

We are pleased to present the results of the 14th annual Michigan Economic Outlook Survey.

Our expert panel today will offer insight into Michigan's economy and where it may be headed in 2026. My role is simple: present what we heard from across the state.

This survey can be a complement to the robust and widely respected reporting from the Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics at the University of Michigan and represented here today in our panel.

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Thanks go to **Steve Grigorian** and the Detroit Economic Club for their ongoing support over the course of this program. Thanks also to **Dianne Keller, Sheri Petras, David Ham, Don Hart, Jimmy Hsiao, and Brad Smith**.

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The survey focuses on one primary goal: make Michigan a great place to grow a business.

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The survey opens one week after Election Day, with respondents from organizations across Michigan.

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For the measurement, we use a proven methodology developed by Ann Arbor-based consulting firm CFI Group, co-founder of the American Customer Satisfaction Index. Questions are asked on a 1-10 scale, then translated to 0-100 to generate a score. Generally, you want scores to be in the high 70's or low 80's. Think of it as a temperature. With that, let's turn to the results.

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This is a tracking survey asking respondents about their organization's economic outlook for the next 6 months, 12 months, and 3 years.

A year ago, from 2024 to 2025, we saw the 6-month outlook up slightly, but the 12-month and 3-year dipped, demonstrating a little uncertainty in what we'll call the medium term.

In 2026, all three measures improved. The 6-month outlook rose to 69, the 12-month to 72, and the 3-year jumped 3 points to 75, signaling a modest but clear return of medium-term optimism.

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In addition to the organization outlook measures, we also asked a few individual perspective questions using what's called a neutral midpoint bipolar Likert scale.

Looking back at 2025, 43% viewed Michigan's economy positively versus 30% negatively.

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Looking ahead to 2026, that improves to 48% positive, and 27% negative.

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As for the expected impact from the President's policies, respondents are split but lean negative, with 35% positive and 55% negative. And notice how animated our respondents are to this question. Only 10% are neutral, with almost half (45%) at the extremes.

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Finally, let's look at five tracking measures we have found to be helpful to watch over the years. Michigan as a great state for raising a family jumped 4 points, from 71 to 75. A great state for professionals is up 2 points. On the right track and has a strong, vibrant economy are both up a point. Michigan as business friendly, though, edged down a couple of points to 62.

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Why might respondents see improvement in most areas but feel less confident about business friendliness? That's a great question for our panel.

Now, someone may ask, "Can today's panel really provide valuable insight for 2026?" Obviously, yes. But I decided to ask that question to a few AI large language models, and here's what they said.

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ChatGPT says today's panel is "a top-tier, benchmark-quality panel . . . highly relevant to 2026 planning."

Gemini adds that they're "exceptionally well-balanced . . . guided by a veteran journalist with deep automotive expertise."

Grok notes they're "a strong, balanced mix of expertise directly tied to Michigan's economic landscape."

And **Claude** gushes that they're "well-suited to provide substantive analysis of Michigan's 2026 economic outlook."

So, without further ado, here's our **top-tier** panel and our **veteran** moderator.