



**Findings**

*Kaiser Family Foundation/NPR*

*Long-Term Unemployed Survey*

**December 2011**

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# KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION/NPR LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED SURVEY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the country grapples with the lingering effects of the Great Recession, many Americans continue to feel the impacts of the ailing economy in very real ways. One group that has been particularly hard-hit are those who have been out of work or getting by with only part-time work for an extended period of time. The Kaiser Family Foundation/NPR *Long-Term Unemployed Survey* seeks to describe the experiences of these individuals, including their outlook on the future, attitudes toward government, and the financial and health-related consequences of long-term joblessness and underemployment.

We surveyed two groups. The first (referred to in this report as the “long-term unemployed”) are those ages 18-64 who have been unemployed for a year or more and who would prefer to be working, regardless of how recently they’ve looked for a job. The second (referred to as the “long-term underemployed” or “long-term part-timers”) are those 18-64 year-olds who are working part-time but would prefer to be working full-time, and who have been without full-time work (either unemployed or working part-time only) for a year or more.<sup>1</sup> For comparison purposes, we also interviewed a sample of adults under age 65 who are currently working full-time jobs.

### Some of the key findings:

- The long-term un- and underemployed are less likely than full-time workers to hold a college degree, and their previous jobs were not high-paying (more than half earned less than \$30,000 a year at their last job). While a small share say leaving their last job was their own choice, about half say it was their employer’s decision, and another one in five say it was some of both.
- While six in ten of the long-term un- and underemployed feel they have all the education and skills they need in order to be competitive in the current job market, fewer than four in ten are very or somewhat confident they’ll be able to find a job with the pay and benefits they need to get by.
- The long-term un- and underemployed also paint a bleak picture of their personal financial situation. Three-quarters say they feel financially insecure, and when asked to use one word to describe their own personal financial situation, seven in ten use a word with a negative connotation, the most common being “poor,” “broke,” and “bad,” followed by “struggling” and “dire.”
- Many of those who have been jobless or without full-time work for an extended period of time report facing a long list of financial problems. Majorities say that in the past two years, they have taken money out of savings or retirement funds to help pay bills (59 percent), been contacted by a collection agency (53 percent), sold personal belongings (51 percent), or borrowed money from relatives or friends (51 percent). Almost half report problems paying for housing (47 percent) and food (44 percent), and a third (33 percent) say they’ve changed their living situation, such as moving in with relatives or friends in order to save money. Nearly a quarter (23 percent) say they’ve had their utilities turned off, and nine percent report losing their home due to eviction or foreclosure. In most cases, the reported rates of these problems are about twice as high among the long-term un- and underemployed as they are among full-time workers.

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<sup>1</sup> The estimates of long-term unemployment and long-term part-time employment provided by this survey differ from official government estimates in several ways. First, we limited our sample to adults ages 18-64 years of age, while government estimates include anyone ages 16 and over who is part of the “active labor force” (those who are either working or actively looking for a job). Second, to qualify as part of the government estimate of unemployed, a person must have actively looked for a job in the past 4 weeks and be available to work. In our survey criteria, a person must be able and available to work, but was counted as unemployed regardless of how long it had been since they last applied for a job (some of these people would be considered “discouraged workers” or “marginally attached to the labor force” in government statistics).

- Many of those who have been grappling with joblessness for a long time report negative impacts on their mental and physical health. More than half say that as a result of being out of work they have had difficulty sleeping or gained or lost more than 10 pounds. One in five say they have sought help from a medical professional for stress or other major health problems, and one in ten report starting a new prescription for a mental health problem since being out of work. Nine percent say they have increased their use of alcohol or drugs.
- Small but important shares of the long-term un- and underemployed report negative impacts on various types of relationships. A third say they have lost touch with close friends or family members as a result of their employment struggles, and they are more likely to say their relationships with their spouses, family members, and friends have gotten worse rather than better. However, parents are more evenly divided between saying their relationship with their children is better (21 percent) and worse (15 percent), perhaps because they have more time to spend with them while not working.
- In fact, many do report some upsides to being out of work or not working full-time. Roughly two-thirds say they have spent more time with family (67 percent) or spent more time on household chores or home improvements (64 percent), and a third (33 percent) say they have enjoyed not having to work for a while or working fewer hours.
- Employment problems also impact people's ability to access and pay for health care. More than four in ten of the long-term un- and underemployed say that they or another family member in their household has had problems paying medical bills in the past two years, and nearly three-quarters also report at least one problem in the household with skipping or delaying care due to cost in the past year. These problems include skipping dental care (63 percent), postponing getting needed health care (56 percent), skipping a recommended medical test or treatment (46 percent), not filling a prescription (40 percent), or problems getting mental health care because of the cost (18 percent). The reported rates of each of these problems are roughly twice as high as they are among those with full-time jobs.
- Beyond the help of family and friends, many of the long-term un- and underemployed seem to get by without the help of much of a safety-net, though some report getting help from churches, charities, and the government. However, only about one in ten feel the federal, state, and local governments have helped them "a lot" while they've been out of work, and they are more than three times as likely to say that federal government efforts to try and deal with the economic situation have hurt them and their family (38 percent) as to say they have helped (12 percent).
- When it comes to who or what they hold responsible for the country's economic situation, the long-term un- and underemployed dish out blame to Wall Street financial institutions, Congress, changes in the global economy, and (to a somewhat lesser extent) President Obama.
- The potential impact of long-term unemployment at the ballot box is unclear. While almost four in ten say their employment situation makes them more likely to vote in the next election, the large majority (69 percent) says that being out of work has not changed their political views (and among the small share who say it has changed their views, few say that it directly made them more likely to support candidates from one party or the other).

## KEY FINDINGS IN DETAIL

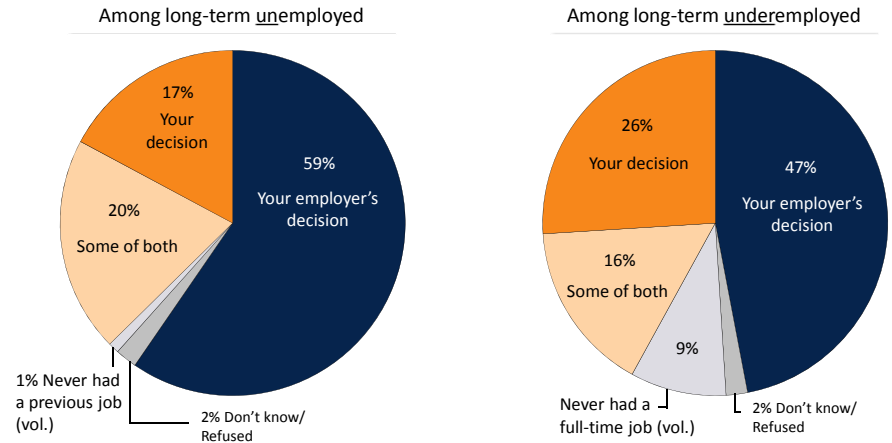
### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LONG-TERM UN- AND UNDEREMPLOYED

According to the survey, the long-term unemployed make up three percent of all non-elderly adults in the United States, representing roughly 5 million Americans<sup>2</sup>. By definition, they have all been without a job for at least a year, but many have been in their situation for much longer—more than half (54 percent) for at least two years, including a quarter (26 percent) who haven't worked in three or more years. They are somewhat older, on average, than the typical full-time American worker—a quarter of them are in the pre-retirement ages of 55-64, compared with 13 percent of full-time workers. Half of them are women (vs. 41 percent of the full-time employed), and 27 percent are black (vs. 10 percent of those with full-time jobs). Just 11 percent of the long-term unemployed hold a college degree (compared with 38 percent of full-time workers), while roughly half (49 percent) have a high school education or less.

While a small share (17 percent) say leaving their last job was their own choice, most (59 percent) say it was their employer's decision (another one in five say it was some of both). About half (51 percent) left jobs they had been at for two years or less, but nearly one in five (18 percent) were at their previous job for a decade or more before becoming jobless. For the most part, the jobs previously held by the long-term unemployed were

### Most Lost Their Last Job Due To Employer Decision

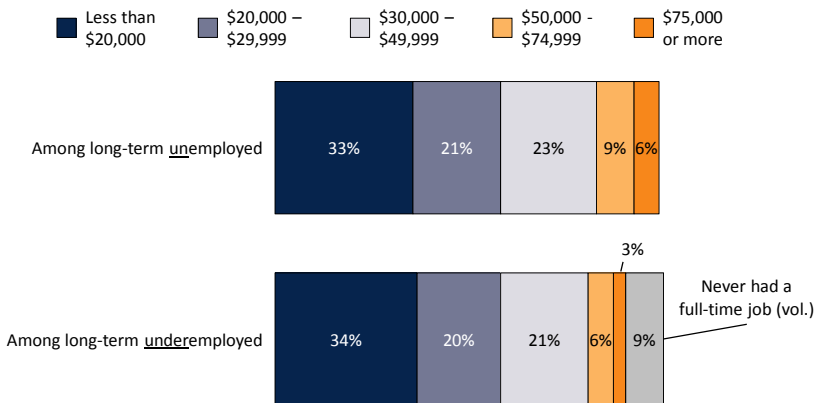
Was the decision to leave your last full-time job your decision, your employer's decision, or some of both?



