



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

**January 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](http://www.ft.com). For inquiries, contact Tracey Mc Nerney at 585-214-7756 or [tmcnerney@harrisinteractive.com](mailto:tmcnerney@harrisinteractive.com).

### **Source**

This FT/Harris Poll was conducted online by Harris Interactive among a total of 6,676 adults (aged 16-64) within France (1,128), Germany (1,135), Great Britain (1,137), Spain (1,114) and the United States (1,015) and adults (aged 18-64) in Italy (1,147) between 10 and 21 January 2008.

### **Complete survey methodology**

This **FT/Harris Poll** was conducted online by Harris Interactive among a total of 6,676 adults (aged 16-64) within France, Germany, Great Britain, Spain, and the United States and adults (aged 18-64) in Italy between 10 and 21 January 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 (6,676); France (1,128); Germany (1,135); Great Britain (1,137); Italy (1,147); Spain (1,114) and the United States (1,015).

Weighted bases for the survey are: Total (6,675); France (1,128); Germany (1,135); Great Britain (1,137); Italy (1,147); Spain (1,114) and the United States (1,015).

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  
NATION'S ECONOMY IN 2008**

"Do you think the economy in [the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the U.S.] will be better or worse in 2008 than in 2007?"

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

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1137	1128	1147	1114	1135	1015
Better	4	8	15	12	20	13
Neither better nor worse	34	37	29	34	47	33
Worse	61	55	57	54	33	54

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

**Majorities in Great Britain, France, Italy, Spain and the US all believe their country's economy will be worse this year in comparison to last year. Germany is the only country where this is slightly different as one in five think the German economy will be better while just under half say it will be neither better nor worse and only one-third say worse.**

**TABLE 2  
PERSONAL FINANCES IN 2008**

"Do you think that your personal finances will improve or worsen in 2008?"

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1137	1128	1147	1114	1135	1015
Improve	23	19	21	25	27	35
Neither improve nor worsen	43	39	44	38	38	41
Worsen	34	42	35	38	36	24

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

**Pluralities in Great Britain, Italy, and the US believe their personal finances will neither improve nor worsen in 2008 while a plurality of French adults believes their personal finances will worsen. In Spain, adults are equally divided between believing it will worsen and it will neither improve or worsen, and they are almost as divided in Germany, with neither improve nor worsen edging slightly higher than worsen. In the European countries, one in five, however, believe their personal finances will improve while this is just over one-third in the US.**

**TABLE 3  
PRICE CHANGES IN PAST FEW MONTHS**

“In the past few months, would you say that prices for food, energy and housing have increased or decreased?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1137	1128	1147	1114	1135	1015
Increased	87	95	94	97	95	88
Neither increased nor decreased	11	4	5	2	4	10
Decreased	2	1	1	2	1	2

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

**Across the board in all six countries adults believe that prices for food, energy and housing have increased over the past few months. Only in the US and UK are these under 90%, and then, just barely.**

**TABLE 4  
IMPACT OF PRICES ON BUDGETS**

“Have the recent price rises for food, energy and housing had any negative impact on your household budget?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults who say prices have increased

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1000	1077	1064	1071	1083	899
No negative impact on my budget	15	5	4	7	10	15
Some negative impact on my budget	64	45	53	52	52	62
Much negative impact on my budget	21	50	43	41	38	23

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

**Half of French adults who say prices have increased say those increases have had much negative impact on their household budget, while majorities in the other 5 countries say there has been some negative impact on their household budget. Just 15% or less in all six countries say there has been no negative impact on their budgets.**

**TABLE 5**  
**DIRECTION OF PRICES**

“How much do you think that prices for most of the things you buy will change over the next year?”  
Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1137	1128	1147	1114	1135	1015
INCREASE (NET)	87	93	88	89	92	88
Increase a lot	27	52	33	38	29	26
Increase a little	60	41	55	50	63	62
Remain the same	11	6	8	8	7	9
DECREASE (NET)	2	2	4	3	1	3
Decrease a little	2	1	3	3	*	2
Decrease a lot	1	1	*	1	*	1

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

**Across the board, adults in all six countries believe that prices will increase for the things that they buy over the next year. Half of adults in France believe prices will increase a lot, while half of adults or more in the other five countries believe prices will increase a little. A small minority believes prices will decrease.**

**TABLE 6**  
**CENTRAL BANK AND INTEREST RATES**

“To improve the economic conditions of [the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the U.S], do you think that the central bank should raise or lower the interest rates that affect borrowing costs for houses, cars and credit cards?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1137	1128	1147	1114	1135	1015
Raise	10	6	5	5	8	5
Keep the same	37	27	15	20	47	27
Lower	53	68	80	75	46	68

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

**Two-thirds or more of adults in France, the US, Spain and Italy believe that the central bank should lower interest rates as do half of adults in Great Britain. German adults are a bit more divided as just under half say the central bank should keep rates the same while almost the same number of Germans believe the rates should be lowered.**

**TABLE 7  
ECONOMIC CHALLENGES FACING GOVERNMENTS**

“How big are the economic challenges facing the national governments of [the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the U.S.]?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1137	1128	1147	1114	1135	1015
Extremely big	16	40	34	19	22	33
Very big	36	39	38	35	51	40
Somewhat big	45	19	26	38	24	25
Not very big	4	2	3	8	3	2

