



Gauging the Impact of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

Date: October 6, 2009



**NEW AMERICA
MEDIA**

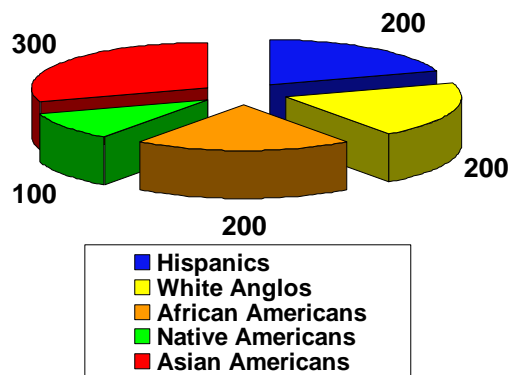


METHODOLOGY

This public opinion research study was sponsored by New America Media. The results and findings in this executive summary are based on a poll of Hispanic, African American, Native American, Asian American and white Anglo adults in the United States. The sample was designed to be representative of the adult population of the United States and based on the latest US Census data. The survey was conducted during the last week of August and the first two weeks of September of 2009. A total of 1,000 interviews were conducted via telephone using professionally trained multilingual interviewers. Hispanic respondents were interviewed in English or Spanish; Asian American respondents were interviewed in English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, or Vietnamese; and African American, Native American, and white Anglo respondents were interviewed in English.

RDD (Random Digit Dialing) methodology was employed in areas of the country that have significant (5 percent or more) Hispanic, African American, Native American, Asian American, and white Anglo populations. Using RDD methodology allows for maximum coverage and ensures that respondents with non-ethnic names and those with unlisted telephone numbers are not systematically excluded from the sample. In areas of the country that have lower-density "ethnic populations" (less than 5 percent), ethnic encoding methodology was employed. Ethnic encoding allows for the identification of potential respondents using first and last name algorithms. The combination of RDD (80 percent of interviews) and ethnic encoding (20 percent of interviews) methodologies results in the collection of the most comprehensive and representative samples of these populations. The margin of error for the total sample of 1,000 interviews is approximately 3 percentage points.

