Half of Americans Say Their Finances Are Getting Worse

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55% of US residents believe that their financial situation is worsening. Meanwhile, stock markets continue to hit record highs.

Details. Gallup recently published the results of a survey on the financial situation of Americans.

► The high cost of living remains Americans' top financial concern in 2026. Inflation and price rises were cited by 31% of respondents – below the 41% peak in 2024 but still among the highest in two decades – followed by housing and energy costs at 13% each, the latter at its highest since 2008. Healthcare rounded out the top four at 8%.

► Among specific financial concerns, 62% worry about retirement savings, 60% about covering medical costs in the event of serious illness, 54% about maintaining their standard of living, 41% about monthly bills, and 40% about affording college.

► Americans' financial situation in 2026 is historically poor, with a record 55% now saying their financial situation is getting worse. While similar to last year's 53%, this is up from 47% in 2024 and marks the fifth consecutive year more Americans say their finances are worsening rather than improving.

► Meanwhile, stock markets continue hitting record highs, with the S&P; 500, Nasdaq, and Dow Jones all recently closing at all-time records, meaning massive gains for wealthy investors and shareholders. At the same time, oil companies are reaping billions in extra profits driven by the conflict with Iran.

Context. Donald Trump promised to fix the economy and make America affordable under his "America First" program. Instead, his administration has started new conflicts across the globe, pursued further militarization, and is openly preparing for future wars – all while imposing trade tariffs that drive up the cost of everyday goods for ordinary Americans.

► All of this serves the interests of the capitalist class Trump represents. During his campaign for a second term, he pressed oil executives for $1 billion in donations. In return, his administration is now protecting their interests – pursuing control over oil-rich states like Venezuela and Iran, implementing further tax cuts, and undermining alternative energy. This mirrors his first term, when he handed oil and gas companies $25 billion in tax cuts.

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