Source: Kaiser Family Foundation/NPR Long-Term Unemployed Survey (conducted October 17 – November 16, 2011)

### More Than Half Earned \$30,000 Or Less At Last Job

Percent whose annual income from their last full-time job was:

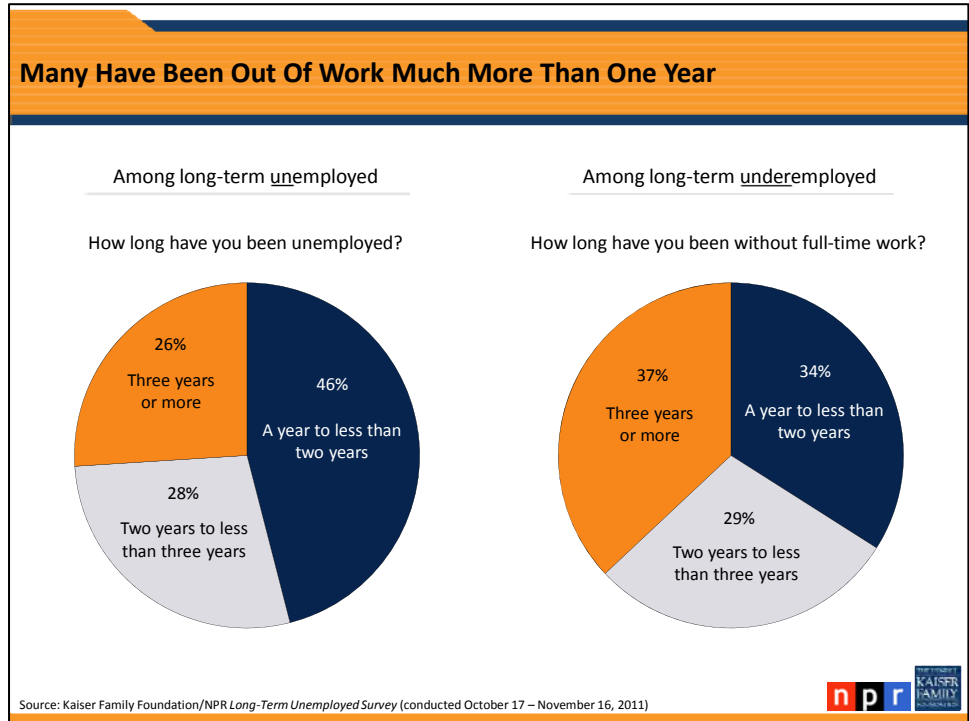


Note: Don't know/Refused answers not shown. Never had a previous job (vol.) not shown for long-term unemployed.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation/NPR Long-Term Unemployed Survey (conducted October 17 – November 16, 2011)

<sup>2</sup> While we don't expect the survey estimates to match up exactly with government statistics for the reasons stated in the previous footnote, a recent report from the Pew Fiscal Analysis Initiative based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that in the third quarter of 2011, 4.4 million Americans had been unemployed for a year or longer. See [http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Fiscal\\_Analysis/Long-term-unemployment-addendum-November-2011.pdf](http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Fiscal_Analysis/Long-term-unemployment-addendum-November-2011.pdf)

not high-paying. More than half (54 percent) say their last job paid less than \$30,000 annually, and just 6 percent say they were earning at least \$75,000.

The long-term underemployed, or long-term part-timers, who make up two percent of all non-elderly Americans (representing about 4 million people) look similar to the long-term unemployed in some respects, but a few key differences stand out. Demographically, the long-term underemployed are younger than the long-term unemployed (45 percent vs. 31 percent are under age 35), and more likely to have graduated from college (23 percent vs. 11 percent). Their racial and ethnic makeup looks more like those with full-time jobs than the long-term unemployed (62 percent are white, compared with 47 percent of the long-term unemployed and 68 percent of the full-time employed). While their previous incomes are similar to the long-term jobless, they've been in their situation even longer—two thirds (66 percent) have been without full-time work for at least two years, including 37 percent who haven't had a full-time job in three or more years.



Despite these differences, these two groups report facing similar challenges, both financially and personally. For the remainder of this report, we'll describe the two groups together as the long-term un- and underemployed and refer to differences between the groups when they exist.

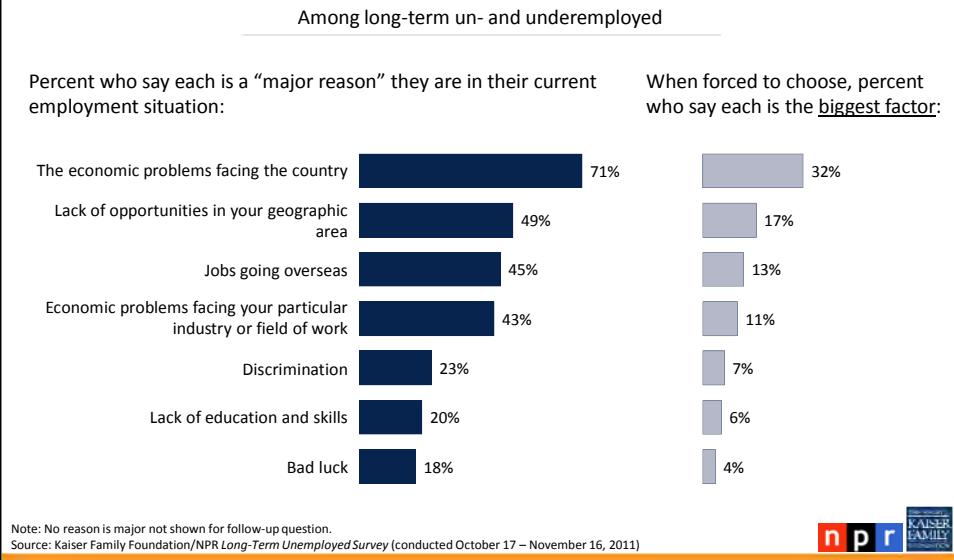
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE LONG-TERM UN- AND UNDEREMPLOYED, AND FULL-TIME WORKERS				
		Long-term <u>unemployed</u>	Long-term <u>underemployed</u>	Full-time workers
<b>Age</b>	18-24	10%	21%	8%
	25-34	21	24	25
	35-44	13	16	27
	45-54	29	23	26
	55-64	25	15	13
<b>Gender</b>	Male	49	44	59
	Female	51	56	41
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	White	47	62	68
	Black	27	10	10
	Hispanic	18	17	12
	Other/mixed race	5	8	7
<b>Education</b>	High school or less	49	48	33
	Some college	38	27	28
	College graduate	11	23	38

## MOST HAVE A PESSIMISTIC OUTLOOK ON THEIR JOB FUTURE

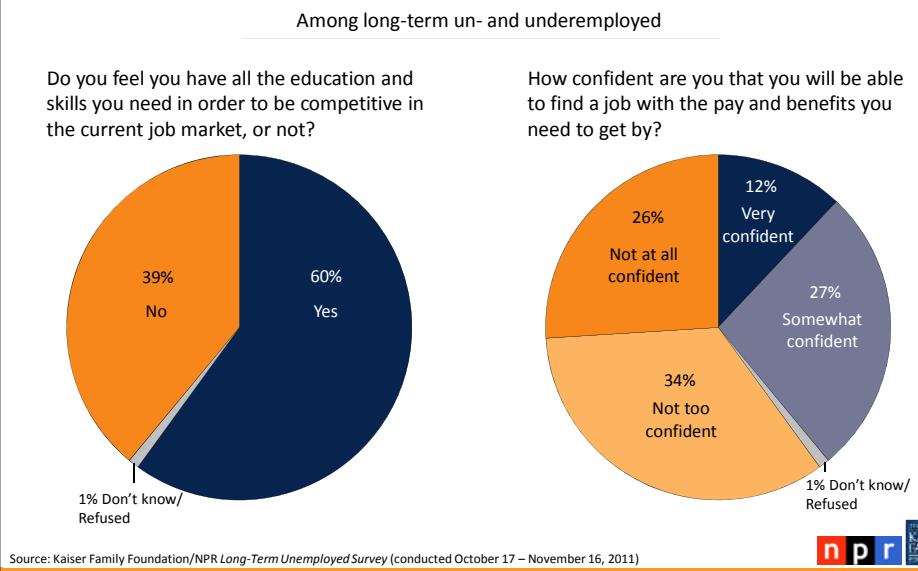
For the most part, the long-term un- and underemployed see economic factors rather than personal ones as the main reasons for their situation. A third (32 percent) say the economic problems facing the country are the biggest factor in their lack of employment, followed by lack of opportunities in their geographic area (17 percent), jobs going overseas (13 percent), and economic problems facing their particular industry or field of work (11 percent). Fewer cite factors like discrimination (7 percent), lack of education and skills (6 percent), or bad luck (4 percent). Still, while discrimination doesn't rise to the top of the list of factors to which people attribute their employment difficulties, a third (33 percent) say they have personally been discriminated against by a potential employer based on factors such as age (13 percent), race (9 percent), gender (3 percent) and the fact that they're currently unemployed (3 percent).

Worries about the country's continuing economic difficulties may be contributing to these workers' discouragement about their job prospects. While six in ten feel they have all the education and skills they need in order to be competitive in the current job market, fewer than four in ten are "very" (12 percent) or "somewhat confident" (27 percent) they'll be able to find a job with the pay and benefits they need to get by.

