



Country Financial Security Index Report, March 2022

Conducted by Ipsos using the probability-based KnowledgePanel®
A survey of the American general population (ages 18+)

Interview dates: March 18 - 20, 2022

Number of interviews, adults: 1,023

Margin of error for the total sample: +/- 3.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level

Americans are starting to feel less financially secured in 2022 than in 2021

Americans are feeling less financially secure in Q1 2022 (56%) compared to Q4 2021 (61%) and Q2 2021 (62%). Importantly, financial security sentiment is on similar lines as expressed in 2020 (55% in Q4 2020 and 52% in Q3 2020). Most Americans are confident in their ability to pay off debts (81%); three percent down from Q4 2021 (83%). The decrease in financial security in 2022 is likely contributing to fewer Americans saying that they have been able to set aside money for savings or investments in Q1 2022 (57%) than in Q2 2021 (66%).

Older Americans are leading their younger counterparts on many positive attitudes about their finances and financial security. Baby Boomers (64%) are significantly more likely to feel financially secure than Gen X (56%), Millennials (53%), or Gen Z (43%). Similarly, Baby Boomers (90%) and Gen X (84%) are more likely to be confident in their ability to repay their debts than Millennials (80%) or Gen Z (67%).

When it comes to retirement, fifty-nine percent of Americans in Q1 2022 say they are confident that they will have enough money to enjoy a comfortable retirement; down five percent from Q4 2021 (64%). Baby Boomers (70%) are most confident in their ability to retire comfortably, while Gen X (59%), Millennials (49%), and Gen Z (48%) feel significantly less confident they'll have enough to retire comfortably when the time comes.

Americans worry how the events of the past several years will affect their financial future

There is no doubt the past several years have been tumultuous and difficult for a lot of people. Americans worry about how these events will impact their financial future. Inflation, the pandemic, medical cost, interest rates, even global events could be causing harming individuals' ability to reach their long-term financial goals.

About half of Americans think inflation could have a big negative impact (54%) on their ability to reach long-term financial goals such as buying a house or being able to retire comfortably when the time comes; 33% expect it to have a medium or small impact. Only five percent expect inflation will have no impact on their long-term financial goals.

Interest rates, medical costs, and global events are also expected to have a negative impact on long-term financial goals, although not quite as severely as inflation – about one in three believe each of these will have a big impact and two in five say each will have a medium or small impact. About one in ten expect interest rate (9%), medical costs (9%), and/or global events (8%) will have no impact on their long-term financial goals.

Americans are least likely to expect COVID-19 (26%) and/or the job market (27%) will have a big negative impact on their long-term goals and most likely to say they will have no impact (15% and 23%, respectively).



Americans say several important financial life goals are difficult to achieve in 2022

Many Americans think big financial goals are getting difficult to achieve in today's world. About seventy-one percent of Americans say buying a house is a difficult financial goal to reach. Highest among 25-34 years old (79%) which is arguably a prime house-buying age group. The second most difficult financial goal is paying off all debt (61%). A similar number, about three in five, say it is difficult to save for retirement (59%). Further, about three in ten 25-49 year olds say it is **very difficult** to save for retirement (28%).

Other financial goals Americans feel are difficult to achieve in today's world include:

- Starting/raising a family (54%)
- Buying a car (53%)
- Traveling/taking big trips (50%)
- Investing in the stock market (38%)

Nearly all Americans are concerned about rising prices and inflation in Q1 of 2022

Americans have noticed a change in the price of many different goods and services across industries in the past three months. The majority of Americans have noticed higher prices on gasoline (92%), groceries (88%), eating out at restaurants or take out (76%), utilities (62%), and travel (60%). Although they are less likely to have purchased them in the past three months, when they do, Americans also notice a higher price in are buying a new home (60%), home renovations/repair (58%), buying a new car (57%), home upgrades (57%), clothing/accessories (54%), rent (42%), home/auto insurance (39%), and health insurance (38%).

