



Select An Osprey Newspaper



STANDARD FREEHOLDER

[HOME](#) > [CORNWALL STANDARD FREEHOLDER](#)

Tuesday, November 15, 2005

ONTARIANS OPTIMISTIC ON ECONOMY: POLL

[LETTERS TO
SANTA](#)

- [LETTERS TO
SANTA](#)

[Features](#)

- [Automotive](#)
- [Home](#)
- [Osprey Health
Series](#)
- [Osprey Writers
Group](#)
- [Queen's Park
Column](#)
- [Travel](#)

[Inside Today](#)

- [Front Page](#)
- [Local News](#)
- [Local Sports](#)

[Links](#)

- [Helpful Pages](#)
- [Online Classifieds](#)
- [In Memoriams &
Cards of Thanks](#)

[About the](#)
[Standard
Freeholder](#)

- [LETTERS TO
THE EDITOR](#)
- [Editorial](#)
- [Distribution](#)
- [Advertising](#)
- [Production](#)
- [Publisher](#)

[Children's](#)
[Treatment Centre](#)

By James Wallace
Osprey News Network

High gasoline, electricity and home heating bills haven't shaken the confidence of Ontario voters in the economy, shows an SES Research/Osprey Media polls.

More than half of Ontarians – 52 per cent – describe the state of the provincial economy either as good or very good and just 17 per cent responded "poor" or "very poor" when asked for their outlook.

"They think things are going O.K., not great not bad but it's positive," said Nik Nanos, president of SES Research.

Ontario Finance Minister Dwight Duncan released his government's fall economic outlook and fiscal review last week.

In it, the government predicts modest economic growth for the current year.

"The current consensus of private-sector forecasts for Ontario's real growth in 2005 has increased from 2.3 per cent at the time of the 2005 budget to 2.5 per cent," Duncan said in the statement.

"We anticipate continued solid growth in 2006 and 2007," he said. "Overall, the Ontario economy is doing well."

The provincial Liberal government's deficit may dip to \$1.4 billion this year and Duncan said Ontario's books won't be balanced at least until the 2007/2008 fiscal year.

"Ontarians are cautiously optimistic and the McGuinty Liberals have been using the same strategy," Nanos said.

"Their messaging has been fairly tight recently on the economy," he said. "The deficit isn't going to be as bad as expected and their message is everything's under control, we're moving in the right direction."

While the mood of most Ontarians is upbeat in terms of the economy, almost a third – 30 per cent – are sitting on the fence and can't say whether things are good or bad.

Special Report

Nov. 14 '05 - Ontarians Optimistic on Economy: Poll
Nov. 7 '05 - Planned Diploma a Hit
Oct. 31 '05 - Smoking Ban a Slam Dunk: Osprey Poll
Oct. 24 '05 - Voters unswayed by Sorbara resignation
Oct. 17 '05 - Private Money for Hospitals: poll
Oct. 11 '05 - Ontarians Satisfied with their Roads: poll
Oct. 3 '05 - Ontarians Don't Trust Liberals
Oct. 1 '05 - Dalton is a Liar, Survey Insists
Sept. 26 '05 - Nukes not out of the Question for Ontarians

- [About the Children's Treatment Centre](#)
- [Bike-A-Thon Plus](#)

= Links

- [Community](#)

= Osprey Personals

- [Osprey Personals](#)

= Feedback

- [Read Feedback](#)
- [Post Feedback](#)
- [Contact](#)

= Osprey News
Archive Service

- [Pinfomart Archive Service](#)

"There's still a pretty good chunk of people who won't give it a thumbs up or a thumbs down," Nanos said.

Men, at 57 per cent, were also more optimistic about fiscal conditions when compared to women (47 per cent had positive views) and just 15 per cent of men viewed the economy as poor or very poor compared to 20 per cent of women.

A recent long-term review of Ontario's fiscal prospects predicts years of spending restraint and slowing growth, driven by increasing health care costs and the movement of Baby Boomers from the job market into retirement.

This year for the first time, the provincial government will spend more than \$80 billion on programs and services.

Ontario's net debt will reach a record \$146 billion – an \$11,634 credit card balance for every man woman and child living in the province.

When the government unveiled its spring budget this year, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, condemned the government for doing too little to help small businesses, which create most jobs in the province.

"The budget assumes rosy economic projections, especially in the long term," Judith Andrew, CFIB's Vice President for Ontario, said in a release.

"We also note that small business' own current outlook has leveled-off in Ontario."

The SES Research/Osprey Media poll found one group of Ontarians shared a similarly cautious outlook on provincial finances, those aged 60 and older.

Just 39 per cent of voters in that group viewed the state of the economy as good, six per cent responded very good compared with 25 per cent who had poor or very poor outlook.

"It's kind of interesting because the people with the most experience in what the economy does are the most likely to be pessimistic," Nanos said.

The youngest voters - 18 to 29-year-olds – on the other hand, those at the beginning of their working careers and earning potential, were the most optimistic about the state of the economy.

Almost two thirds in this group had a positive outlook and just 17 per cent held a negative view.

Nanos cautioned that polls that gauge the public's mood about the economy can change quickly if the economy swings one way or the other.

"We might find in the dead of winter when people are getting the electrical bills that their view may change," he said.

The SES Research telephone poll of 501 Ontario voters was conducted between Oct. 14 and Oct. 17. It is considered accurate to within 4.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

James Wallace is the Queen's Park bureau chief for the Osprey News Network.

Contact the writer at: jwallace@ospreymediagroup.com or at www.ospreyblogs.com