### Most See Economic Factors As Biggest Reason They Are Out Of Work

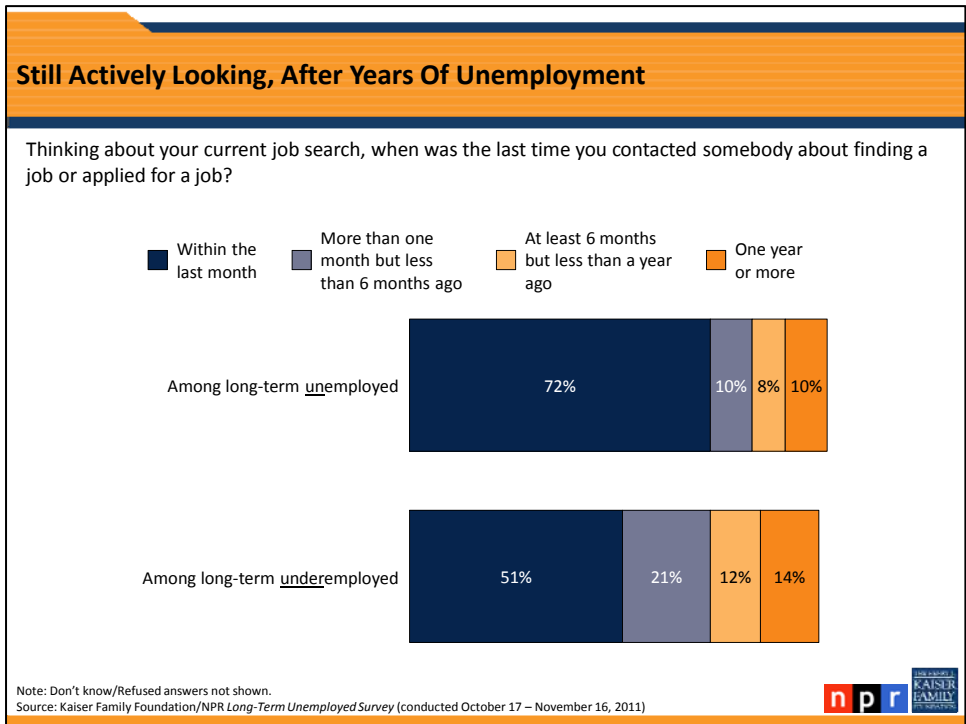


### Most Are Pessimistic About Job Future

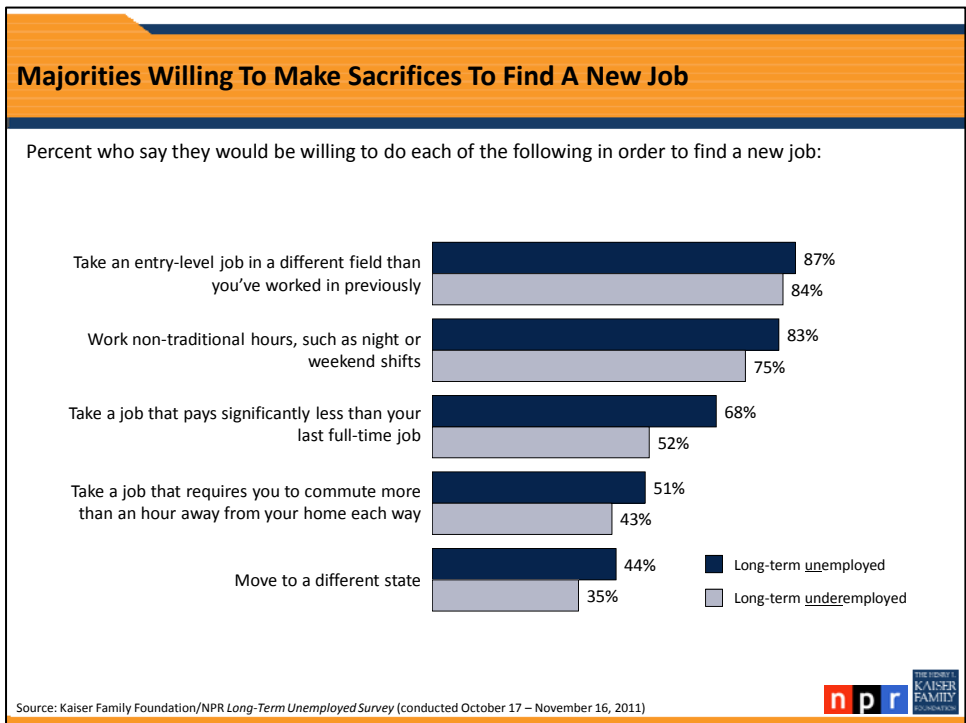


**BUT MOST HAVE NOT GIVEN UP THE JOB SEARCH, MANY REPORT WILLINGNESS TO MAKE SACRIFICES TO FIND A JOB**

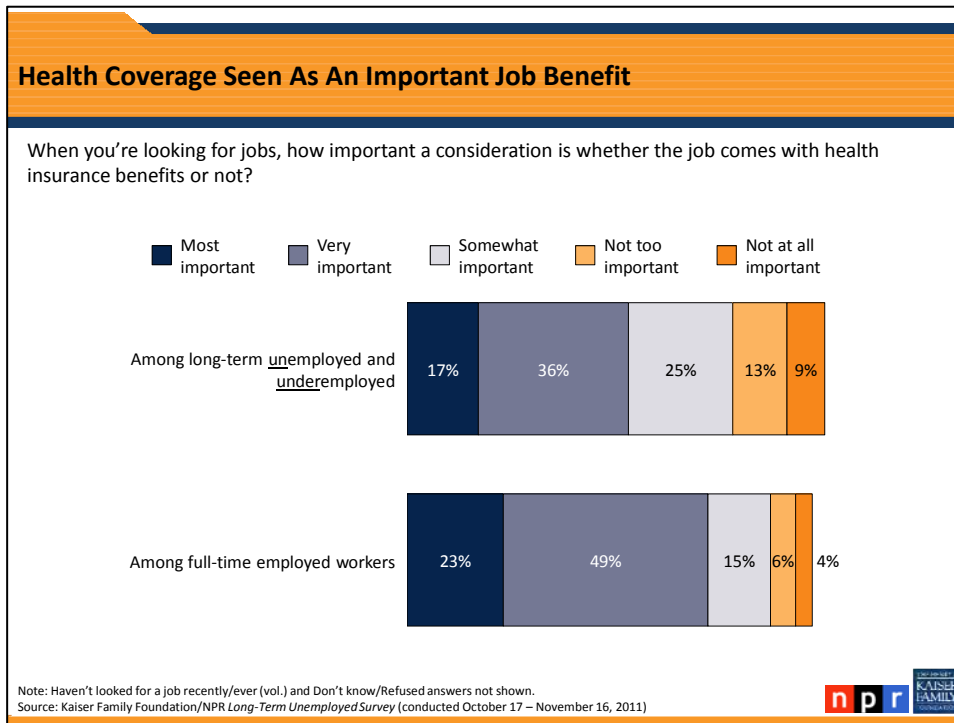
Despite this sense of discouragement, and likely out of necessity, most of the long-term unemployed don't appear to have given up the search. More than seven in ten (72 percent) say they've looked for a job within the last month, and another one in ten say they've looked within the last 6 months. A minority (18 percent) may be more discouraged, saying they haven't applied for a potential job in six months or more. Perhaps because they've been in their situation for longer, or perhaps because they have the cushion (and the demands) of a part-time job, the long-term underemployed have not been quite so active in their job hunts. About half (51 percent) say they've applied for a job in the past month, and a quarter (26 percent) say they haven't looked in at least 6 months.



At this point in their job search, most of the long-term unemployed report a willingness to make various sacrifices in order to find a new job, including taking an entry-level job in a new field (87 percent), working non-traditional hours (83 percent), and taking a significant pay cut from their last job (68 percent). Half (51 percent) say they'd be willing to take a job that requires them to commute more than an hour in each direction, and more than four in ten (44 percent) say they'd move to another state. In general, long-term part-timers are somewhat less willing to make these sacrifices, though large shares say they'd take an entry-level job in a new field (84 percent) or work non-traditional hours (75 percent), and more than half (52 percent) would be willing to work for significantly less than pay than their last full-time job.

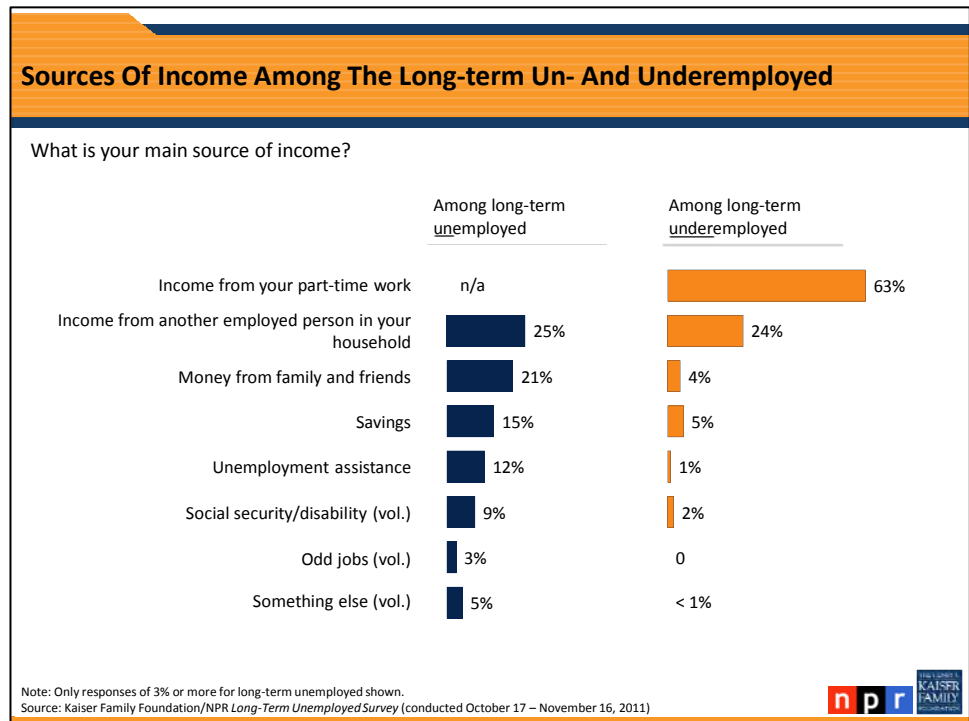


Most workers see health insurance as a very important benefit to having a job. However, as a reflection of their need to make compromises in order to find work, the long-term un- and underemployed are less likely than those with full-time jobs to prioritize health insurance benefits in their job search. Just over half (53 percent) say that whether a job comes with health insurance is the “most important” or a “very important” consideration when they’re looking for jobs, compared with seven in ten (72 percent) of those who are currently employed full-time.



### THE LONG-TERM UN- AND UNDEREMPLOYED FACE A LONG LIST OF FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

Three in ten (31 percent) of the long-term unemployed and four in ten (41 percent) of the long-term underemployed live in a house with at least one full-time worker. Still, just about a quarter of each group says another worker in their household is their main source of income. While six in ten of the long-term underemployed say their part-time work provides their main income source, the long-term unemployed are more likely to be scraping by on money from family and friends (21 percent), savings (15 percent), unemployment assistance (12 percent), or disability or Social Security payments collected by themselves or someone else in the household (9 percent).