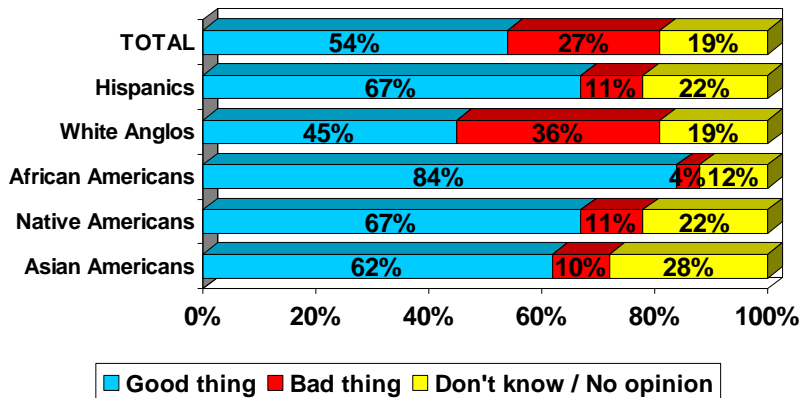
Sample Distribution



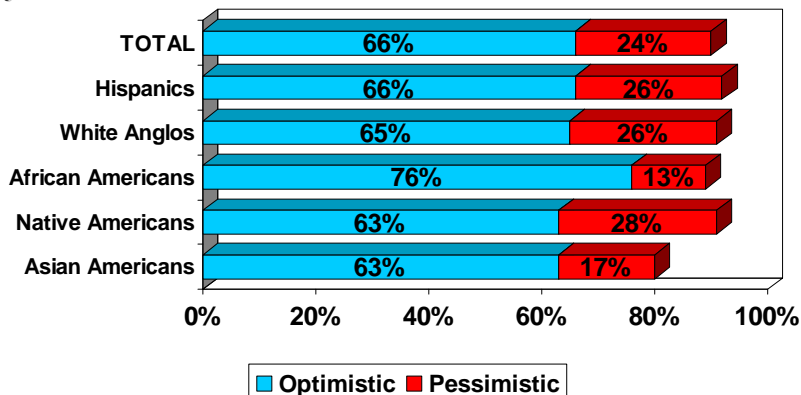
MAJOR FINDINGS

1.) Ethnic adults have a much better image of the “stimulus package’ than their white Anglo counterparts. Two-thirds or more of Hispanics, African Americans, Asian Americans and Native Americans think it is a “good thing.” In contrast, less than half of white adults characterize it in a positive way. The poll reveals that optimism reigns among most adults of all ethnic and racial groups – more than three-fifths are “optimistic about their personal financial situation in 2010.”

From what you know about President Obama’s economic stimulus package, do you think that it is a good thing or a bad thing for your family and local community?



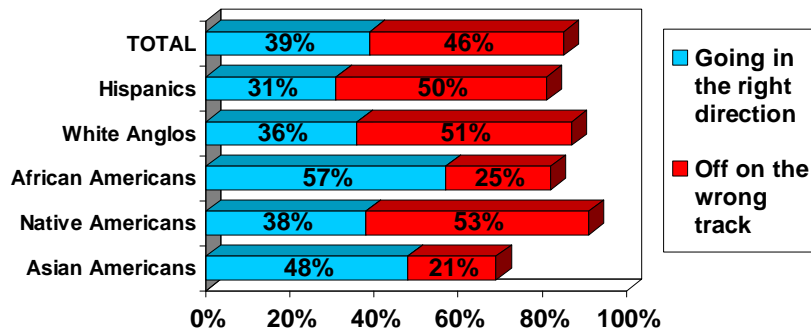
Now thinking about the last year, do you feel optimistic or pessimistic about your personal financial situation in 2010?



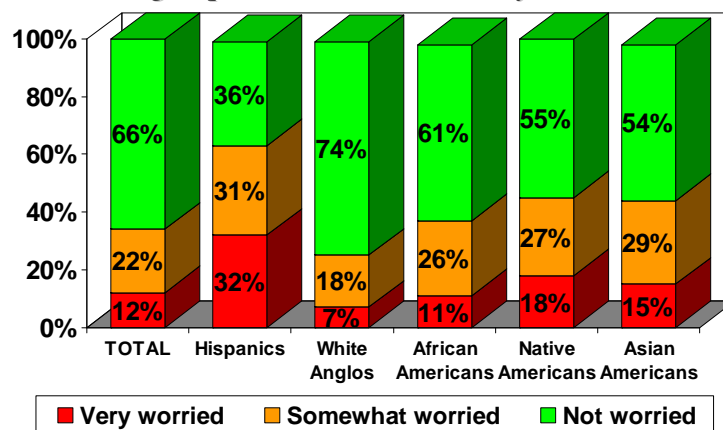
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2.) The United States economy is still under a “black cloud” as we approach the one-year anniversary of the 2008 stock market crash. A majority of White Anglos, Hispanics and Native Americans think that the American economy is “going off on the wrong track.” African Americans and Asian Americans disagree with this point-of-view. More than sixty percent of Hispanics are worried about their ability to pay for their housing expenses; fifty percent of Native Americans are worried about their ability to pay for the basic food, medicine and clothing expenses of their family; more than 30 percent of African Americans and Asian Americans are worried about losing their current full-time job. Moreover, only 4 percent of all Americans say that “there are a lot of jobs available “in their community.

In general, do you think that the American economy is going in the right direction or is it off on the wrong track?

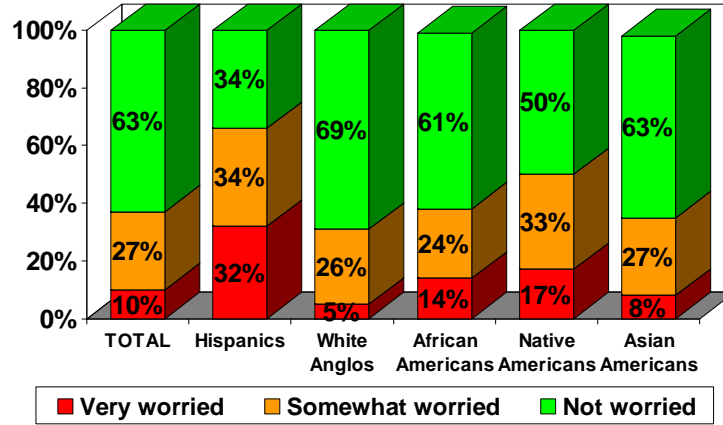


How worried are you about your ability to pay for your housing expenses over the next few months?



