



Financial Times/Harris Poll Monthly Opinions of Adults from Five European Countries and the United States

April 2008 - Below are the most recent data from the Financial Times/Harris Poll, a monthly poll of adults from six countries in Europe and the United States. The countries include France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Spain and the United States.

For more information about the polls and to view the articles by the Financial Times that are based on these data, visit www.ft.com. For inquiries, contact Tracey Mc Nerney at 585-214-7756 or tmcnerney@harrisinteractive.com.

Source

This FT/Harris Poll was conducted online by Harris Interactive among a total of 6,434 adults (aged 16-64) within France (1,114), Germany (1,028), Great Britain (1,122), Spain (1,012) and the United States (1,053) and adults (aged 18-64) in Italy (1,105) between 27 March and 8 April 2008.

Complete survey methodology

This **FT/Harris Poll** was conducted online by Harris Interactive among a total of 6,434 adults (aged 16-64) within France, Germany, Great Britain, Spain, and the United States and adults (aged 18-64) in Italy between 27 March and 8 April 2008. Figures for age, sex, education, region and Internet usage were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

Unweighted bases for the survey are: Total (6,434); France (1,114); Germany (1,028); Great Britain (1,122); Italy (1,105); Spain (1,012) and the United States (1,053).

Weighted bases for the survey are: Total (6,434); France (1,114); Germany (1,028); Great Britain (1,122); Italy (1,105); Spain (1,012) and the United States (1,053).

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult populations within those countries that were surveyed. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls and the British Polling Council.

**TABLE 1
CREDIT CRISIS IMPACT**

“How much of an impact, if any, has the recent credit crisis in the world’s financial markets had on your daily life?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1122	1114	1105	1012	1028	1053
Major impact	6	13	22	16	5	13
Moderate impact	17	24	29	24	14	26
Slight impact	33	28	25	28	34	35
No impact	44	35	24	32	47	26

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Looking at the financial markets and the credit crisis, Italy seems to be the hardest hit followed by Spain and the United States according to respondents. While over one-third of French adults say the crisis has had a major or moderate impact on their daily life, over one-third also say it has had no impact. Germany and Great Britain appear to be the best off financially as pluralities in both countries say the crisis has had no impact on their daily lives.

**TABLE 2
FINANCIAL POSITION OVER NEXT YEAR**

“Do you expect your own financial position to improve, worsen, or remain the same over the next year?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1122	1114	1105	1012	1028	1053
Improve	20	14	16	19	23	31
Remain the same	34	25	32	43	41	38
Worsen	36	49	37	27	27	20
Not sure	10	12	15	10	9	11

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Looking ahead, almost half of French adults as well as over one-third of Italians and British adults say they expect their own financial position to worsen over the next year. Pluralities of Spaniards and Germans as well as over one-third of Americans believe their financial position will remain the same over the next year. Americans seem to be most optimistic as three in ten also believe their financial position will improve over the next year.

**TABLE 3
BIGGEST PROBLEM FACING ECONOMY**

“Which of the following do you consider to be the biggest problem facing the [UK, French, German, Spanish, Italian, US] economy today?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1122	1114	1105	1012	1028	1053
Rising prices for food and energy	40	42	23	43	37	46
Excessive taxes	25	4	25	1	22	8
Rising housing costs	12	6	4	11	1	4
Unemployment	4	7	9	10	12	9
The value of the [euro, pound, US dollar] versus other currencies	4	6	4	3	4	19
Lack of consumer purchasing power	2	28	32	26	17	3
Another problem	6	4	3	2	4	8
Not at all sure	8	2	1	4	3	3

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Pluralities in the United States, Spain, France and Great Britain as well as over one-third of German adults all say the biggest problem facing their country’s economy today is rising prices for food and energy. While almost one-quarter of Italians believe this as well, two other problems are larger for their country’s economy. Almost one-third of Italians say the biggest problem is the lack of consumer purchasing power while one-quarter say it is excessive taxes.

**TABLE 4
GOVERNMENT’S HANDLING OF ECONOMY**

“How confident are you in your government’s ability to deal with the recent economic difficulties?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1122	1114	1105	1012	1028	1053
Very confident	2	3	3	5	*	1
Rather confident	3	10	13	20	7	6
Somewhat confident	27	37	41	40	41	42
Not confident at all	68	50	43	36	52	51

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Note: * indicates less than 0.5%

Over two-thirds of British adults as well as majorities in Germany, the U.S. and France all have no confidence at all in their government’s ability to deal with the recent economic difficulties. Italians are a bit more evenly divided, albeit on the lower end of the scale, as just over two in five have no confidence while slightly less than that are somewhat confident. A plurality of Spaniards are somewhat confident in their government’s abilities while over one-third are not confident at all.

