



The Nielsen Company

www.nielsen.com

The Nielsen Company

## News Release

### **THE ECONOMY AND FINANCIAL WOES KEEP NORTH AMERICANS AWAKE AT NIGHT, BUT IN BOOMING & EMERGING MARKETS, MAINTAINING WORK/LIFE BALANCE IS THE BIGGEST CONCERN: NIELSEN**

Oslo, 17.juni 2008: One in four global consumers cite the Economy as their biggest concern in the six months ahead, but concern about Work/Life balance is emerging as a major worry - ahead of job security - according to Nielsen's bi-annual Global Online Consumer Opinion Survey conducted across 51<sup>1</sup> countries worldwide.

"While the state of the economy has always been a chief concern for the world's Internet consumers according to the Nielsen survey, it will come as a surprise to many that Work/Life balance has become consumers' second biggest concern worldwide – ahead of Job Security and Health," said David Parma, SVP and Global Head of Customized Research, The Nielsen Company.

In fact, in many countries - and particularly in booming, emerging markets across Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Asia – consumers cite Work/Life balance as their number one concern today.

Globally, consumers rated Job Security (10%) as their third biggest concern, followed by Health (9%), Children's Education/Welfare (9%) and Debt (8%).

---

<sup>1</sup> **51 Markets Covered:** Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, UAE, United Kingdom, US, Venezuela and Vietnam.

Consumer concerns, however, differ significantly across the world's regions.

- North America** – economy, debt, ability to afford retirement, war
- Latin America** – job security, children's welfare and education, crime
- Asia Pacific** – work/life balance, health, parents' welfare and happiness
- Europe** – global warming, immigration
- Middle East/Africa** – political stability, terrorism

“When looking at the landscape of consumer concerns globally, lifestyle and cultural values play a significant role in how consumers rank their concerns and priorities in life,” said Parma.

The renowned spendthrift nature and credit culture of North Americans has taken its toll on the economy in the past year. The 'shop 'til you drop' mentality of North American consumers has led to a credit crunch nightmare and weakening currencies. Not surprisingly during May 2008, one in three (33%) North Americans said the Economy was their biggest concern in the next six months. They also outranked other regions for being most concerned about Debt, Ability to Afford Retirement, and the Ongoing War in Iraq. These sentiments closely mirror Nielsen's Global Online Consumer Confidence survey (May 08) which revealed that one in four US consumers said they had “no spare cash” after paying basic living expenses, and 41 percent claimed they used their spare cash to repay debts.

Twenty percent of Asia Pacific and EEMEA consumers also cited the economy as their major concern in the next six months, as well as 15 percent of Europeans and 11 percent of Latin Americans.

Over a third of Hong Kong and US consumers (35%) topped global rankings for being most concerned about their Economy, followed very closely by the Eastern European nations of Latvia and Lithuania (34%), where consumers are currently grappling with runaway inflation. In the event of an economic downturn, Inflation would be the top concern of over 80 percent of Latvians and Lithuanians.

In Asia Pacific, concern for Work/Life balance equaled or exceeded concern for the Economy in many countries. “The fast-paced, booming economies of emerging Asian nations in the past decade have left many consumers rethinking their pace of life. Demanding work schedules and careers have dominated the lives of many young Asians over the past two



decades. For many, such demanding lifestyles are starting to take their toll and there's a whole generation of consumers in emerging nations who are seeking to find and sustain a healthy work/life balance," observed Parma.

Nine of the top ten ranking countries who said a Work/Life balance was a major concern hailed from emerging markets in Asia, LatAm and the Middle East. In 13 markets across the globe, consumers cited Work/Life balance as the biggest concern in the next six months, topped by close to one in four Indonesians (24%), Brazilians, Chinese and Filipinos (22%).

Nielsen's latest Global Online Consumer Confidence study revealed that compared to any other region, more consumers in Latin America expect a global recession in the next twelve months, so it's no surprise that Latin Americans (16%) are also the most concerned about Job Security. 62 percent of Latin Americans also cited Unemployment as their main concern in the event of an economic downturn. Latin Americans were also the most concerned about their children's Welfare/Education (11%) and Crime (8%).

As a region, Europeans were most concerned about global warming (4%) and immigration (3%). UK consumers (8%) topped global rankings for citing Immigration as their biggest concern in the next six months. Italy ranked in the top five global countries for concern about crime, with 12 percent of Italians citing crime as their biggest concern in the next six months.

#### **About The Survey**

The Nielsen Global Online Consumer Survey, conducted by Nielsen Customized Research, reaches more than 28,000 Internet users in more than 50 countries worldwide. The survey is designed to gauge sentiment and confidence in the future of the economy, examine expenditure and saving patterns, and identify major concerns.

#### **About The Nielsen Company**

The Nielsen Company is a global information and media company with leading market positions in marketing information (ACNielsen), media information (Nielsen Media Research), online intelligence (NetRatings and BuzzMetrics), mobile measurement, trade shows and business publications (Billboard, The Hollywood Reporter, Adweek). The privately held company is active in more than 100 countries, with headquarters in Haarlem, the Netherlands, and New York, USA. For more information, please visit, [www.nielsen.com](http://www.nielsen.com)