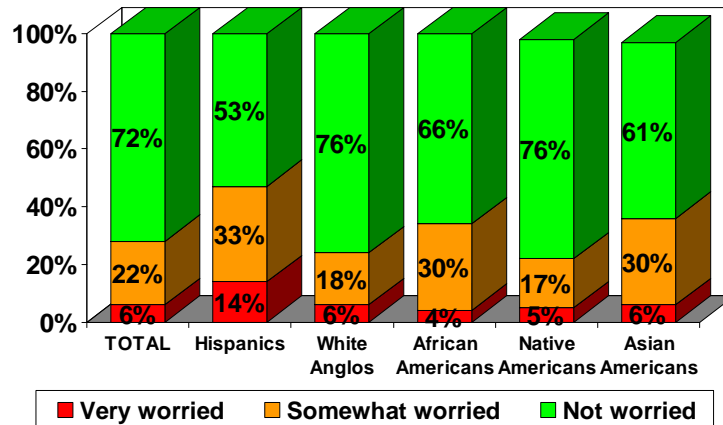
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How worried are you about your ability to pay for the basic food, medicine and clothing expenses over the next few months?

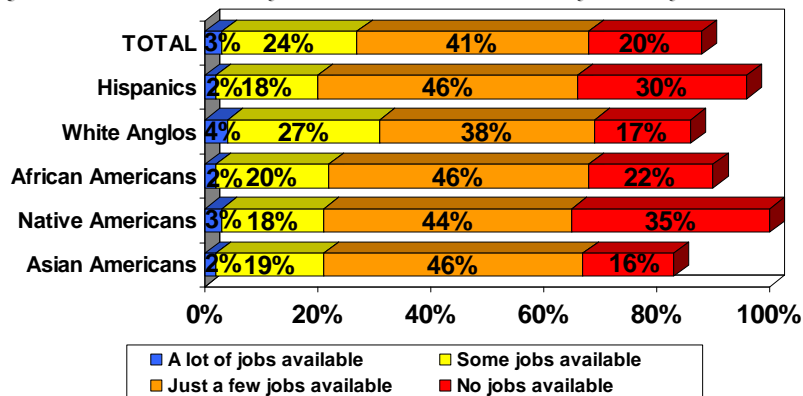


How worried are you about losing your current full-time job over the next few months?

Asked only of respondents who currently work full time



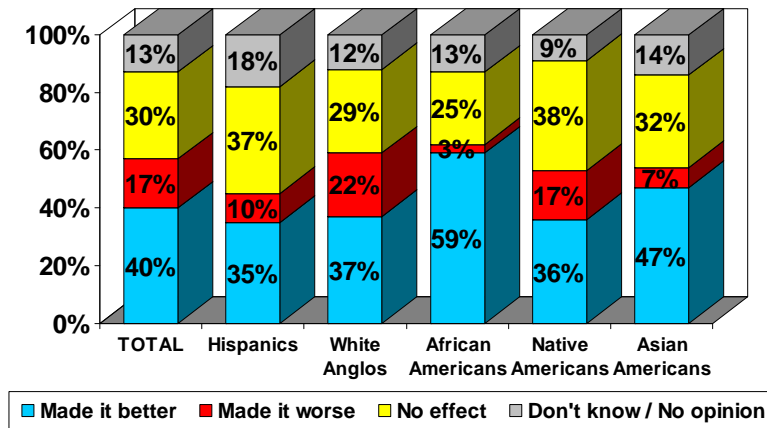
How would you generally characterize the number of jobs available in your local community today?