Just over one in five (22 percent) of the long-term unemployed say they are currently receiving unemployment benefits, and another third (35 percent) have received them at some point since being unemployed. Nearly all of those who currently get benefits think it is very likely (70 percent) or somewhat likely (24 percent) that their benefits will run out before they find a new job.

Given their income situation, it's not surprising that the survey responses of the long-term un- and underemployed paint a bleak financial picture. When asked to use one word to describe their own personal financial situation, seven in ten use a word with a negative connotation, the most common being "poor," "broke," and "bad," followed by "struggling" and "dire". Asked directly about their sense of financial security, three-quarters (74 percent) say they feel at least somewhat insecure, including 41 percent who say they feel "very" insecure.

### Financial Situation in One Word

If you had to use one word to describe your own personal financial situation these days, what would it be?



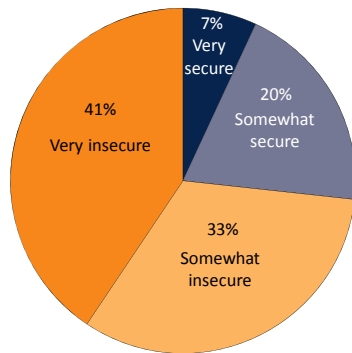
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation/NPR Long-Term Unemployed Survey (conducted October 17 – November 16, 2011)



### Feelings Of Financial Insecurity

Among long-term un- and underemployed

All in all, how financially secure do you feel?



If you had to use one word to describe your own personal financial situation these days, what would it be? (open-end)

	Percent
<b>Negative outlook (NET)</b>	<b>70%</b>
Poor	12
Broke	7
Bad	5
Struggling	4
Dire	3
Hard	2
Terrible	2
Tight	2
<b>Positive outlook (NET)</b>	<b>7</b>
Comfortable	2
Stable	2
<b>Moderate outlook (NET)</b>	<b>14</b>
Okay	4
Fair	2

Note: Only responses of 2% or more shown for open-end question. Other and Don't know/Refused answers not shown for follow-up question.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation/NPR Long-Term Unemployed Survey (conducted October 17 – November 16, 2011)



Many of those who have been jobless or without full-time work for an extended period of time report facing a long list of financial problems. Majorities say that in the past two years, they have taken money out of savings or retirement funds to help pay bills (59 percent), been contacted by a collection agency (53 percent), sold personal belongings (51 percent), or borrowed money from relatives or friends (51 percent). Almost half report problems paying for housing (47 percent) and food (44 percent), and a third (33 percent) say they've changed their living situation, such as moving in with relatives or friends in order to save money. Nearly a quarter (23 percent) say they've had their utilities turned off, and nine percent report losing their home due to eviction or foreclosure.

Many of those with full-time jobs report experiencing similar financial struggles, but in most cases, the reported rates of these problems are about twice as high among the long-term un- and underemployed as they are among full-time workers. The exceptions are taking money out of savings or retirement and increasing credit card debt to help pay bills, which are reported at similar rates by both groups.

PERCENT WHO SAY THAT EACH OF THE FOLLOWING HAS HAPPENED IN THE PAST TWO YEARS		
	Among long-term un- and underemployed	Among full-time employed
Taken money out of your savings or retirement fund to help pay bills	59%	54%
Been contacted by a collection agency about bills you owe	53	27
Borrowed money from relatives or friends to help pay bills	51	30
Sold personal belongings to help pay bills	51	24
Had problems paying your rent or mortgage	47	27
Had problems paying for food	44	21
Changed your living situation, such as moving in with parents, other family, or friends in order to save money	33	17
Increased your credit card debt to help pay bills	23	29
Had any of your utilities turned off	23	9
Postponed getting married or having a baby for financial reasons	15	15
Lost your home due to eviction or foreclosure	9	4

The financial stress of being out of work also leads some to put major life decisions on hold. Fifteen percent of the long-term un- and underemployed say that in the past two years, they have put off getting married or having a baby for financial reasons (a similar rate to full-time workers).

### **MANY REPORT IMPACTS ON PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH, INCLUDING PROBLEMS ACCESSING AND PAYING FOR CARE**

The stress of unemployment can take a toll on one's health, both physically and mentally, and those who have been grappling with joblessness for a long time often feel these impacts in major ways. Nearly four in ten (38 percent) of the long-term unemployed report their own physical health status as "only fair" or "poor," twice as many as among the long-term part-timers (19 percent), and three times as many as a national sample of 18-64 year-olds in a recent survey (12 percent)<sup>3</sup>.

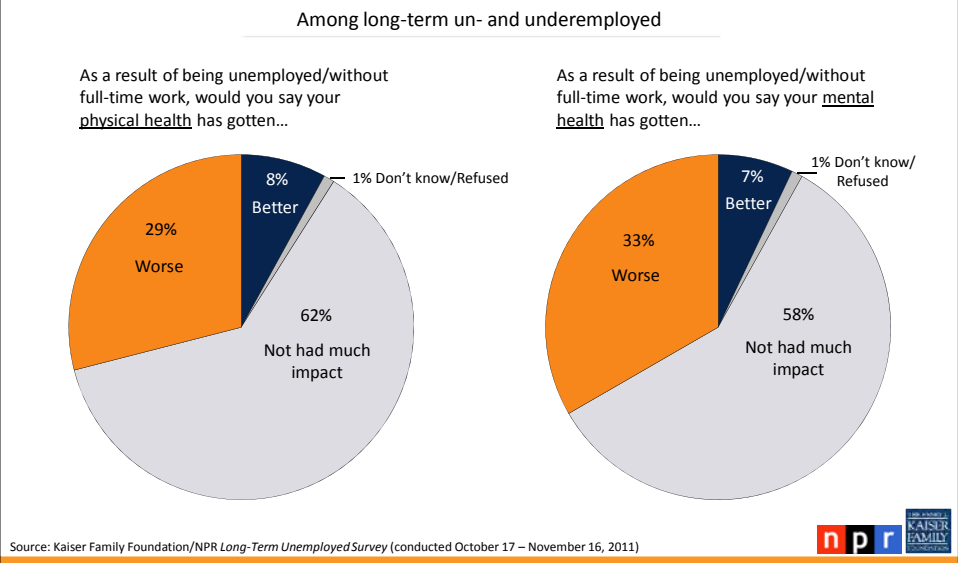
It's hard to determine causality—whether extended unemployment leads to poor health, or vice versa—but the survey findings indicate that the arrow may point in both directions. While six in ten (62 percent) of the long-term un- and underemployed say their employment status hasn't had much impact on their physical health, more say their health has gotten worse (29 percent) than better (8 percent). And while both groups report being in better mental than physical health (just 14 percent say their mental health is only fair or poor), they are also more likely to say their lack of employment has made their mental health worse (33 percent), rather than better (7 percent). As evidence that the effect may also run in the other direction, one in five (19 percent) say that problems with their mental or physical health have made it difficult for them to look for or find a new job.

<sup>3</sup> Source: Kaiser Family Foundation, *Kaiser Health Tracking Survey*, November 2011.

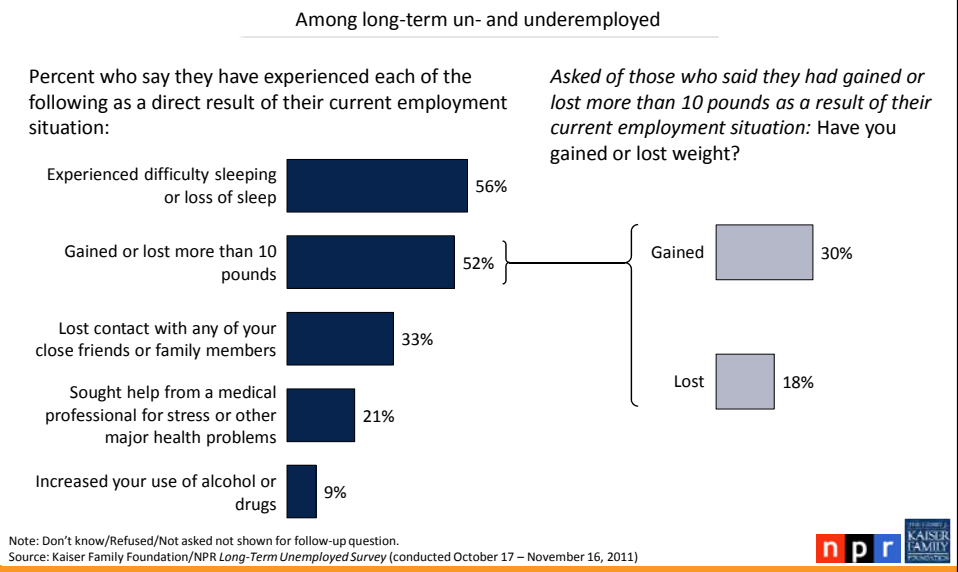
Both those who are without any work and those who have been only partially employed for an extended period of time report some specific health consequences related to their employment situation. Nearly six in ten (56 percent) say they have had difficulty sleeping or loss of sleep. More than half (52 percent) say they have gained or lost more than 10 pounds as a result of being out of work, including more who report gaining (30 percent) than losing (18 percent).

Other ill health effects are less commonly reported, but some are quite serious. One in five (21 percent) say they have sought help from a medical professional for stress or other major health problems as a direct result of their employment situation, and one in ten (10 percent) report starting a new prescription for a mental health problem since being out of work. Nine percent say they have increased their use of alcohol or drugs.

