

Press Release

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American optimism prevails

Latest AP-GfK Poll reveals: Americans look forward to a better 2012 for the country and themselves

Nuremberg, December 29, 2011 – Despite continuing high unemployment and a persistently challenging economy, a majority of Americans say they are optimistic about 2012 both in terms of the country as a whole (62%) as well as for themselves and their families (78%), the latest AP-GfK Poll reveals, a national survey conducted December 8-12.

Those most optimistic about the country in the coming year include the younger generation between 18-29 years of age (76%), and lower-income Americans (67%). Least optimistic are the middle aged (54%). Similarly, younger people are particularly likely to say they are optimistic about 2012's prospects for themselves and their family (86%), as well as the college educated (83%).

In contrast, their assessment of 2011 is less upbeat. Only three in ten Americans (29%) agree it has been a "good" year, and most (68%) think it was a bad year for the country. Most likely to say it has been a bad year are married Americans (73%) and those reporting household incomes of at least \$50,000.

In many ways, Americans remain unhappy about the condition of the country. Most think the economy is in poor shape (80%), most think the economy has not improved over the past month (64%), and few (24%) think unemployment will decrease over the next year.

"True to form, Americans remain optimistic about their future," said Debra A. Pruent, Chief Operating Officer of the GfK Group with responsibility for the Custom Research sector, which conducted the poll in partnership with the Associated Press. "It has been a tough year for not only Europe, but for America as well, with unemployment hovering near 10% for much of the year, a very high number historically. But Americans, realistic about the woes of 2011, have not lost their resilient optimism about the future, despite no solid indications 2012 will bring a brightening economy."

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The survey

The Associated Press-GfK Poll was conducted December 8 - 12, 2011, by GfK Roper Public Affairs & Corporate Communications – a division of GfK Custom Research North America. This telephone poll is based on a nationally-representative probability sample of 1,000 general population adults age 18 or older. Interviews were conducted with 700 respondents on landlines and 300 respondents on cellular telephones. Both the landline and cell phone samples were provided by Survey Sampling International.

The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 4.0 percentage points at the 95% confidence level, for results based on the entire sample of adults. The margin of sampling error is higher and varies for results based on sub-samples. For further information visit www.ap-gfkpoll.com

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