TABLE 5
SHOULD GOVERNMENT SAVE BANKS?

“Thinking of the government and the Central Bank, who do you think should intervene to help banks that have been hit by the financial crisis?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1122	1114	1105	1012	1028	1053
Both the Central Bank and government should intervene	33	26	43	57	24	33
The Central Bank should intervene, but not the government	22	23	19	11	23	12
Neither the Central Bank nor the government should intervene	15	19	17	10	27	18
The government should intervene, but not the Central Bank	6	3	6	4	5	4
Not at all sure	25	29	15	17	21	33

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

When it comes to intervention and helping banks hit by the financial crisis a majority of Spaniards believes both the Central Bank and the government should intervene as do a plurality of Italians and one-third of Americans and British adults. While just over one-quarter of French adults also believe both should intervene, just under one-quarter believe just the Central Bank should intervene, but not the government. Over one-quarter of Germans, however, believe neither the Central Bank nor the government should intervene to help the struggling banks.

TABLE 6
CONFIDENCE IN ABILITY TO SET APPROPRIATE INTEREST RATES

“How confident are you that the [European Central Bank, Bank of England, Federal Reserve] can set interest rates at an appropriate rate to manage the current credit crisis?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1122	1114	1105	1012	1028	1053
Very confident	3	5	2	2	2	3
Rather confident	10	26	22	15	11	10
Somewhat confident	49	48	53	55	59	55
Not confident at all	39	21	23	27	27	31

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Majorities in Germany, Spain, the US and Italy as well as just under half of adults in France and Great Britain are all just somewhat confident that the European Central Bank, the Bank of England or the Federal Reserve can set interest rates appropriately to handle this credit crisis. British adults are most pessimistic as almost two in five say they have no confidence at all in the Bank of England to set these rates appropriately.

TABLE 7
EU VS. MEMBERS IN HANDLING FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

“In your opinion, does the European Union need a common policy to deal with failing international financial institutions or should this be left to individual member states?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1122	1114	1105	1012	1028
The European Union needs a common policy	21	51	68	64	49
Should be left to individual member states	50	29	20	22	32
Not at all sure	29	21	12	14	18

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

There is definitely a divide between Great Britain and the other four European countries as to whether the EU should have a common policy in dealing with failing financial institutions or if it should be left to the individual members. Half of adults in Great Britain think it should be left to the individual states while majorities in Italy, Spain, France and just under half of Germans all think there should be a common policy.

TABLE 8
INSIDE OR OUTSIDE THE EUROZONE

“In your opinion, would your country’s economy perform better...?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1122	1114	1105	1012	1028
Inside the Eurozone	25	45	48	55	41
Outside the Eurozone	46	26	28	23	27
No opinion	30	29	23	22	32

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

The issue of countries performing better inside or outside the Eurozone is also one of division. Just under half of adults in Great Britain say their country’s economy would perform better outside the Eurozone while a majority in Spain and pluralities in Italy, France and Germany say inside the Eurozone.

TABLE 9
EU MEMBERSHIP HELPING OR HURTING COUNTRY'S ECONOMY

“Again, in your opinion, is membership in the European Union helping or harming your country’s economy?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1122	1114	1105	1012	1028
Helping your country’s economy	21	52	55	54	43
Harming your country’s economy	44	29	29	23	31
Not sure	35	19	16	22	27

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Majorities in France, Italy and Spain all believe membership in the European Union is helping their country’s economy as does a plurality of adults in Germany. A plurality of adults in Great Britain, however, believe membership in the EU is harming their country’s economy.

TABLE 10
GREATEST THREATS TO GLOBAL STABILITY

“Which one, if any, of the following countries do you think is the greatest threat to global stability?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and in the U.S.

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1122	1114	1105	1012	1028	1053
US	26	30	21	41	29	15
China	27	36	47	28	35	31
Iran	10	11	13	10	6	16
Iraq	10	9	6	9	8	13
Russia	7	2	3	1	7	3
North Korea	6	3	3	2	3	12
Other	*	1	1	1	1	1
None	14	8	6	8	10	9
Not sure/Not stated/Refused	*	*	*	*	*	*

Note: * indicates less than 0.5%

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