About nine in ten Americans say they are concerned about inflation (91%). Importantly, six in ten say they are **very concerned** about inflation – up from 48% in Q4 2021. This high level of concern about inflation is held across all racial and ethnic groups and income levels. While all generations are concerned about inflation, older generations are more likely to express more intense concern about inflation than their younger counterparts, 65% of both Gen X and Baby Boomer are very concerned about inflation compared to 47% of Gen Z and 56% of Millennial.

With economists reporting that inflation is currently increasing and likely to continue to increase throughout 2022, Americans are starting to think of what actions they can take to reduce spending and be able to pay for the things they need. About half of Americans say they will cut back on dining at a restaurant or take-out meals (46%), 30 percent say they will budget food/cut back on groceries, and about one in four Americans say they will drive less (26%) – they are twice as likely to say they will drive less compared to Q4 2021 (13%).

Other actions Americans are likely to take to reduce spending include:

- purchase less clothing/accessories (24%),
- keep current technology instead of upgrading (23%),
- cancel/put off travel plans (23%), or
put off home renovations/repairs (22%).



The increasing interest rates for mortgages and/or loans are forcing Americans to wait before making big purchases

About seven in ten Americans say that interest rates are increasing for mortgages and/or loans in the United States (66%). Conversely, about one in four Americans are not sure of the current state of interest rates (24%). Gen X (72%) is more aware of increasing interest rates than Millennials (60%) followed by Gen Z (49%). With rising interest rates in 2022, Americans are starting to or are likely to be putting off big purchases that will need them to take a loan (29%), cutting back on credit card use or paying off credit card balances (26%), or putting off purchasing a home or refinancing (22%).

Millennials (31%) are more likely to say they will put off purchasing a home or refinancing because of increasing interest rates than Gen Z (29%) and Gen X (27%). Gen X is more likely to cut back on credit card use or pay off credit card balances (29%) or put off big purchases that need a loan (31%) compared to other generations. Baby Boomers (15%) are making more changes to investments and/or retirement accounts than Gen Z and Millennials (12% of both groups). Interestingly, Gen Z is about twice as likely as Gen X to be saving more money in a traditional savings account (22% and 12% respectively).



Annotated Questionnaire:

NOTE: All results show percentages among all respondents, unless otherwise labeled. Reduced bases are unweighted values

NOTE: * = less than 0.5%, - = no respondents

Q1. How would you rate your overall level of financial security? Please select only one response.

	Q2 2020 (n=1030)	Q3 2020 (n=1330)	Q4 2020 (n=1015)	Q2 2021 (n=1015)	Q4 2021 (n=1031)	Q1 2022 (n=1023)
Excellent	12%	13%	15%	20%	15%	15%
Good	40%	40%	40%	42%	46%	42%
Fair	30%	31%	29%	23%	28%	26%
Poor	14%	68%	13%	12%	10%	14%
Don't know	3%	13%	3%	3%	1%	3%
Skip	9%	10%	6%	1%	1%	1%
<i>Excellent/ Good (net)</i>	<i>52%</i>	<i>52%</i>	<i>55%</i>	<i>62%</i>	<i>61%</i>	<i>56%</i>
<i>Fair/ Poor (net)</i>	<i>44%</i>	<i>44%</i>	<i>42%</i>	<i>34%</i>	<i>37%</i>	<i>40%</i>

Q2. Over the past two months, have you been able to set aside any money for savings or investments?

	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q2 2021	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Yes	50%	51%	54%	66%	58%	57%
No	44%	44%	42%	28%	38%	37%
Not sure	5%	4%	3%	5%	3%	4%
Skip	6%	7%	1%	1%	1%	2%

Q3. Thinking for a moment about the money you may owe to others including mortgages, car loans, credit cards and other debt, how confident are you in your ability to pay all of these debts as they come due?

