

## **Personal Optimism Prevails for 2012; Nationally and Globally, Less So**

Economic challenges aren't holding back personal optimism: Despite the still-deep downturn, Americans overwhelmingly express positive views about what 2012 holds for them personally. But views of the country's future are less bright – and the world's prospects, even less so.

Three-quarters of adults in the latest ABC News/Washington Post poll hold a favorable view of what the new year has in store for them. Many fewer, albeit more than half, 55 percent, have an optimistic view of the country's year ahead. And for the world in general, it's just 49 percent.

In terms of personal outlooks, money's a big factor, but it isn't everything. Better-off Americans hold the most favorable views of their own prospects in 2012 – 86 percent positive. But it's a respectable 72 percent among people with household incomes less than \$50,000 a year, and even 61 percent among the least well-off, those with household incomes less than \$15,000 a year.

Similarly, while a positive personal outlook peaks at 83 percent among people who hold full-time jobs, it also includes 72 percent of those temporarily out of work and 66 percent of people in part-time jobs. If optimism in those groups turns out to anticipate a recovering job market, it'd be a critical change in the nation's most persistent problem.

Personal optimism to some extent also is informed by youth; it peaks at 83 percent of Americans under age 40, compared with 70 percent of those 40 or older.

THE U.S. AND THE WORLD – Political differences are minimal on personal prospects, but sharpen considerably when it comes to assessments of the country and the world beyond in 2012. With a Democratic president at the helm, two-thirds of Democrats view the country's future in 2012 favorably. Only about half of Republicans and independents agree.

Essentially the same pattern holds for global outlooks: They're much more apt to be positive among Democrats, at 60 percent, vs. Republicans (41 percent) or independents (47 percent).

Conservative Republicans are the least positive political group on the national and global measures. A mere 38 percent hold favorable views of the country's outlook, and just 33 percent express positive expectations for the world more broadly.

	Favorable views of what 2012 holds		
	For you	For the country	For the world
All	75%	55	49
Democrats	78	67	60
Republicans	75	48	41
Independents	76	51	47

Liberal Dems	81	67	55
Conservative Reps	72	38	33

It's a positive sign in these results that, regardless of the challenges ahead, so many Americans are optimistic about their personal prospects – far more than are negative about what 2012 holds for the country and the world more broadly. And while a fairly tepid 37 percent are “strongly” optimistic about their personal outlook, this, too, considerably outstrips the numbers who hold strongly negative views about what’s to come for the country and the world in the year ahead.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cell phone Dec. 20-26, 2011, excluding Dec. 24 and 25, among a random national sample of 1,016 adults. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points. The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by SSRS/Social Science Research Solutions of Media, Pa.

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ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

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Full results follow.

1. Overall, do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of (NAME)? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

a. The year 2012 for you personally

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
12/26/11	75	37	38	22	13	9	2

b. The year 2012 for the United States

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
12/26/11	55	17	38	43	24	19	2

c. The year 2012 for the world in general

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
12/26/11	49	14	35	48	25	23	3

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