## More Report A Negative Than A Positive Impact On Physical, Mental Health

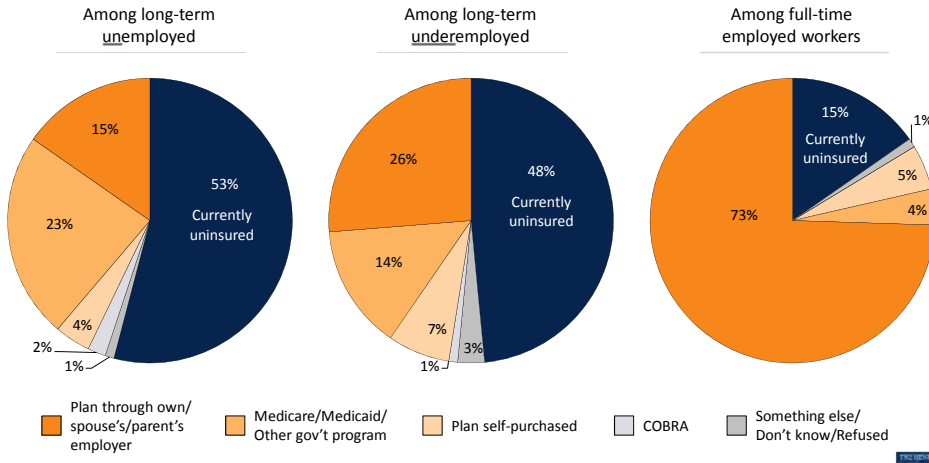


## Specific Health/Stress Impacts Of Being Out Of Work



## Reported Health Insurance Status Of Long-Term Un- And Underemployed Compared With Full-Time Workers

Are you, yourself, now covered by any form of health insurance or health plan or do you not have health insurance at this time? Which type of health insurance do you now have?



Source: Kaiser Family Foundation/NPR Long-Term Unemployed Survey (conducted October 17 – November 16, 2011)

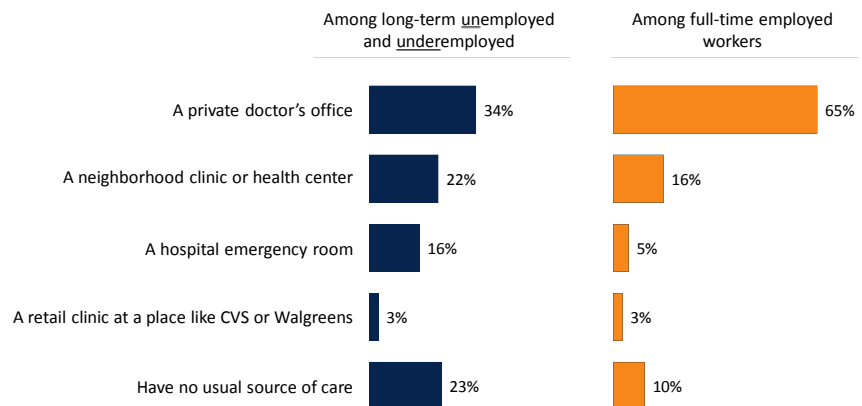
Employment problems also impact people's ability to access and pay for health care. While 85 percent of those with full-time jobs report being covered by health insurance, roughly half (51 percent) of the long-term un- and underemployed say they have no health coverage whatsoever. About half of those without coverage (making up 26 percent of the long-term un- and underemployed overall) say they became uninsured as a result of losing their job. Among those who do have coverage, the long-term unemployed are most likely to report getting it through Medicare, Medicaid, or another government program (23 percent), while the long-term underemployed are most likely to say they get coverage through

their part-time job or a spouse's or parent's employer (26 percent). Just 2 percent of the long-term unemployed and 1 percent of the long-term underemployed say they have COBRA coverage from a former job.

When they are sick or need medical advice, the long-term un- and underemployed are much more likely than those with full-time jobs to say they rely on a hospital emergency room or that they have no usual place to go for care (39 percent, compared with 15 percent of full-time employees). This rises to almost six in ten (58 percent) among those who are both un- or underemployed and uninsured. Correspondingly, more than four in ten (43 percent) of the long-term un- and underemployed say that they or another family member living in their household has had problems paying medical bills in the past two years, including 23 percent who say such bills have had a major impact on their family.

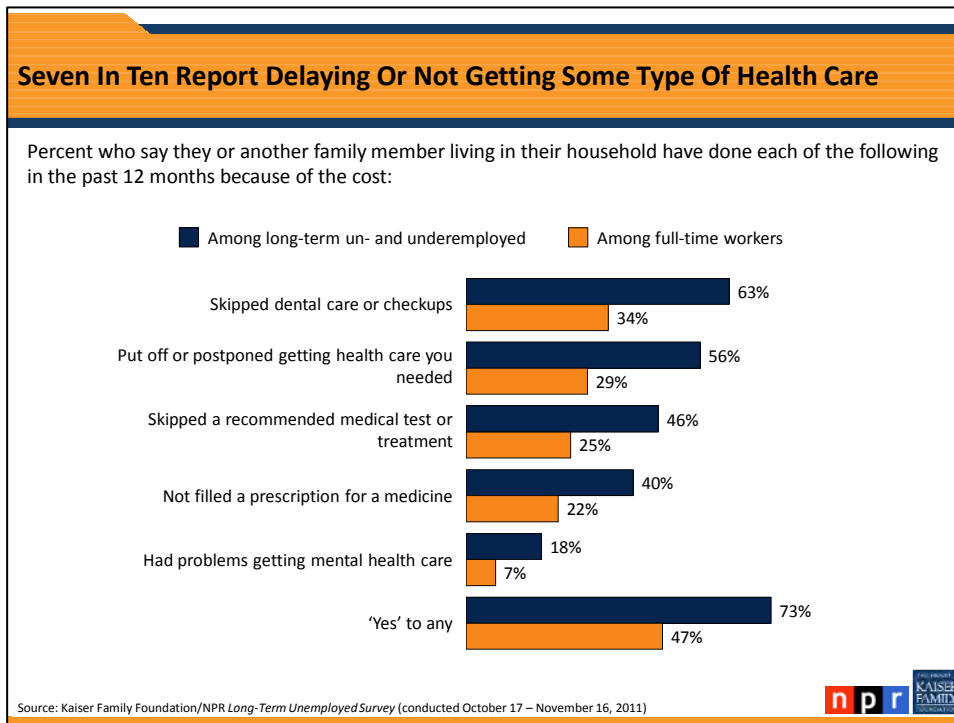
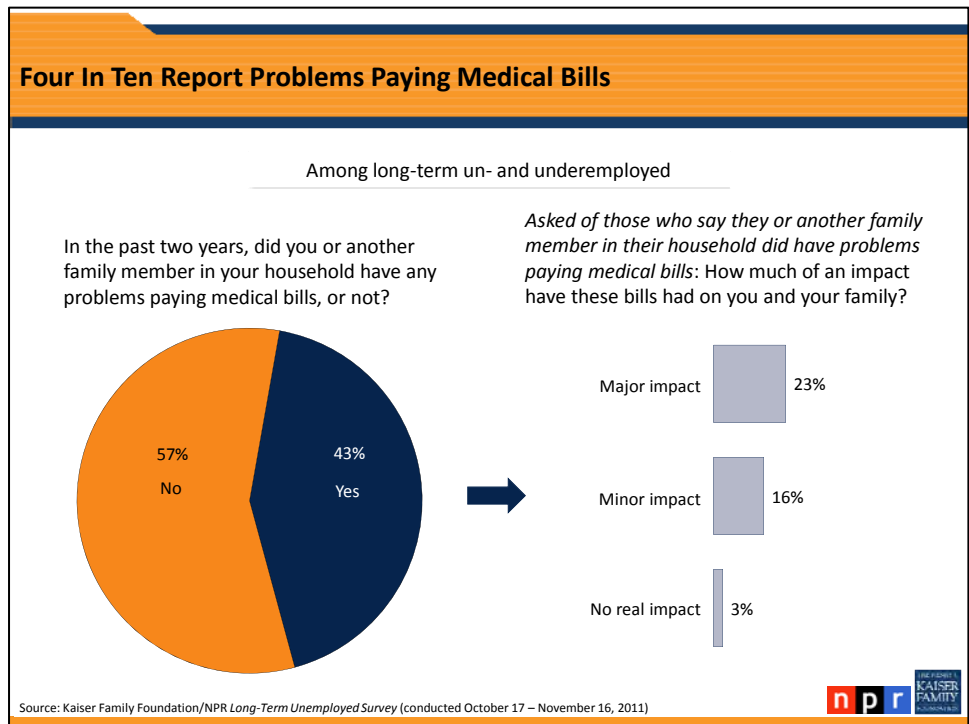
## Long-Term Jobless Are Less Likely To See Private Doctors, More Likely To Rely On Hospital ER Or Have No Usual Source Of Care

Today, what kind of place, if any, do you usually go to when you are sick or when you need advice about your health?



Note: University/student health center (vol.) and Don't know/Refused answers not shown.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation/NPR Long-Term Unemployed Survey (conducted October 17 – November 16, 2011)

The large majority (73 percent) of the long-term un- and underemployed also report at least one problem with skipping or delaying care due to cost in the past year. Most commonly, more than six in ten (63 percent) say they or another family member in their household has skipped dental care or check-ups, and over half say (56 percent) they have postponed getting needed health care because of the cost. Almost half report skipping a recommended medical test or treatment (46 percent), and four in ten (40 percent) say they have not filled a prescription because of the expense. Nearly one in five (18 percent) report problems getting mental health care. The reported rates of each of these problems are roughly twice as high as they are among those with full-time jobs.