	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q2 2021	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Very confident	41%	-	51%	59%	54%	56%
Somewhat confident	32%	-	32%	26%	28%	25%
Not very confident	11%	-	7%	5%	8%	6%
Not at all confident	8%	-	5%	4%	6%	6%
Not sure	7%	-	5%	6%	3%	5%
Skip	10%	-	3%	1%	1%	2%
<i>Confident (net)</i>	<i>73%</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>83%</i>	<i>84%</i>	<i>83%</i>	<i>81%</i>
<i>Not confident (net)</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>14%</i>	<i>12%</i>



Q4. And, when it comes time to retire, how likely do you feel it will be that you will have enough money to enjoy a comfortable retirement?

	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Very likely	29%	31%
Somewhat likely	35%	28%
Not very likely	14%	15%
Not at all likely	12%	12%
Not sure	8%	12%
Skip	1%	2%
<i>Likely (net)</i>	64%	59%
<i>Not likely (net)</i>	26%	27%

Q5. Do you currently have a financial planner/advisor?

	Q1 2022
Yes	23%
No	76%
Skip	1%

Q6. How attainable or reachable do you think these financial goals are in today's world?

Buying a house	Q1 2022
Very easy to reach	7%
Somewhat easy to reach	14%
Somewhat difficult to reach	33%
Very difficult to reach	38%
Not sure	8%
Skip	1%

Buying a new car	Q1 2022
Very easy to reach	11%
Somewhat easy to reach	27%
Somewhat difficult to reach	34%
Very difficult to reach	19%
Not sure	8%
Skip	1%



Q6. How attainable or reachable do you think these financial goals are in today's world?

Saving for retirement	Q1 2022
Very easy to reach	9%
Somewhat easy to reach	23%
Somewhat difficult to reach	35%
Very difficult to reach	23%
Not sure	8%
Skip	1%

Investing in stock market	Q1 2022
Very easy to reach	15%
Somewhat easy to reach	32%
Somewhat difficult to reach	23%
Very difficult to reach	15%
Not sure	15%
Skip	1%

Traveling/taking big trips	Q1 2022
Very easy to reach	10%
Somewhat easy to reach	31%
Somewhat difficult to reach	32%
Very difficult to reach	18%
Not sure	9%
Skip	1%

Paying off all debt	Q1 2022
Very easy to reach	12%
Somewhat easy to reach	20%
Somewhat difficult to reach	34%
Very difficult to reach	27%
Not sure	6%
Skip	2%

Starting/raising a family	Q1 2022
Very easy to reach	9%
Somewhat easy to reach	23%
Somewhat difficult to reach	34%
Very difficult to reach	20%
Not sure	12%
Skip	1%



Q7. In the past three months, have you noticed any changes in the price or cost of any of the following?

Groceries	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Higher prices or cost	80%	88%
About the same	16%	7%
Lower prices or cost	1%	1%
Not applicable/Have not purchased this in the last 3 months	2%	2%
Skip	1%	2%

Gasoline/travel	Q4 2021
Higher prices or cost	86%
About the same	7%
Lower prices or cost	1%
Not applicable/Have not purchased this in the last 3 months	5%
Skip	1%

Gasoline (e.g., gas for your car)	Q1 2022
Higher prices or cost	92%
About the same	2%
Lower prices or cost	1%
Not applicable/Have not purchased this in the last 3 months	3%
Skip	2%

Travel	Q1 2022
Higher prices or cost	60%
About the same	11%
Lower prices or cost	2%
Not applicable/Have not purchased this in the last 3 months	26%
Skip	2%

Utilities	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Higher prices or cost	51%	62%
About the same	41%	29%
Lower prices or cost	1%	0%
Not applicable/Have not purchased this in the last 3 months	6%	7%
Skip	1%	2%

Q7. In the past three months, have you noticed any changes in the price or cost of any of the following?