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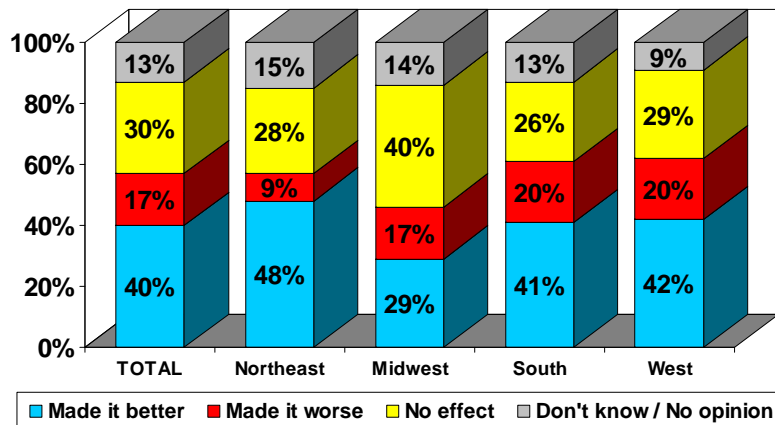
3.) The American public currently believes that the stimulus package has not had a major impact on the national economy. Approximately one-half of Hispanics, Asian Americans, white Anglos and Native Americans say that the stimulus package has had “no effect” or that it has “made the economy worse.” Only African Americans believe that President Obama’s stimulus package “has made the economy better.” There are also interesting regional differences in the way the respondents answered this question.

Do you think the economic stimulus plan has made the national economy better, made it worse, or has had no effect on it?



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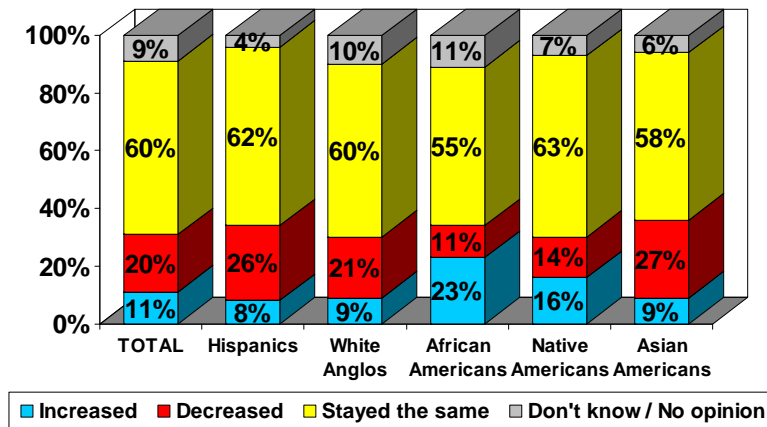
All Voters by Region



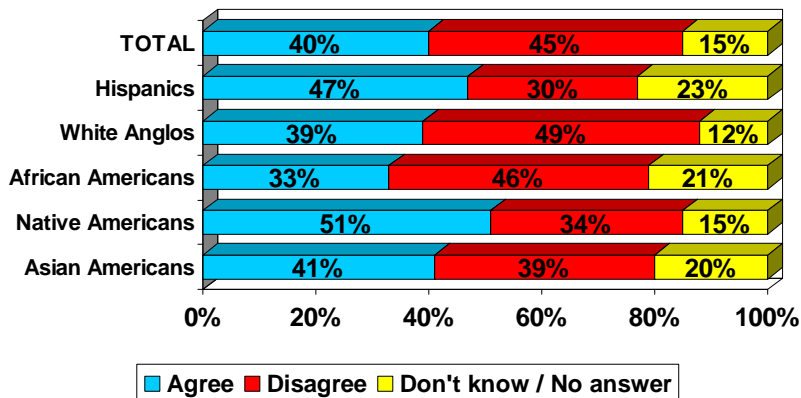
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4.) It is clear from the poll that one of the major objectives of the stimulus package has failed. The single largest part of the Recovery Act – more than one-third of it – financed tax cuts and according to Vice-President Joe Biden, 95 percent of working Americans should have seen their taxes go down as a result of the stimulus package. Yet the poll indicates more than two-thirds of Americans report that their monthly take-home pay has either “stayed the same” or actually “decreased” during the last six months. Moreover, Hispanics and Native Americans agree that **ONLY** the large corporations and institutions will benefit from the stimulus package.

