008
Extremely	11%	9%
Quite	13%	4%
Somewhat	21%	20%
Slightly	20%	17%
Not at all	35%	49%
Don't Know	--	1%
Refused	--	--
	(N = 400)	(N = 374)

(* Only asked to respondents who reported that they owned their own home, approximately 74% of all respondents. The margin of error for the October 2008 Badger Poll on this question is +/- 4.9%, for the April 2008 Badger Poll it is +/- 5.1%)

How Worried are You About Losing Your Job? **		
	Oct. 2008	Apr. 2008
Extremely	4%	4%
Quite	3%	1%
Somewhat	10%	9%
Slightly	15%	13%
Not at all	68%	72%
Don't Know	<1%	1%
Refused	<1%	--
	(N = 373)	(N = 327)

(** Only reporting respondents who said that they are currently employed for wages, approximately 69% of all respondents. The margin of error for the October 2008 Badger Poll on this question is +/- 5.1%, for the April 2008 Badger Poll it is +/- 5.4%)

How Problematic are Six Economic Concerns for Badger State Residents?

How Problematic is it that Wisconsin is Losing Jobs?		
	Oct. 2008	Apr. 2008
Extremely	30%	30%
Quite	40%	28%
Somewhat	20%	26%
Slightly	9%	13%
Not at all	1%	2%
Don't Know	<1%	1%
Refused	<1%	--
	(N = 538)	(N = 521)

How Problematic are the Costs of Health Care?		
	Oct. 2008	Apr. 2008
Extremely	40%	50%
Quite	36%	25%
Somewhat	14%	13%
Slightly	8%	7%
Not at all	1%	2%
Don't Know	<1%	2%
Refused	--	1%
	(N = 538)	(N = 521)

How Problematic is the Price of Gasoline?		
	Oct. 2008	Apr. 2008
Extremely	25%	72%
Quite	20%	19%
Somewhat	30%	5%
Slightly	19%	3%
Not at all	6%	<1%
Don't Know	<1%	<1%
Refused	--	--
	(N = 538)	(N = 521)

How Problematic are Home Heating and Energy Prices?		
	Oct. 2008	Apr. 2008
Extremely	36%	48%
Quite	23%	19%
Somewhat	25%	20%
Slightly	13%	11%
Not at all	2%	1%
Don't Know	1%	<1%
Refused	--	--
	(N = 538)	(N = 521)

How Problematic is the Price of Food?		
	Oct. 2008	Apr. 2008
Extremely	24%	23%
Quite	19%	20%
Somewhat	33%	34%
Slightly	20%	16%
Not at all	4%	5%
Don't Know	<1%	<1%
Refused	<1%	--
	(N = 538)	(N = 521)

How Problematic are the Amount of Property Taxes Home Owners Pay in Wisconsin?		
	Oct. 2008	Apr. 2008
Extremely	33%	33%
Quite	27%	25%
Somewhat	25%	25%
Slightly	10%	13%
Not at all	2%	2%
Don't Know	3%	2%
Refused	<1%	<1%
	(N = 538)	(N = 521)

APPENDIX:

		Current Economic Conditions in Wisconsin						(N)
		Good Times	Bad Times	Both Good & Bad (Vol.)	Neither (Vol.)	Don't Know	Refused	
Overall		12%	78%	5%	3%	2%	<1%	(538)
Gender	Men	14%	76%	5%	5%	<1%	--	(245)
	Women	10%	81%	5%	2%	2%	<1%	(293)
Party ID	Democrats	10%	80%	4%	4%	1%	1%	(185)
	Independents & Others	12%	79%	5%	3%	1%	--	(210)
	Republicans	13%	77%	4%	3%	3%	--	(133)
Ages	18 to 29*	15%	76%	5%	3%	--	--	(27)
	30 to 44	12%	80%	3%	2%	2%	1%	(110)
	45 to 59	12%	77%	4%	4%	3%	<1%	(198)
	60 and over	9%	80%	6%	4%	1%	--	(203)
Education	Never attended college	15%	75%	4%	4%	2%	--	(206)
	Some college	15%	78%	2%	3%	2%	--	(156)
	College graduate or more	6%	82%	7%	2%	1%	1%	(177)
Income	Under \$40,000	13%	77%	6%	4%	<1%	<1%	(181)
	\$40,000 to \$80,000	11%	80%	4%	4%	<1%	--	(176)
	Over \$80,000	12%	79%	4%	2%	2%	1%	(123)
Region	Milwaukee County	4%	94%	2%	<1%	--	<1%	(82)
	SE WI, w/o Mil. Co.	9%	75%	7%	6%	2%	--	(98)
	SC WI, Madison Area	16%	73%	7%	2%	--	2%	(74)
	NE WI, Fox Valley	16%	81%	2%	1%	--	--	(90)
	NC Wisconsin	18%	74%	1%	5%	2%	--	(81)
	Western & NW Wisconsin	10%	72%	9%	5%	4%	--	(113)