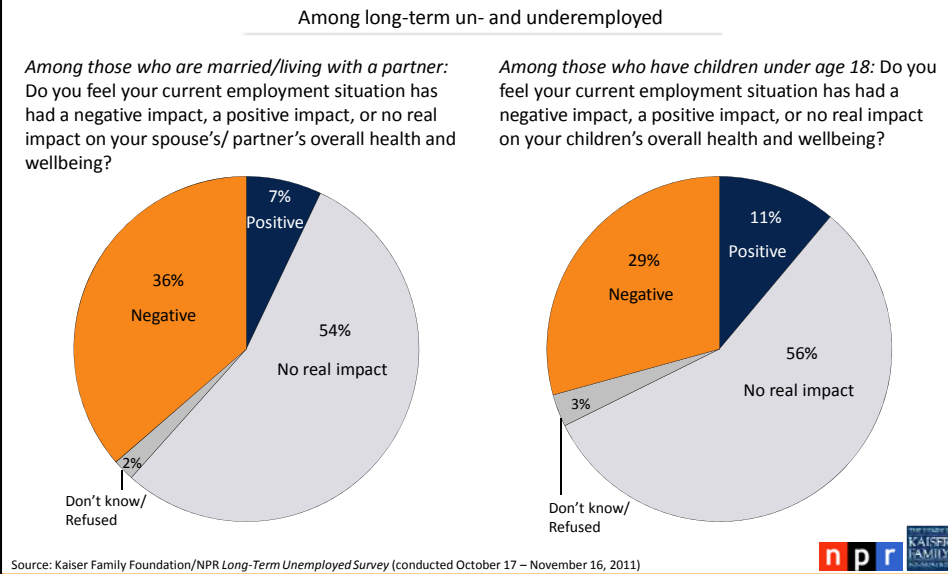


## IMPACTS ON RELATIONSHIPS AND OTHERS IN THE HOUSEHOLD

Negative health effects sometimes extend to others in the household as well. Of those long-term un- and unemployed who are married or living with a partner, more than a third (36 percent) say their employment situation has had a negative impact on their spouse or partner's well-being, while 7 percent say the effect has been positive. Similarly, parents are almost three times as likely to say their children's health has gotten worse (29 percent) rather than better (11 percent) as a result of their employment situation.

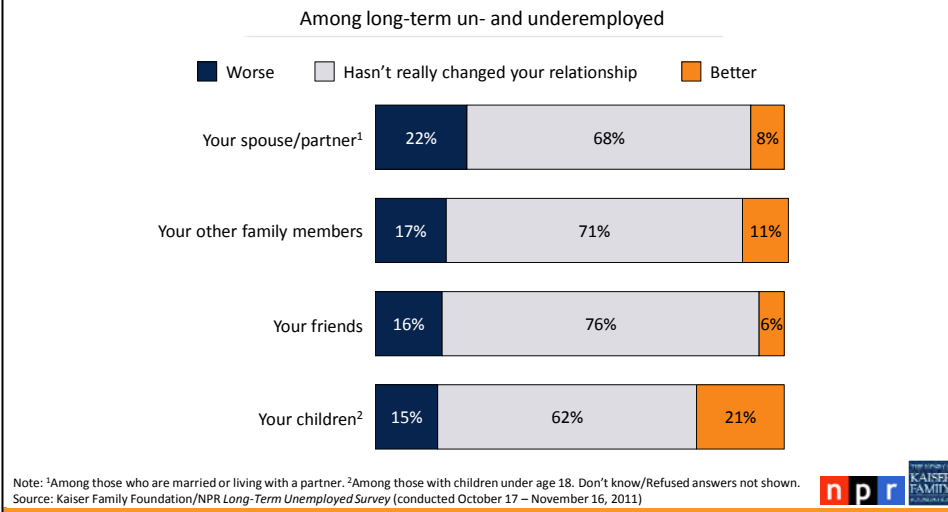
More broadly, small but important shares of the long-term un- and underemployed report negative impacts on various types of relationships. A third (33 percent) say they have lost touch with close friends or family members as a result of their employment struggles. More than one in five (22 percent) say their relationship with their spouse or partner has gotten worse, and nearly one in five say the same about their relationships with other family members (17 percent) and friends (16 percent). A similar share of parents says their relationship with their children has gotten worse (15 percent), though parents are about equally likely to say they have a better relationship with their children (21 percent), perhaps because they have more time to spend with them while not working.

### More See Negative Than Positive Impact On Spouse/Children's Health

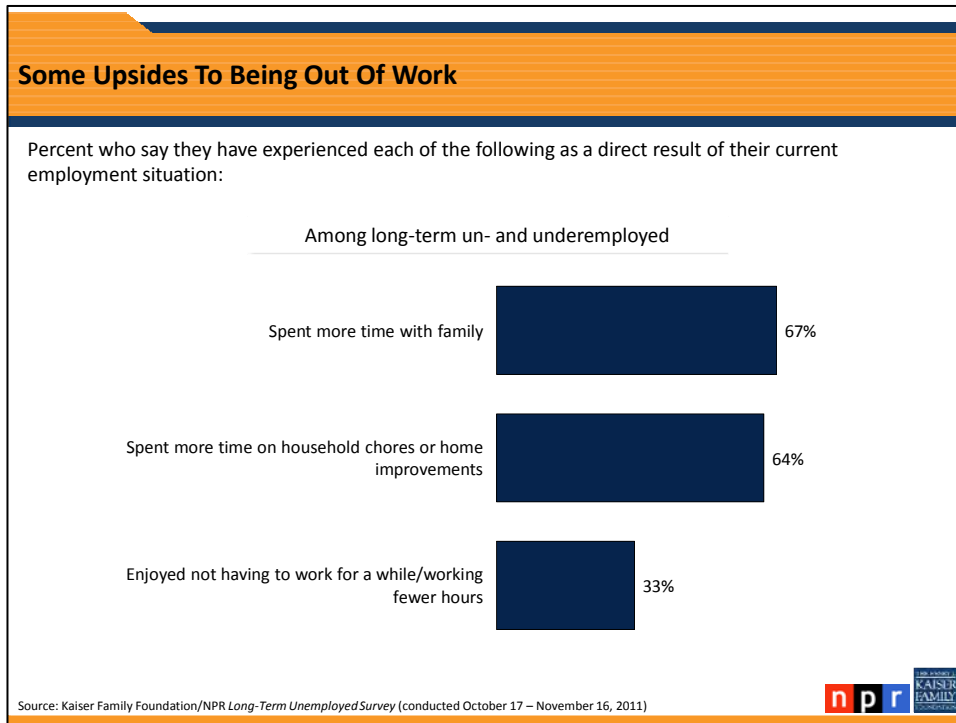


### More See Negative Than Positive Impact On Relationships With Spouse, Family, Friends, But Split On Impact On Children

Has being unemployed/your current employment situation changed your relationships with each of the following for the better, for the worse, or hasn't it really changed your relationships?



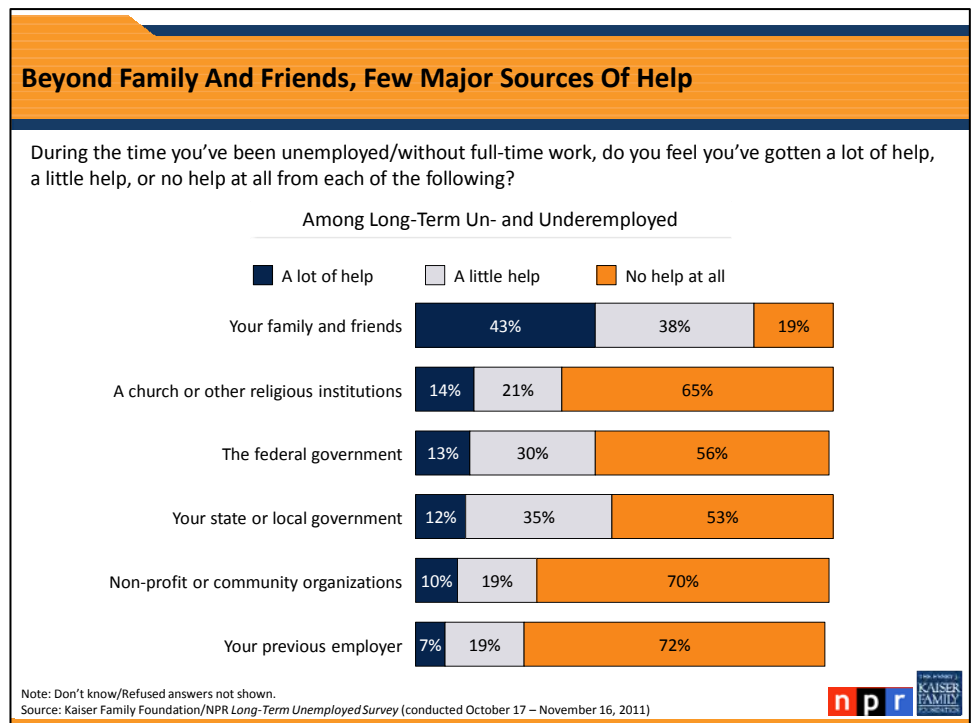
In fact, many do report some upsides to being out of work or not working full-time. Roughly two-thirds say they have spent more time with family (67 percent) or spent more time on household chores or home improvements (64 percent), and a third (33 percent) say they have enjoyed not having to work for a while or working fewer hours.



### LIMITED SAFETY NET, AND A HOPE FOR MORE HELP FROM GOVERNMENT

Beyond the help of family and friends, many of the long-term un- and underemployed seem to get by without the help of much of a safety-net, though some report getting help from churches, charities, and the government. Friends and family appear to be the largest source of support, with 43 percent saying they have gotten a lot of help from these folks since losing their job, and another 38 percent saying they've helped a little. Smaller shares report getting some help from churches or other religious institutions (35 percent) or non-profit organizations (29 percent). Just about a quarter (26 percent) report getting at least a little help from their previous employer.

