



ONTARIANS CONCERNED ABOUT EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC PROSPECTS: RBC CANADIAN CONSUMER OUTLOOK INDEX

TORONTO, February 8, 2011 — Job anxiety levels in Ontario are the highest in the country, with 23 per cent of Ontarians expressing concern about job losses or layoffs in the upcoming year, according to the January 2011 RBC Canadian Consumer Outlook Index (RBC CCO).

Ontarians are also less optimistic about the outlook for the Canadian economy than they were 12 months ago, with only 42 per cent now saying they feel the Canadian economy will improve in 2011, compared to 60 per cent in January 2010.

The prevailing mood may have influenced Ontario consumers to stay within their holiday spending budgets, as the January 2011 RBC CCO found that 64 per cent of Ontarians managed not to overspend this past holiday season. Of the 36 per cent who did overspend and are now looking for ways to pay their holiday bills, the majority are planning cutbacks to their day-to-day living expenses as well as entertainment expenses (45 per cent and 44 per cent respectively), using their credit cards less (38 per cent) and limiting their lunch and coffee money (31 per cent).

“Budgeting to manage paying down debt and setting up a financial plan for the year can help you save money while you pay off your bills,” said Jennifer Tory, regional president, GTR, Ontario, RBC. “Looking at your big picture goals with the help of a financial advisor can help you focus on your financial priorities, so you can build a secure future while taking care of your present-day needs.”

While job losses and the economy may be weighing on the minds of Ontarians, RBC Economics is forecasting that employment will grow by 1.9 per cent in 2011 and that the province will see increased economic growth if the U.S. begins to grow as well.

“The recent bounce in key U.S. indicators, combined with a recovering domestic economy, opens the door for Ontario to see growth accelerate this year to 3.1 per cent from an estimated 2.7 per cent gain in 2010,” said Craig Wright, senior vice-president and chief economist, RBC.

Other provincial highlights from the January 2011 RBC CCO include:

- **Job Anxiety Outlook:** The national job anxiety outlook sits at 20 per cent. Prairie residents are the least concerned (15 per cent) about the prospect of job losses or layoffs in the upcoming year.

- **Personal Financial Situation Outlook:** Thirty-six per cent of Ontario residents' expect improvements in their personal financial situation over the coming year, slightly lower than the national average (38 per cent). The highest expectations are being expressed by people living in Alberta (48 per cent) and Atlantic Canada (44 per cent).
- **Spending Outlook on Major Purchases:** Nearly two-in-ten (19 per cent) Ontarians expect to spend more on major purchases this year than last, just under the national average (20 per cent). Atlantic Canadians are the most likely to increase their major purchase spending in 2011, while Quebecers are the least likely (17 per cent).

About RBC's financial advice and interactive tools

RBC's [myFinance Tracker](#) is a new online financial management tool that offers all personal RBC online banking clients the ability, at no cost, to create a set budget and track their spending habits. In addition, whether Canadians want to get more from their everyday banking, protect what's important, save and invest, borrow with confidence or take care of their businesses, the RBC Advice Centre (www.rbcadvicecentre.com) can help answer their questions. Advice videos are updated regularly to reflect current trends and to answer the questions that are top of mind with Canadians. Interactive tools and calculators provide customized information covering many facets of personal finance. With the guidance of RBC advisors who are available to chat live, Canadians have access to free, no-obligation professional advice about RBC products and services and personalized one-on-one service.

About the RBC Canadian Consumer Outlook Index

The *RBC Canadian Consumer Outlook Index*, benchmarked as of November 2009, is conducted online via Ipsos Reid's national I-Say Consumer Panel to 3,533 Canadians (503 British Columbia, 476 Alberta, 589 Saskatchewan/Manitoba, 721 Ontario, 678 Quebec, 566 Atlantic Canada). Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. Data collection was January 4 to 10, 2011. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100 per cent response rate would have an estimated margin of error of ± 1.65 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had the entire population of adults in Canada been polled.

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