

MEDIA RELEASE

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Kiwis feeling secure despite rising unemployment

Despite unemployment rising to its highest level in six years, most Kiwis remain confident in their job security and believe the Government is taking the right steps to manage the recession, Research New Zealand polling shows.

The poll found two thirds (68 percent) of respondents believe the state of the economy is having some impact on their current financial situation and standard of living, and one in six (18 percent) feel it is having a 'big impact'.

Research New Zealand Director Emanuel Kalafatelis said the results are similar to those recorded in February 2009 (71 percent), but significantly lower than in October 2008 (81 percent) and September 2008 (90 percent). This might be because people have adjusted their spending.

"And despite all the recession talk, almost one-half of Kiwis (44 percent) remain cautiously optimistic that their financial situation will improve in the next 12 months. This is a significant improvement on the result earlier this year, when we found 32 percent saying this.

"Furthermore, almost two thirds of us (63 percent) agree that the government is taking the right steps to manage the recession, with 15 percent strongly agreeing," Mr Kalafatelis said.

He said the poll also found that 79 percent of those in paid employment continue to believe their jobs are secure.

"It seems New Zealanders are an optimistic bunch because despite rising levels of unemployment, 79 percent of us believe our jobs are secure and that continues the trend we first saw building in November last year (73 percent)," Mr Kalafatelis said.

Research New Zealand polling was conducted between 24 and 30 April.

The Research New Zealand poll of 501 people aged 15 and over was conducted by telephone between the 24 and 30 April. The maximum margin of error is +/- 4.6 % (at the 95% confidence level). The data has been weighted to ensure it is an accurate representation of New Zealand's general population. The poll was not taken on behalf of any organisation but as part of Research New Zealand's monthly survey of attitudes and opinions.



Respondents were asked:

1. 'How much of an impact, if any, would you say the state of the economy is having on your financial situation and standard of living at present?'
2. 'Compared to your financial situation at about the same time last year, would you say your current financial situation is a lot worse, somewhat worse, somewhat better, a lot better?'
3. 'In the next 12 months, do you expect your financial situation to be a lot worse, somewhat worse, somewhat better, a lot better?'
4. 'How much do you agree or disagree that the Government is taking the right steps to manage the impact of the recession?'
5. 'Given the economic downturn and expected predictions of rising unemployment, do you feel confident that your job is secure?'

Table 1: Impact of economy on personal financial situation

How much of an impact, if any, would you say the state of the economy is having on your financial situation and standard of living at present?

	March 2008 Total Sample	September 2008 Total Sample	October 2008 Total Sample	February 2009 Total Sample	April 2009 Total Sample
Base =	550 %	529 %	500 %	502 %	501 %
A big impact	25	33	28	20	18
Somewhat of an impact	54	57	53	51	50
No impact at all	20	10	19	28	32
Don't know/Refused	1	0	0	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 2: Current financial situation in comparison to 12 months ago

Compared to your financial situation at about the same time last year, would you say your current financial situation is...?

	March 2008 Total Sample	September 2008 Total Sample	October 2008 Total Sample	February 2009 Total Sample	April 2009 Total Sample
Base =	550 %	529 %	500 %	502 %	501 %
A lot worse	8	9	11	10	10
Somewhat worse	37	46	45	39	37
Somewhat better	18	12	19	13	21
A lot better	6	4	6	5	7
No change	31	28	18	32	25
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0
Refused	0	0	1	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.



Table 3: Expectation of financial situation in 12 months time

In the next 12 months, do you expect your financial situation to be...?

	March 2008 Total Sample	September 2008 Total Sample	October 2008 Total Sample	February 2009 Total Sample	April 2009 Total Sample
Base =	550 %	529 %	500 %	502 %	501 %
A lot worse	5	3	4	4	4
Somewhat worse	29	17	28	28	24
Somewhat better	27	33	38	24	33
A lot better	9	7	10	8	11
No change	29	37	16	34	24
Don't know/ Refused	1	3	4	3	5
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 4: Government's management of the recession

How much do you agree or disagree that the Government is taking the right steps to manage the impact of the recession?

	February 2009 Total Sample	April 2009 Total Sample
Base =	502 %	501 %
Strongly agree	14	15
Agree	47	48
Neither agree or disagree	9	7
Disagree	11	8
Strongly disagree	4	6
Don't know	15	14
Total	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.



Table 5: Job security

Given the economic downturn and expected predictions of rising unemployment, do you feel confident that your job is secure?

	November 2008 Sub-sample	February 2009 Sub-sample	April 2009 Sub-sample
Base =	345* %	291* %	329* %
Yes, I do feel confident	73	76	79
No, I do not feel confident	24	21	19
Don't know	3	4	2
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

*Sub-sample based on respondents who are employed

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