(*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.)

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?
ECON15	And now thinking about the current economic conditions across the United States, would you say that economically the U.S. 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?
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?
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?
ECON11	How worried are you about being able to pay your bills? Would you say, not at all worried, slightly worried, moderately worried, quite worried, or extremely worried?
ECON13A	Do you currently own your home or do you rent from someone else?
ECON13	[#Note: asked only to home owners.] How worried are you about seeing the value of your home drop? (INT: IF NECESSARY: "Would you say not at all worried, slightly worried, moderately worried, quite worried, or extremely worried?")
ECON14	How worried are you about losing your job or are you not currently employed for wages? (INT: IF NECESSARY: "Would you say not at all worried, slightly worried, moderately worried, quite worried, or extremely worried?")
ECON10_intro	Now, I am going to read you a list of some economic issues. For each issue please tell me how problematic it is for residents of Wisconsin.
ECON10A	How problematic is it that Wisconsin is losing jobs? Would you say it is not at all problematic, a little problematic, somewhat problematic, quite problematic, or extremely problematic?
ECON10C	How problematic are the costs of health care? (INT: IF NECESSARY "Is this not at all problematic, slightly problematic, moderately problematic, quite problematic, or extremely problematic?")
ECON10D	How problematic is the price of gasoline? (INT: IF NECESSARY "Is this not at all problematic, slightly problematic, moderately problematic, quite problematic, or extremely problematic?")
ECON10E	How problematic are home heating and energy prices? (INT: IF NECESSARY "Is this not at all problematic, slightly problematic, moderately problematic, quite problematic, or extremely problematic?")
ECON10F	How problematic is the price of food? (INT: IF NECESSARY "Is this not at all problematic, slightly problematic, moderately problematic, quite problematic, or extremely problematic?")

ECON10H How problematic are the amount of property taxes home owners pay in Wisconsin? (INT: IF NECESSARY "Is this not at all problematic, slightly problematic, moderately problematic, quite problematic, or extremely problematic?")

DEFINITION OF REGIONS

Region	Counties Included in Region
Milwaukee County:	only Milwaukee County
SE WI, without Milwaukee County:	Kenosha, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington, Waukesha
SC WI, Madison area:	Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Rock, Sauk
NE WI, Fox Valley & Green Bay:	Brown, Calumet, Door, Fond du Lac, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Outagamie, Sheboygan, Winnebago
North Central WI:	Adams, Florence, Forest, Green Lake, Iron, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Marinette, Marquette, Menominee, Oconto, Oneida, Portage, Shawano, Vilas, Waupaca, Waushara, Wood
Western & North Western WI:	Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Buffalo, Burnett, Chippewa, Clark, Crawford, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Grant, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Price, Richland, Rusk, Sawyer, St. Croix, Taylor, Trempealeau, Vernon, Washburn

Data sources: (1) question asked to respondents "In which county do you live?", (2) question asked to respondents "What is your zip code?", and (3) the county that the telephone number is assigned to by SSI (by plurality of listed telephone numbers known to be in a county).

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 538 persons who were randomly chosen within households with working landline telephone numbers and interviewed between October 21 and October 28, 2008, inclusive. During this time period, the UWSC made 10,688 phone calls to 2,002 telephone numbers. Additionally, advance letters describing the survey and its procedures was sent to 887 households whose randomly chosen telephone numbers were matched to a known listed address. The response rate for this survey was 38.1%, as defined by the American Association of Public Opinion Research Response Rate 3. 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 57.6% of the 538 interviews were completed in the first three 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).