



Financial and Employment Expectations of New Zealanders

At a time when the latest survey of business confidence shows a high level of optimism, it is interesting to note that many New Zealanders are not optimistic about their financial prospects or job security.

For some years now Research New Zealand has measured whether the financial situation of New Zealanders has improved in the last 12 months, whether it is expected to improve in the next 12 months, and whether those who are employed feel that their job is secure.

It is interesting to note that in April 2009 and 2010, 48 percent and 49 percent respectively reported that their current situation is worse than it had been twelve months earlier. In May 2011 the proportion was 45 percent.

Also in 2009 and 2010, the proportions that reported their financial situation had improved in the last 12 months was 26 percent and 27 percent respectively, but dropped to 14 percent in 2011.

“What seemed to be an improving trend in 2009 and 2010 has dropped sharply in 2011”, said Research New Zealand Director, Emanuel Kalafatellis.

Interestingly, those in the May 2011 social poll who particularly felt that their situation had become worse in the last 12 months, were the 35–54 age group (53 percent); those living in the South Island (51 percent) and those on incomes of \$40,000 or less (50 percent). Those that felt their financial situation had improved were the age group 18–34 (25 percent); Maori and Pacific People (20 percent); and those earning \$80,000 or more per year (21 percent).

A similar trend to the one noted above was present in the responses to the question about expectations in the next 12 months. In 2009 and 2010 the proportions who felt their financial situation would improve were 43 percent and 56 percent, a strong upward trend. However, in May 2011 that had dropped to 23 percent, reversing the trend.

Those in the May 2011 social poll, who particularly felt their financial circumstances would get better in the next 12 months, are those 18–34 years (38 percent) and Maori and Pacific People (30 percent). Those who felt their financial circumstances would get worse, were those 55 years and over at 41 percent and those on incomes under \$40,000 at 37 percent.

There has also been a change in confidence that one’s job is secure. In 2009 and 2010 79 percent and 76 percent respectively felt confident their jobs were secure, while in 2011



that had dropped to 65 percent, a significant fall. Those in the May 2011 poll who are particularly concerned about their job security are the 35–54 year age group at 30 percent, and those in the Lower/Central North Island at 29 percent. Those who particularly felt their jobs are secure are those in the 18–34 year age group at 73 percent, those who live in the Upper North Island or the South Island at 68 percent and 69 percent respectively.

“It seems clear”, said Research New Zealand Director Emanuel Kalafatelis, “that expectations about financial prospects are much lower now than they were 12 months ago, and that the expectations about job security of those working in or near the capital, have declined to a much larger extent than elsewhere”.

The Research New Zealand poll of 503 people aged 18 and over was conducted by telephone on 20–27 May 2011. The maximum margin of error for the sample as a whole is +/- 4.4 % (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 organization, but as part of Research New Zealand's monthly survey of attitudes and opinions.

Contact: Emanuel Kalafatelis
Director
Research New Zealand Limited
P O Box 10-617
Wellington 6143
Ph. 04-462-6401 (DDI); 027-500-4401 (M)



Current financial situation

Table 1:

Q10. Compared to your financial situation at about the same time last year, would you say your current financial situation is...?

	April 2009 Total Sample	April 2010 Total sample	May 2011 Total sample
Base =	476	474	503
	%	%	%
Worse	48	49	45
Better	26	27	14
No different	25	25	40
Don't know/refused	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 2:

Q13. The next few questions are about the state of the economy. Compared to your financial situation at about the same time last year, would you say your current financial situation is...

	Total	Male	Female
Base =	503	250	253
	%	%	%
Worse	45	43	47
Better	14	18	10
No different	40	39	42
Don't know/ refused	0	0	1
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 3:

Q13. The next few questions are about the state of the economy. Compared to your financial situation at about the same time last year, would you say your current financial situation is...

	Total	18-34 years	35 to 54 years	55 years and over
Base =	503	177	205	121
	%	%	%	%
Worse	45	38	53	44
Better	14	25	10	6
No different	40	37	37	49
Don't know/refused	0	0	0	2
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.



Table 4:

Q13. The next few questions are about the state of the economy. Compared to your financial situation at about the same time last year, would you say your current financial situation is...

	Total	NZ European/ Pakeha	Maori/ Pacific	Other
Base =	503 %	386 %	62 %	55 %
Worse	45	46	40	49
Better	14	12	20	17
No different	40	41	41	34
Don't know/refused	0	1	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 5:

Q13. The next few questions are about the state of the economy. Compared to your financial situation at about the same time last year, would you say your current financial situation is...