Now thinking about your monthly income or your regular paycheck from work, has the net amount of money you receive, or your take-home pay, increased, decreased, or stayed about the same during the first six months of 2009?



*Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Only the large corporations and institutions in the United States will benefit from the economic stimulus plan.*

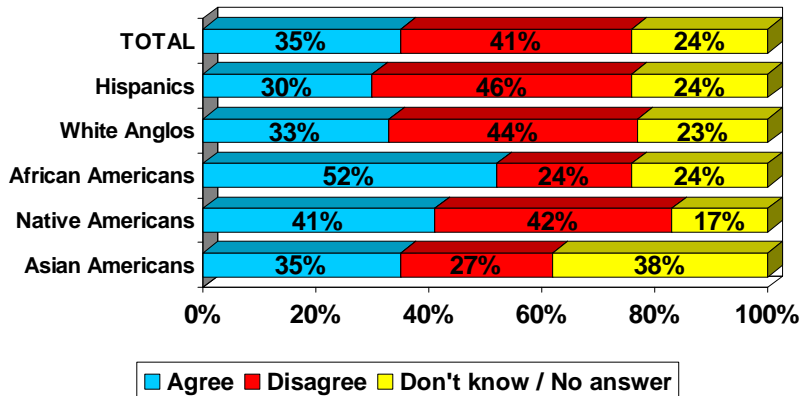


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5.) Americans are also not clear about the effectiveness of the second-largest part – just under one-third – of the stimulus package: direct relief to state governments to avoid laying off teachers, firefighters and police officers. Majorities of white Anglos, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Native Americans are not aware that the stimulus package has had a significant impact on their state or local government when it comes to avoiding the firing of public employees. Only African Americans give the stimulus package credit for having been effective on this front. There are also interesting regional differences in the way the respondents answered this question.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

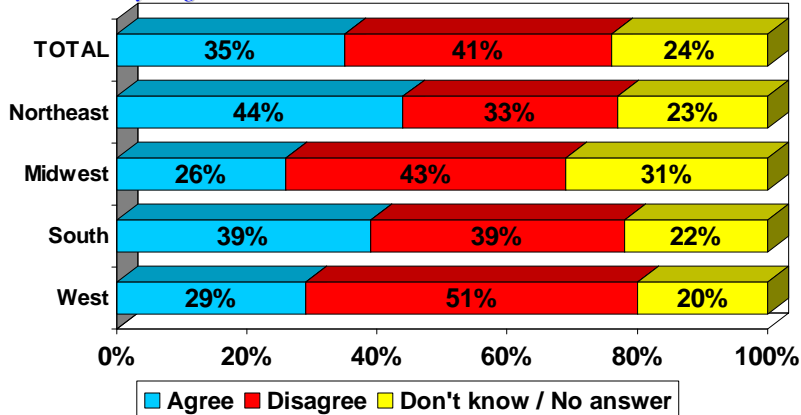
The economic stimulus package has allowed my state and local governments to avoid laying off a large number of teachers, firefighters and police officers.



Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

The economic stimulus package has allowed my state and local governments to avoid laying off a large number of teachers, firefighters and police officers.

