

HOPE INSIDER

An initiative of  OPERATION
HOPE

Bringing you our research, analysis, and
insights into the world of financial inclusion

Second-Quarter Survey Results: Confidence in the Economy Remains Low

In the second-quarter results of *The HOPE Insider*, Operation HOPE's nationwide survey, over 2,000 clients shared their sentiments on current and future economic conditions, as well as their personal financial situations. Key findings are consistent with the first quarter of 2025: anxiety about personal finances remains high and confidence in the stability of the U.S. economy remains low. Despite this uncertainty, clients remain as hopeful as they were last quarter in their ability to improve their financial wellbeing over the course of the next year.

Here are five key findings:

1. Most are not confident in the U.S. economy

Nearly three-fourths of respondents (72%) said they are not confident that the U.S. economy will remain stable in 2025. This uncertainty led almost half to report they are unsure how the rest of the year will play out, based on current economic conditions (49%). Over a third think there will be an economic downturn (36%).

2. Income is not keeping up with the rising cost of living

Four out of five clients who are working say their income is not keeping up with the rising cost of living (83%). This correlates with the large number of respondents (77%) who consider themselves or their families to be living paycheck to paycheck, meaning they are unable to save money or plan for the future.

The high cost of living has translated into difficulty affording basic necessities. Clients say the following have become more difficult to afford in the past three months:

- 59% say "food and groceries"
- 55% say "housing (rent/mortgage)"
- 45% say "transportation (car, gas payments, public transit, etc.)"
- 30% say "medical care (including prescriptions and doctor visits)"

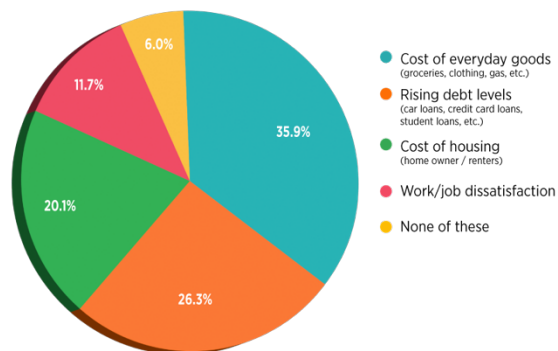
3. Anxiety over finances is affecting spending

Four out of five respondents have felt anxious about their personal finances in the past three months (84%) and nearly half say their personal debt levels have increased (49%), with credit card debt being the most burdensome. In fact, over a third say they are worse off financially than they were a year ago (37%). This economic landscape has led almost half to say that now is a bad time to buy major household items (44%).

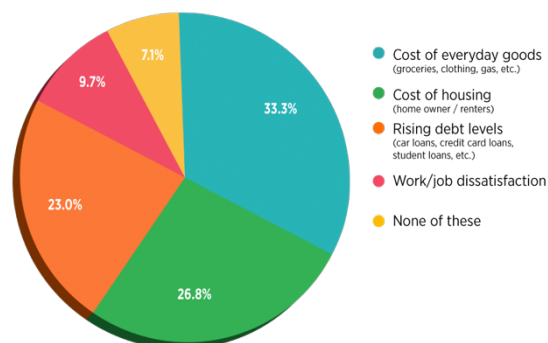
4. Costs of everyday goods are top of mind

Whether looking back at the last three months or looking toward the next three, the cost of everyday goods is the largest factor of impact and worry, at 36% and 33% respectively. Although “rising debt levels” was the second-largest impact in the last three months, “cost of housing” takes the second spot when looking toward the future.

Factor that most impacted life in last 3 months



Factor most worried about in next 3 months



In fact, 86% of respondents say they are concerned about the cost of housing in their community. Over a third considered purchasing a home in the past year but found it unaffordable (35%). Hope over housing prices in the next year is almost split, with 44% saying they are somewhat or very hopeful and 56% saying they are not too hopeful or not hopeful at all.

5. Controllable factors lead to hopefulness

As reported last quarter, our clients remain most hopeful for the situations they can control: 80% say they are hopeful their financial wellbeing will increase over the next year and 82% are hopeful their work/career will improve. This speaks to a sense of empowerment during uncertain times.

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My household has taken steps to cut back on spending on certain areas, so we do not feel the pinch that is increasing as it relates to our monthly income. It was important for us to adjust our mentality so we could overcome the stress.

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[I'm most hopeful about] my ability to control my income, especially at a time when the economy is unstable. The key is understanding that and positioning oneself and one's business (if possible) to take advantage of the volatility.

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My goal is to be in a better financial position than today, not just surviving but thriving. That means taking intentional steps: refining my budget, identifying streams of passive and active income, investing in personal growth, and making wise financial decisions.

Despite macroeconomic headwinds, HOPE clients remain determined and empowered to shift their financial future. Through coaching, education, and support, Operation HOPE continues to stand as a trusted guide for millions navigating financial uncertainty.