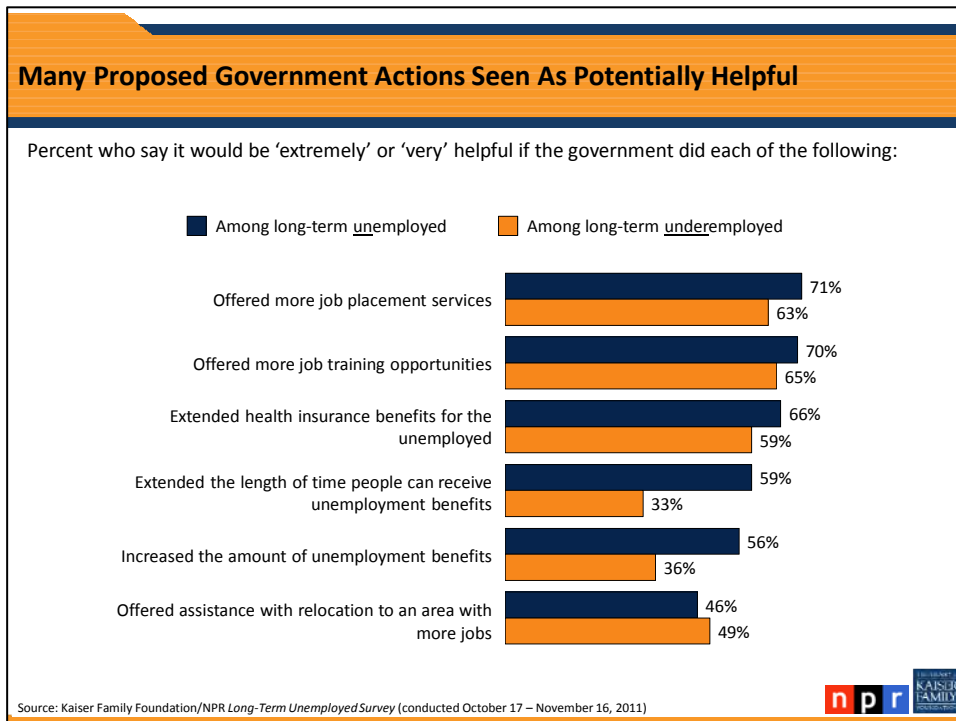
When it comes to government, the long-term unemployed are more likely than the long-term underemployed to feel they've been helped, perhaps because most of those who are working part-time aren't eligible for unemployment benefits. Among the long-term unemployed, about half feel they've gotten at least some help from both the federal government (48



percent) and their state or local government (54 percent), though fewer say they've been helped "a lot" (19 percent and 15 percent, respectively). Among long-term part-timers, closer to a third say the federal (35 percent) and state/local (37 percent) governments have helped them, and fewer than one in ten (4 percent and 7 percent, respectively) feel they've gotten a lot of help.

Those who feel they have been helped by the federal government are most likely to cite unemployment benefits as the way government has helped them (19 percent), followed by food stamps or WIC (8 percent), help with health care or insurance (3 percent), and other economic assistance (3 percent).

Asked about some specific things the government might do that could help them, the long-term unemployed believe a variety of measures would be extremely or very helpful. At the top of the list are services to help them find a job so they can be self-sufficient, such as job placement services (71 percent) and job training opportunities (70 percent). Following these are extensions of other types of benefits, such as extending health insurance benefits for the unemployed (66 percent), extending the length of time people can collect unemployment (59 percent), and increasing the amount of unemployment benefits (56 percent). Fewer would find government assistance with relocation to an area with more jobs to be extremely or very helpful (46 percent). In general, the long-term part-timers are somewhat less likely than the long-term unemployed to say each of these steps would be extremely helpful to them personally, but still large shares say each would help at least somewhat.

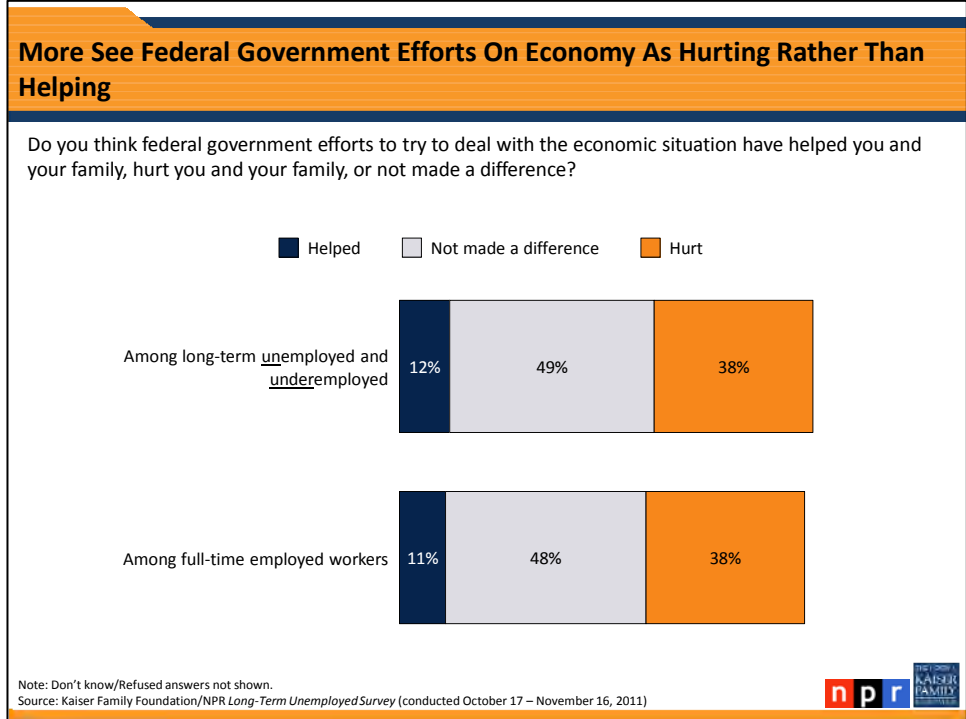




**A NEGATIVE VIEW OF GOVERNMENT, QUESTIONABLE IMPACT OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT AT THE BALLOT BOX**

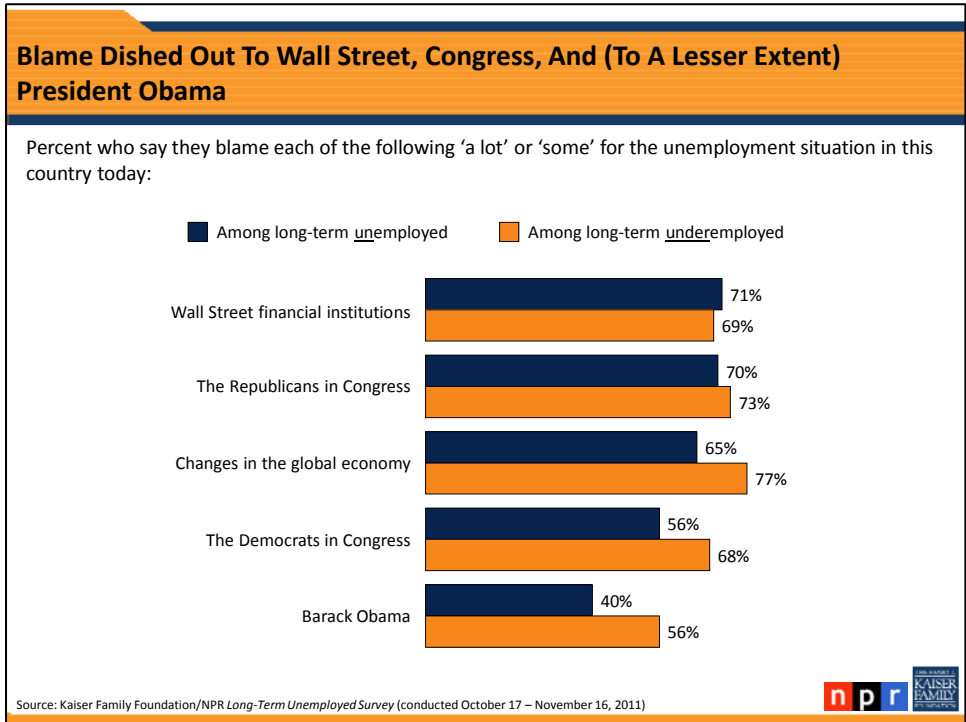
Like the rest of the nation, the long-term un- and underemployed do not look favorably on the federal government these days. Just 16 percent say they can trust the government in Washington to do what is right “just about always” or “most of the time,” somewhat lower than the 24 percent of full-time workers who say the same. And like full-time workers, they are more than three times as likely to say that federal government efforts to try and deal with the economic situation have hurt them and their family (38 percent) as to say they have helped (12 percent).

Politically, the long-term un- and underemployed are more likely than full-time workers to identify as Democrats, and less likely to identify as Republicans. Roughly half of both groups call themselves either a Democrat or an independent who leans more toward the Democratic party, while just a quarter of the long-term unemployed and a third of the long-term underemployed call themselves a Republican or say they lean in that direction. By contrast, full-time workers are about evenly split between Democrats and Democratic leaners (41 percent) and Republicans and Republican leaners (42 percent).

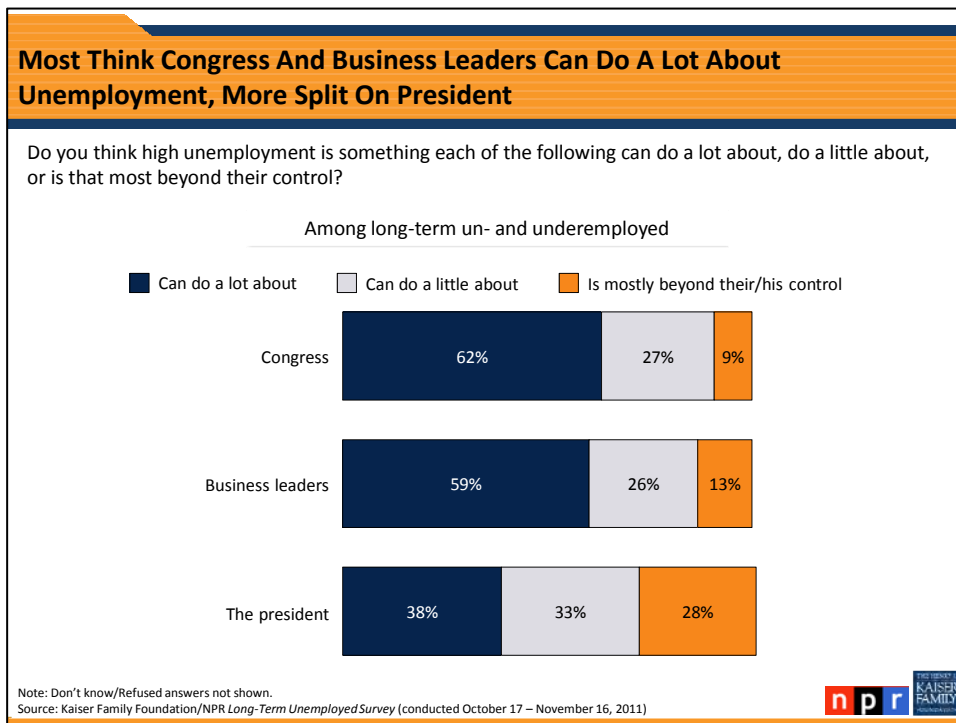


POLITICAL PARTY IDENTIFICATION OF THE LONG-TERM UN- AND UNDEREMPLOYED, AND FULL-TIME WORKERS			
	Long-term <u>unemployed</u>	Long-term <u>underemployed</u>	Full-time Workers
<b>Democrat/Lean Democrat (Net)</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>41%</b>
Democrat	42	30	27
Independent Lean Democrat	13	19	14
<b>Republican/Lean Republican (Net)</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>42</b>
Independent Lean Republican	9	13	16
Republican	16	20	26
<b>Independent/don't lean</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Something else</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Don't know/Refused</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

