

rural new york minute

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New Yorkers are more optimistic about their personal finances than the State's economic future

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While almost one in three New Yorkers expect the state's economy to worsen over the next year, far fewer expect that their personal financial situation will deteriorate during this time. People's perceptions vary, however, depending on where one lives in the state.

We asked 1,100 respondents to Cornell University's 2007 Empire State Poll and CaRDI's Rural Survey whether they expected the NYS economy as a whole to improve, stay the same, or worsen over the next 12 months. As might be expected, downstate urban respondents were the most optimistic about the state's economy, with 38% believing it would improve. Downstate New York as a whole has been largely buffered from Upstate New York's economic woes in the last decade or more. Although poverty and economic hardship still plague parts of New York City, the metropolitan area has had impressive economic gains in financial services bringing significant rewards to the region.

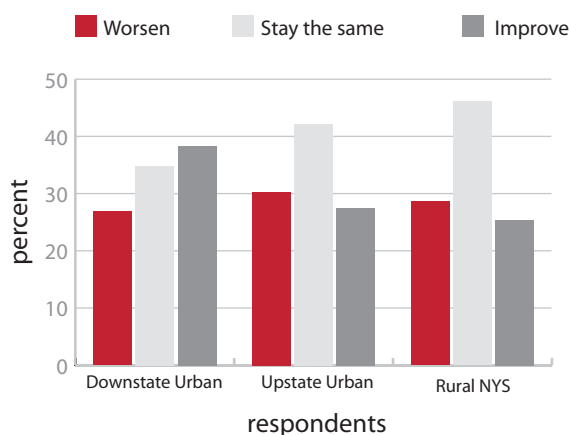
In contrast to NYC, more upstate urban New Yorkers were pessimistic about the state's economic future, with 30% fearing that the state's economy would worsen over the next year, and only 28% ex-

pecting it to improve (compared to 38% for their downstate counterparts). Rural New Yorkers were slightly less pessimistic than their urban counterparts, but a large majority expects the state's economic fortunes to worsen or stay the same.

When asked about respondents' personal financial situations, responses again vary by geographic location. Over 44% of downstate urban respondents expect their personal finances to improve and only 11% felt they would be financially worse off in a year. By contrast, only 31% of rural New Yorkers believed they would experience an improvement in their personal financial situation, while 15% felt they would be worse off a year from now. Upstate urban respondents were somewhere in the middle, with about 36% expecting their personal financial situation to improve and about 13% expecting it to worsen.

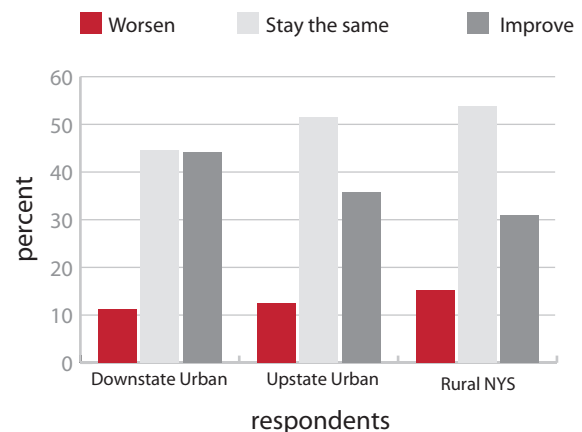
Regardless of where New Yorkers live in the state, respondents to our survey believe that their personal financial situation will fare better than the state economy as a whole over the next year. A challenge will be to channel this sense of personal optimism into greater economic growth and development across the state. ♦

Figure 1: Do you expect the NYS economy as a whole to worsen, stay the same, or improve over the next year?



Source: 2007 Empire State Poll and Rural Survey, Cornell University.

Figure 2: Do you expect your own personal financial situation to be worsen, stay about the same, or improve over the next year?



Source: 2007 Empire State Poll and Rural Survey, Cornell University.