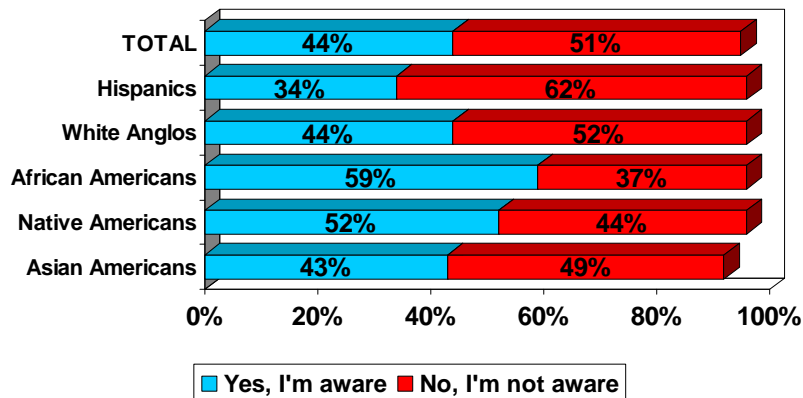
All Voters by Region



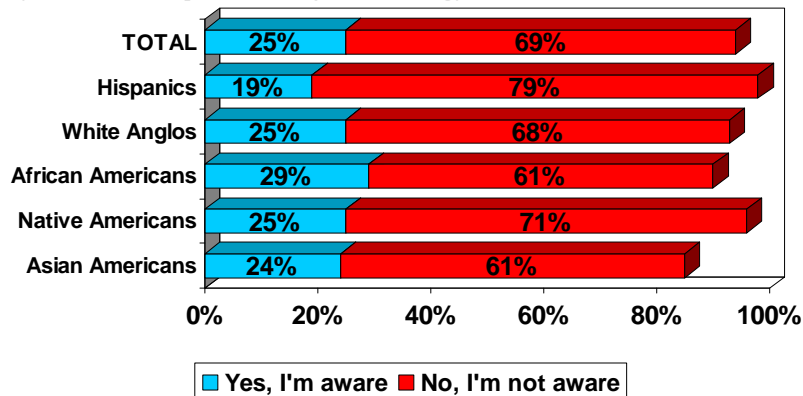
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6.) A majority of African American and Native American adults say that they are aware of newly-created projects in their community or region of the state like construction at military bases, ports, bridges and tunnels. Two-fifths of white Anglo and Asian American adults and one-third of Hispanic adults also said that they were aware of these improvements and upgrades. In contrast, only one-fourth of all Americans are aware that new “green jobs” have been created in their community during the last six months. The final third of the stimulus package financed investments in the creation of “green jobs” and in the creation of government construction projects.

Now thinking about the last six months, are you aware of any newly-created projects in your community or region of your state – like building new roads and highways; or construction projects at military bases, ports, bridges and tunnels; or upgrades to mass transit and rail systems?



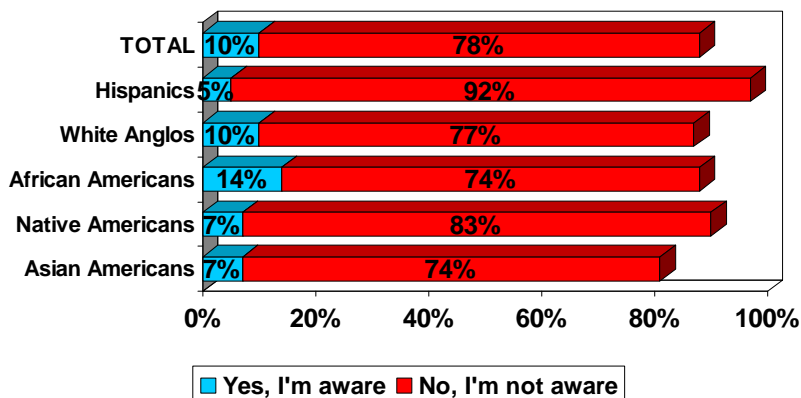
Now thinking again about the last six months, are you aware of any newly-created “green jobs” in your community or region of the state – jobs based on the protection of the environment, the improvement of water systems and the promotion of clean energy?