	Total	Upper North Island	Lower/Central North Island	South Island
Base =	503 %	216 %	122 %	165 %
Worse	45	41	44	51
Better	14	15	13	13
No different	40	43	41	36
Don't know/refused	0	1	1	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 6:

Q13. The next few questions are about the state of the economy. Compared to your financial situation at about the same time last year, would you say your current financial situation is...

	Total	Under \$40,000	At least \$40,000 but less than \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	Don't know/refused
Base =	503 %	188 %	148 %	138 %	29** %
Worse	45	50	47	37	38
Better	14	9	14	21	16
No different	40	40	39	41	42
Don't know/refused	0	1	0	0	4
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

**Caution: low base number of respondents - results are indicative only.



Expectations about the next 12 months

Table 7: Financial situation over next 12 months

Q11. And in the next 12 months, do you expect your financial situation will be...

	April 2009	April 2010	May 2011
	Total Sample	Total Sample	Total sample
Base =	473	474	503
	%	%	
Worse	28	19	31
Better	43	56	23
No different	24	22	45
Don't know/refused	5	3	1
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 8:

Q14. And in the next 12 months, do you expect your financial situation will be...

	Total	Male	Female
Base =	503	250	253
	%	%	%
Worse	31	29	33
Better	23	26	19
No different	45	45	46
Don't know/refused	1	1	2
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 9:

Q14. And in the next 12 months, do you expect your financial situation will be...

	Total	18-34 years	35 to 54 years	55 years and over
Base =	503	177	205	121
	%	%	%	%
Worse	31	25	29	41
Better	23	38	23	4
Or no different	45	36	48	52
Don't know/ refused	1	2	0	3
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.



Table 10:

Q14. And in the next 12 months, do you expect your financial situation will be...

	Total	NZ European/ Pakeha	Maori/ Pacific	Other
Base =	503	386	62	55
	%	%	%	%
Worse	31	31	36	24
Better	23	21	30	24
No different	45	47	32	48
Don't know/refused	1	1	2	4
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 11:

Q14. And in the next 12 months, do you expect your financial situation will be...

	Total	Upper North Island	Lower/Central North Island	South Island
Base =	503	216	122	165
	%	%	%	%
Worse	31	32	31	30
Better	23	25	22	20
No different	45	43	45	49
Don't know/refused	1	1	2	1
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 12:

Q14. And in the next 12 months, do you expect your financial situation will be...

	Total	Under \$40,000	At least \$40,000 but less than \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	Don't know/refused
Base =	503	188	148	138	29**
	%	%	%	%	%
Worse	31	37	27	26	30
Better	23	21	22	27	20
No different	45	41	50	47	42
Don't know/refused	1	1	1	0	8
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

**Caution: low base number of respondents - results are indicative only.



Expectation about job security

Table 13:

Q12. Given the current state of the economy, do you feel your job is secure?

	April 2009 Sub-sample Base =	April 2010 Sub-sample	May 2011 Sub-sample
	321*	316*	333
	%	%	%
Yes	79	76	65
No	19	23	24
Don't know	2	1	11
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

*Sub-sample based on respondents who are employed.

Table 14:

Q15. Given the current state of the economy, do you feel your job is secure?

	Total	Male	Female
Base =	333*	182	151
	%	%	%
Yes	65	68	62
No	24	24	24
Don't know	11	8	15
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

*Sub-sample based on respondents who are self employed or a salary or wage earner.

Table 15:

Q15. Given the current state of the economy, do you feel your job is secure?

	Total	18-34 years	35 to 54 years	55 years and over
Base =	333*	129	168	36
	%	%	%	%
Yes	65	73	62	52
No	24	23	30	6
Don't know	11	5	8	42
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

*Sub-sample based on respondents who are self employed or a salary or wage earner.



Table 16:

Q15. Given the current state of the economy, do you feel your job is secure?

	Total	NZ European/ Pakeha	Maori/ Pacific	Other
Base =	333*	259	39	35
	%	%	%	%
Yes	65	66	59	66
No	24	23	25	29
Don't know	11	11	15	6
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

*Sub-sample based on respondents who are self employed or a salary or wage earner.

Table 17:

Q15. Given the current state of the economy, do you feel your job is secure?

	Total	Upper North Island	Lower/Central North Island	South Island
Base =	333*	137	81	115
	%	%	%	%
Yes	65	68	54	69
No	24	21	29	23
Don't know	11	11	17	8
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

*Sub-sample based on respondents who are self employed or a salary or wage earner.

Table 18:

Q15. Given the current state of the economy, do you feel your job is secure?

	Total	Under \$40,000	At least \$40,000 but less than \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	Don't know/refused
Base =	333*	81	108	123	21**
	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	65	52	65	76	49
No	24	28	28	19	18
Don't know	11	20	7	5	33
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

*Sub-sample based on respondents who are self employed or a salary or wage earner.

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