Rent	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Higher prices or cost	29%	42%
About the same	22%	18%
Lower prices or cost	*	1%
Not applicable/Have not purchased this in the last 3 months	49%	37%
Skip	1%	2%

Clothing and accessories	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Higher prices or cost	46%	54%
About the same	34%	28%
Lower prices or cost	1%	1%
Not applicable/Have not purchased this in the last 3 months	19%	16%
Skip	1%	2%

Home upgrades (furniture, appliances, décor, etc.)	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Higher prices or cost	47%	57%
About the same	15%	12%
Lower prices or cost	*	1%
Not applicable/Have not purchased this in the last 3 months	37%	28%
Skip	1%	2%

Buying a new home	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Higher prices or cost	42%	60%
About the same	4%	5%
Lower prices or cost	1%	1%
Not applicable/Have not purchased this in the last 3 months	52%	32%
Skip	1%	2%

Buying a new car	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Higher prices or cost	40%	57%
About the same	7%	8%
Lower prices or cost	1%	*
Not applicable/Have not purchased this in the last 3 months	51%	33%
Skip	1%	2%

Q7. In the past three months, have you noticed any changes in the price or cost of any of the following?

Home renovation or home repair	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Higher prices or cost	48%	58%
About the same	11%	8%
Lower prices or cost	1%	1%
Not applicable/Have not purchased this in the last 3 months	40%	31%
Skip	1%	2%

Eating out at restaurants or take out	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Higher prices or cost	67%	76%
About the same	23%	15%
Lower prices or cost	1%	*
Not applicable/Have not purchased this in the last 3 months	8%	7%
Skip	1%	2%

Home or auto insurance	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Higher prices or cost	32%	39%
About the same	46%	45%
Lower prices or cost	2%	1%
Not applicable/Have not purchased this in the last 3 months	19%	14%
Skip	1%	2%

Health insurance	Q1 2022
Higher prices or cost	38%
About the same	40%
Lower prices or cost	1%
Not applicable/Have not purchased this in the last 3 months	19%
Skip	2%



Q8. How concerned, if at all, are you about inflation?

	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Very concerned	48%	60%
Somewhat concerned	39%	31%
Not very concerned	8%	4%
Not at all concerned	1%	1%
Not sure	2%	3%
Skip	1%	1%
<i>Concerned (net)</i>	88%	91%
<i>Not concerned (net)</i>	10%	5%

Q9. Economists report inflation is currently increasing and likely to continue increasing into 2022. If inflation continues to rise in the U.S., which, if any, of the following actions are you most likely to take to be able to pay for the things you need? Please select up to three.

	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Cut back on restaurant/take-out meals	48%	46%
Keep my current technology (phone, laptop, tablet, etc.) instead of upgrading	30%	23%
Budget food/cut back on grocery buying	29%	30%
Purchase less clothing/accessories	29%	24%
Put off home repairs, renovations, or home upgrades (furniture, décor, appliances, etc.)	23%	22%
Cancel or put off travel plans	20%	23%
Drive less	13%	26%
Work longer before retirement	9%	11%
Find a higher paying job	8%	10%
Cut back or pause my emergency fund savings	7%	6%
Ask for a pay raise	-	5%
Put off car repairs or maintenance	5%	4%
Cut back or pause my credit card payment	4%	3%
Cut back or pause my retirement savings	4%	4%
Cut back or pause student loan debt payments	2%	2%
Other	2%	2%
None of these	14%	12%
Skip	1%	1%

Q10. Based on your understanding, what is the current state of interest rates for mortgage and/or loans in the US?

	Q1 2022 (n=1023)
Interest rates are increasing	66%
Interest rates are decreasing	3%
Interest rates are stable	7%
Don't know	24%
Skip	1%



Q11. If interest rates increase in the U.S., what are you doing or are likely to do differently due to increasing interest rates?

	Q1 2022 (n=1023)
Putting off big purchases that I will need a loan for, such as a car, boat or recreational vehicle (other than a home)	29%
Cutting back on credit card use or paying off credit card balances	26%
Putting off purchasing a home or refinancing	22%
Save more money in a traditional savings account	18%
Making changes to investments and/or retirement accounts – investing more, switching to investments with less risk, etc.	14%
Buying a home or refinancing sooner than I planned to lock in an interest rate	6%
Taking out a loan to make a big purchase, such as a car, boat, recreational vehicle (other than a home)	7%
Other [SPECIFY]	2%
Don't plan to change what I am doing	40%
Skip	2%

Q12 To what extent, if at all, do you think the following factors could have a **negative impact** on your ability to reach your long term financial goals such as buying a home or being able to retire when the time comes?