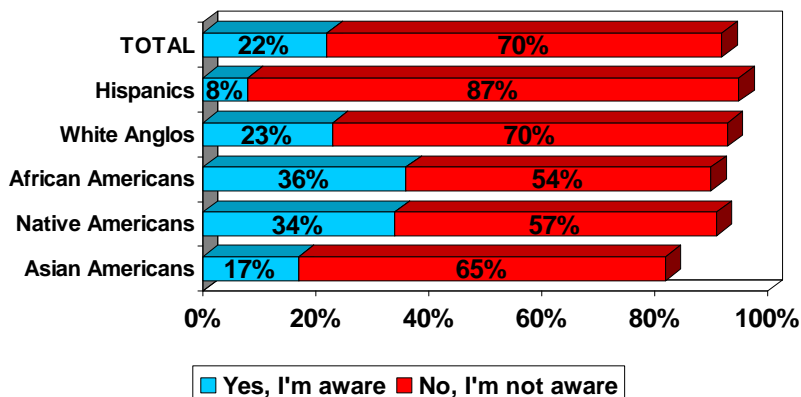
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7.) More than four-fifths of all Americans do NOT know of any small business in their community or neighborhood that has received a government loan over the last six months. Approximately two-thirds of all adults say that they are also NOT aware of any arts program, environmental project, health care research or affordable housing program in their community that has received stimulus dollars. This image of failure at the local level makes sense when you consider that only about one-third of African American, Hispanic, Asian American and Native American adults think that their community contractors and businesses know how to access stimulus dollars. Moreover, only one-quarter of Hispanics, Asian Americans and Native Americans and two-fifths of white Anglos and African Americans think that there is still time for local businesses and community groups to apply for economic stimulus dollars. The rest either think that most of the money has already been spent or have no opinion on the matter.

Thinking again about the last six months, are you aware of any small business in your community or neighborhood that was successful at getting a small business loan?

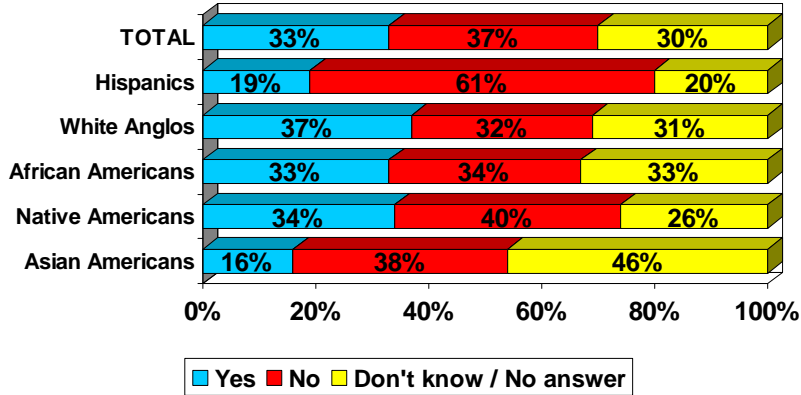


Now thinking about community organizations in your local area, are you aware of any of them receiving stimulus dollars for arts programs, environmental projects, health care research, job training programs, affordable housing programs or criminal justice rehabilitation programs?

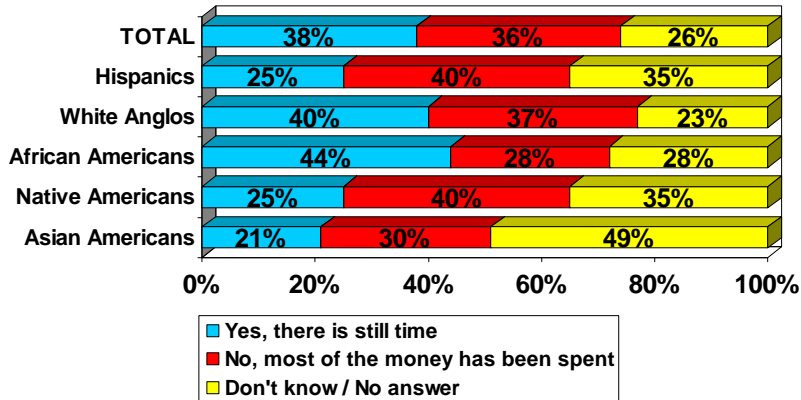


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Do you think that businesses, contractors and community groups in your local area have any idea of how to access economic stimulus dollars?