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

**Over two thirds of adults in France, Italy, Germany and the US believe the economic challenges facing their national governments are extremely or very big. Just over half of adults in Spain and Great Britain believe the same. A plurality of adults in Great Britain, however, believe the economic challenges are only somewhat big.**

**TABLE 8  
SOLVING THE ECONOMIC CHALLENGES**

“How well do you think that the national governments of [the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the U.S.] will solve the economic challenges facing the country in 2008?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1137	1128	1147	1114	1135	1015
Extremely well	1	1	2	3	1	2
Very well	4	5	5	12	6	5
Somewhat well	37	32	25	40	46	35
Not very well	58	63	68	44	46	59

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

**Over two-thirds of adults in Italy believe their national government will not solve the economic challenges very well. Majorities of adults in France, Great Britain, and the US, also believe their governments will not solve their economic challenges very well in 2008. A plurality of adults in Spain believe this. Germans are split equally with just under half saying their government will solve the problems somewhat well and the same number saying their government will not solve the economic challenges very well.**

**TABLE 9  
JOB RATING FOR CENTRAL BANKS**

“How would you rate the [Bank of England; European Central Bank; Federal Bank] in handling the credit problems in the financial markets?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1137	1128	1147	1114	1135	1015
Excellent	1	1	2	*	2	2
Good	14	8	9	4	20	10
Fair	53	54	45	46	59	52
Bad	26	25	37	40	14	24
Terrible	7	12	8	10	6	12

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

**A majority of adults in Great Britain give the Bank of England fair marks in handling the credit problems in the financial markets whole one-quarter give them a bad mark. The numbers are similar in the US for rating the Federal Bank, over half say fair and one-quarter say bad. Looking at the job the European Central Bank is doing, a majority of adults in France and Germany say they are doing a fair job as do pluralities of adults in Italy and Spain. Four in ten adults in Spain and over one-third of adults in Italy say the Central Bank is doing a bad job.**

**TABLE 10  
HOME OWNERSHIP**

“For your primary residence do you...?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1137	1128	1147	1114	1135	1015
OWN (NET)	56	48	59	66	34	58
Own, with a mortgage	40	27	22	42	22	43
Own, with no mortgage	16	21	37	24	13	15
Rent/lease	24	34	15	15	54	26
Live with friends/family and pay little or no rent	12	7	19	14	9	14
Housing association	6	8	1	*	1	*
Other	2	3	6	6	2	2

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

**Spain has the highest incidence of home ownership, followed by Italy, the US and Great Britain. Just under half of adults in France own a home and just one-third of German adults own their home with over half of Germans renting or leasing.**

**TABLE 11  
CHANGE IN VALUE OF PRIMARY RESIDENCE**

“Overall, do you expect the value of your primary residence to increase or decrease in 2008?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults who own their residence

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	650	547	683	755	385	620
Increase	28	40	38	33	21	27
Stay the same	48	51	55	51	53	50
Decrease	24	10	7	16	26	23

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

**Among those who do own their own homes, a majority of adults in France, Italy, Spain, Germany and the US expect those values to stay about the same as do just under half of home owners in Great Britain.**

**TABLE 12  
INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY'S ECONOMY VERSUS GLOBAL ECONOMY**

“Do you think the [UK, French, German, Italian, Spanish, U.S.] government's economic policy should be mostly concerned with maintaining growth and economic stability within [the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the U.S.] or should they also coordinate with other governments to maintain the global system?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1137	1128	1147	1114	1135	1015
Should be mostly concerned with the economy of [the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the U.S.]	72	74	71	77	55	68
Should be equally concerned with the global economy	28	26	29	23	45	32

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

**Over two-thirds of adults in Great Britain, France, Italy, Spain and the US believe that their country's government should be mostly concerned with the economy of their country rather than coordinate with other governments to maintain the global economy. Germany, again, is a little different as they are more evenly split with just over half saying the German government should be mostly concerned with the German economy and just under half believing they should be equally concerned with the global economy.**

**TABLE 13**  
**GREATEST THREATS TO GLOBAL STABILTY**

“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	1137	1128	1147	1114	1135	1015
US	31	29	27	47	27	13
China	23	31	31	18	29	29
Iran	15	20	21	11	11	20
Iraq	10	6	8	9	9	12
Russia	5	4	3	1	9	3
North Korea	4	2	2	3	2	12
Other	2	1	2	1	2	3
None	10	6	6	8	11	8

**About Harris Interactive**

Harris Interactive is the 13th largest and one of the fastest-growing market research firms in the world. The company provides innovative research, insights and strategic advice to help its clients make more confident decisions which lead to measurable and enduring improvements in performance. Harris Interactive is widely known for The Harris Poll, one of the longest running, independent opinion polls and for pioneering online market research methods. The company has built what it believes to be the world's largest panel of survey respondents, the Harris Poll Online. Harris Interactive serves clients worldwide through its North American, European and Asian offices, and through a global network of independent market research firms. More information about Harris Interactive may be obtained at [www.harrisinteractive.com](http://www.harrisinteractive.com).

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