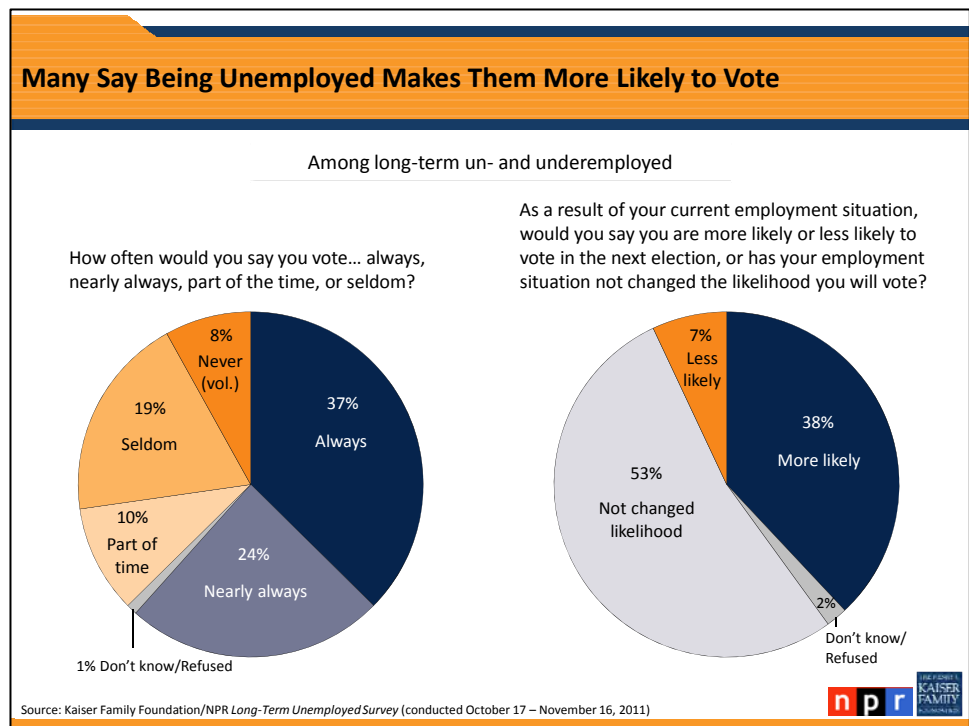
When it comes to who or what they hold responsible for the country's economic situation, both the long-term un- and underemployed dish out blame to Wall Street financial institutions (71 percent say they blame Wall Street "a lot" or "some") and changes in the global economy (70 percent). Large shares of both groups also blame the Republicans in Congress (71 percent). On the other side of the aisle, the long-term unemployed are somewhat less likely to blame the Democrats in Congress (56 percent) and president Obama (40 percent) for high unemployment, while long-term part-timers are more likely to find Congressional Democrats and the president culpable (68 percent and 56 percent, respectively).



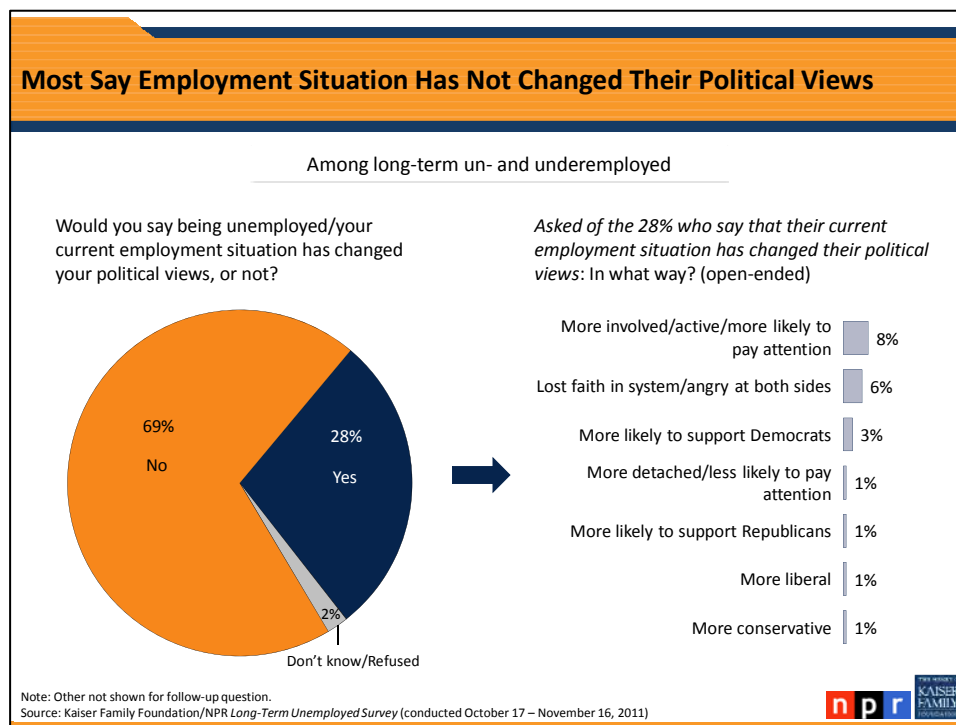
And while they cut the president some slack, they're not letting Congress or business leaders off the hook. Majorities say that high unemployment is something Congress (62 percent) and business leaders (59 percent) can do a lot about. As for the president, almost four in ten (38 percent) think he can do a lot about high unemployment, a third (33 percent) think he can do a little, and about three in ten (28 percent) think it is mostly beyond his control.



These attitudes and continuing frustration with their employment status could have an impact at the ballot box in 2012, though it's not entirely clear in which direction. Most (53 percent) of the long-term un- and underemployed say their employment situation has not changed the likelihood that they will vote in the next election, though nearly four in ten (38 percent) say it makes them more likely to vote. However, their reported level of political engagement is somewhat lower to begin with (half of full-time workers say they "always" vote, compared with 37 percent of the long-term un- and underemployed), so it remains to be seen what the actual impact will be.



Further, the large majority (69 percent) says being unemployed or without full-time work has not changed their political views, and among the few who say it has changed their views, few say that it directly made them more likely to support candidates from one party or the other. Most commonly, those whose views have changed say their employment situation has either made them more likely to pay attention to politics (8 percent) or made them lose faith in the system or be angry at both sides (6 percent).



## SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The Kaiser Family Foundation/NPR *Long-Term Unemployed Survey* is part of a series of survey projects about health-related issues by NPR and the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. Representatives of the two organizations worked together to develop the survey questionnaire and to analyze the results, with NPR maintaining sole editorial control over its broadcasts and online reporting relating to the survey results. The survey research team included Mollyann Brodie, Ph.D., Liz Hamel, Bianca DiJulio, Sarah Cho, and Theresa Boston from the Kaiser Family Foundation; and Joe Neel, Vickie Walton, Steve Drummond, Uri Berliner and Anne Gudenkauf from NPR.

The survey was conducted via landline and cellular telephone October 17 through November 16, 2011, among a nationally representative random sample of adults ages 18-64 who met one of the following definitions:

- **Long-term unemployed:** Respondents ages 18-64 who say they are currently unemployed, would prefer to be working and are available and able to work, and have been out of work for one year or more
- **Long-term underemployed:** Respondents ages 18-64 who say they are currently working part-time, would prefer to be working full time and are available and able to work full time, and have been without full-time work (either unemployed or working part-time) for one year or more
- **Full-time workers:** Respondents ages 18-64 who say they are currently working full-time

In order to obtain enough interviews with this low-incidence population, a complex sampling design was employed that involved a stratified random sample with more calls made in areas with higher known rates of unemployment vs. those with lower unemployment rates, as well as callbacks to households that were previously identified as having an un- or underemployed household member in a nationally representative omnibus survey. Weighting adjustments were made to account for the probability of selection from each of these sources. In addition, demographic information was collected from all respondents, including a sample of those reached via random telephone sampling who did not meet one of the criteria for the survey. Weighting adjustments were made to match the overall sample to current Census estimates of the U.S. population by gender, age, education, race/ethnicity, Census region, home ownership, and population density, as well as matching patterns of telephone usage (landline/cell phone) to current national estimates based on the National Health Interview survey.

The number of respondents and margin of sampling error for each group is shown below. For results based on smaller subsets of respondents the margin of sampling error is somewhat higher.

Group:	Long term un- and underemployed total	Long-term unemployed	Long-term underemployed	Full-time workers
N:	713	413	300	757
Margin of sampling error (percentage points):	+/-5	+/-7	+/-8	+/-5

Social Science Research Solutions (SSRS) carried out telephone interviews in English and Spanish, and also assisted with the survey sampling and weighting.

- Please note: (1) Table percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.  
 (2) "Vol." indicates that a response was volunteered by the respondent and not an explicitly offered choice.  
 (3) Sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error in this or any other public opinion poll.



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