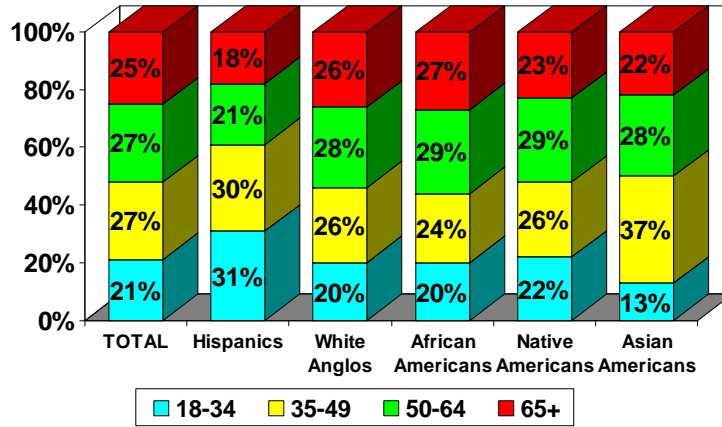


Do you think that there is still time for businesses, contractors and community groups in your local area to apply for economic stimulus dollars or do you think that most of the economic stimulus money has already been spent?

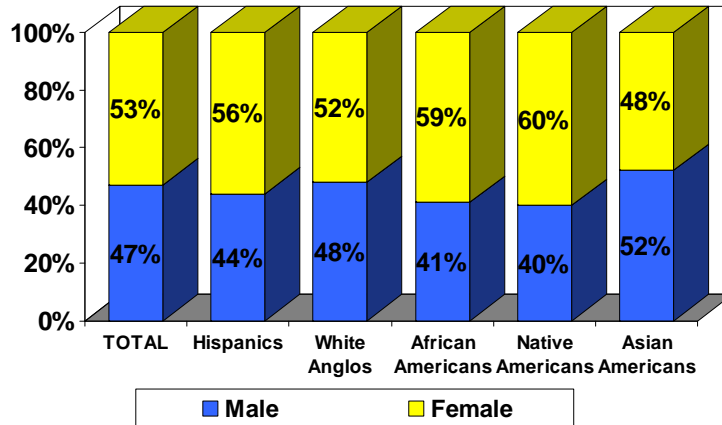


Demographics of Survey

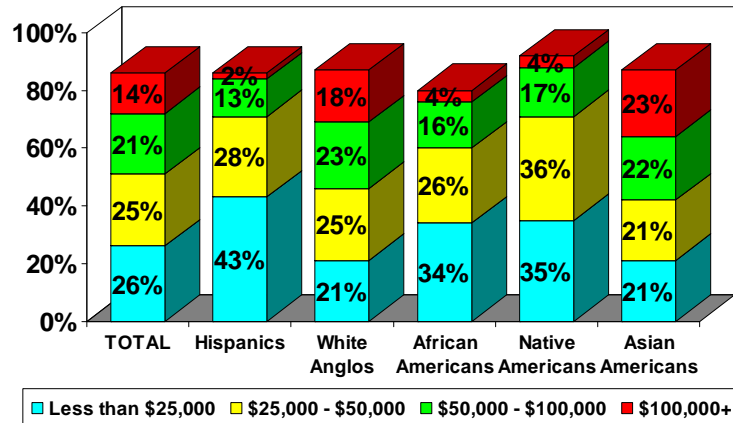
Age



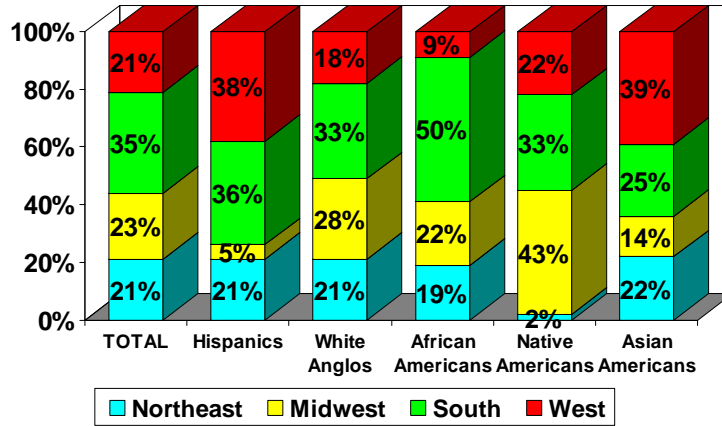
Gender



Annual Household Income



Region



How would you rate your current financial situation?