The COVID-19 Pandemic	Q1 2022 (n=1023)
Big impact	26%
Medium impact	27%
Small impact	22%
No impact	15%
Don't know	9%
Skip	2%

Q12 To what extent, if at all, do you think the following factors could have a **negative impact** on your ability to reach your long term financial goals such as buying a home or being able to retire when the time comes?

Inflation	Q1 2022 (n=1023)
Big impact	54%
Medium impact	23%
Small impact	10%
No impact	5%
Don't know	6%
Skip	2%

The job market	Q1 2022 (n=1023)
Big impact	27%
Medium impact	20%
Small impact	16%
No impact	23%
Don't know	12%
Skip	2%

Medical cost	Q1 2022 (n=1023)
Big impact	35%
Medium impact	25%
Small impact	19%
No impact	10%
Don't know	9%
Skip	2%

Interest rates	Q1 2022 (n=1023)
Big impact	35%
Medium impact	25%
Small impact	19%
No impact	9%
Don't know	11%
Skip	2%

Global events (i.e. war in Ukraine, instability in African nations, and regime change in South America, etc.)	Q1 2022 (n=1023)
Big impact	34%
Medium impact	28%
Small impact	17%
No impact	8%
Don't know	12%
Skip	2%



About the Study

This Country Financial/Ipsos Poll was conducted March 18 - 20 2022, by Ipsos using the probability-based KnowledgePanel®. This poll is based on a nationally representative probability sample of 1,023 general population adults age 18 or older.

The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level, for results based on the entire sample of adults. The margin of sampling error takes into account the design effect, which was 1.17. The margin of sampling error is higher and varies for results based on other sub-samples. In our reporting of the findings, percentage points are rounded off to the nearest whole number. As a result, percentages in a given table column may total slightly higher or lower than 100%. In questions that permit multiple responses, columns may total substantially more than 100%, depending on the number of different responses offered by each respondent.

The survey was conducted using KnowledgePanel, the largest and most well-established online probability-based panel that is representative of the adult US population. Our recruitment process employs a scientifically developed addressed-based sampling methodology using the latest Delivery Sequence File of the USPS – a database with full coverage of all delivery points in the US. Households invited to join the panel are randomly selected from all available households in the U.S. Persons in the sampled households are invited to join and participate in the panel. Those selected who do not already have internet access are provided a tablet and internet connection at no cost to the panel member. Those who join the panel and who are selected to participate in a survey are sent a unique password-protected log-in used to complete surveys online. As a result of our recruitment and sampling methodologies, samples from KnowledgePanel cover all households regardless of their phone or internet status and findings can be reported with a margin of sampling error and projected to the general population.

The data were weighted to adjust for gender by age, race/ethnicity, education, Census region, metropolitan status, household income, race/ethnicity by gender, race/ethnicity by age, and race/ethnicity by education. The demographic benchmarks came from the 2019 March supplement of the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS). The weighting categories were as follows:

- Gender (Male, Female) by Age (18–29, 30–44, 45–59, and 60+)
- Race/Hispanic Ethnicity (White Non-Hispanic, Black Non-Hispanic, Other or 2+ Races Non-Hispanic, Hispanic)
- Education (High School graduate or less, Some College, Bachelor and beyond)
- Census Region (Northeast, Midwest, South, West)
- Metropolitan status (Metro, non-Metro)
- Household Income (Under \$25,000, \$25,000-\$49,999, \$50,000-\$74,999, \$75,000-\$99,999, \$100,000-\$149,999, \$150,000+)
- Race/ethnicity (White/Other Non-Hispanic, Black Non-Hispanic, Hispanic) by Gender (Male, Female)
- Race/ethnicity (White/Other Non-Hispanic, Black Non-Hispanic, Hispanic) by Age (18-44, 45+)
- Race/ethnicity (White/Other Non-Hispanic, Black Non-Hispanic, Hispanic) by Education (Some College or less, Bachelor and beyond)



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