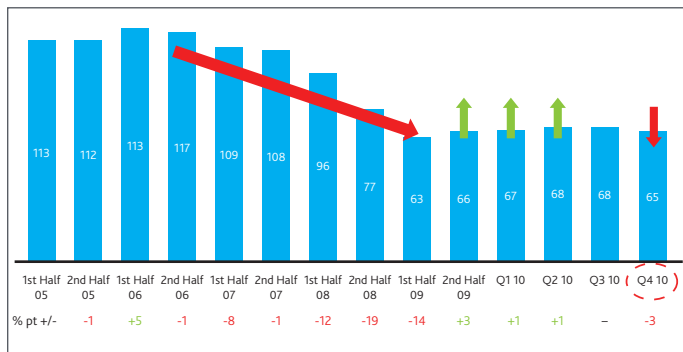


## Consumer confidence slips once again in Q4 2010

Consumer confidence in Ireland fell in Q4 2010 following 4 consecutive quarters of growth and stabilisation. While consumer confidence levels remained unchanged in Q3, the latest results do not bode well, showing that Irish consumers still maintain a level of gloominess. Ninety-five per cent of Irish consumers believe that the country is currently in recession (up from 93% in Q3), while 79% of Irish consumers believe that the country will still be in a recession in 12 months time (up from 73% in Q3 2010). These are the key findings of the latest Nielsen Consumer Confidence Survey, which shows that consumer confidence levels have slipped back to levels seen at the end of 2009.

Chart 1: Consumer confidence dropped once again in Q4

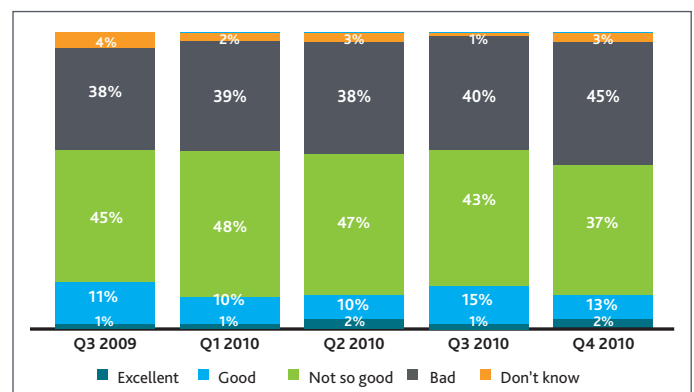


Source: Nielsen Global Online Consumer Confidence Survey  
Results: IE, 2005 to 2010

To put Irish consumer confidence levels in context, the global consumer confidence index stands at 90, so sentiment in Ireland lags behind the average. Indeed the CCI of our closest neighbours in the UK stands at 77 and experienced an upturn in Q4 versus Q3.

An increase in the number of people fearing for their job security, combined with an increased uncertainty regarding their personal financial situations has driven the latest fall in consumer confidence in Ireland.

Chart 2: Q Do you think job prospects in your country over the next 12 months will be...

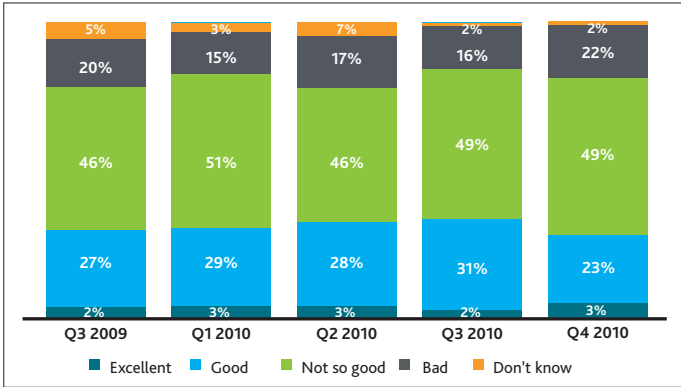


Source: Nielsen–Global Consumer Confidence Survey  
Q4 2010 - IRE results

Over 80% of people questioned in the quarterly survey, which asks people their thoughts and feelings about job prospects, personal finances, major concerns and spending intentions, said that they thought job prospects in Ireland will be “not so good” (37%) or “bad” (45%) over the forthcoming year. Although there wasn't a substantial shift in the overall level of negativity since the survey was conducted in Q3, what is worth noting is the shift from “not so good” to “bad”.

Also contributing to the drop in the confidence index is a worsening of the outlook on personal finances. There has been a six percentage point increase in the number of people who believe that the status of their own personal financial situations is “bad”, with 22% believing this to be the case, compare with 16% in Q3. There was no change in the “not so good” proportion, meaning that the increased positivity seen in Q3, once again slipped back towards negative mode in Q4.

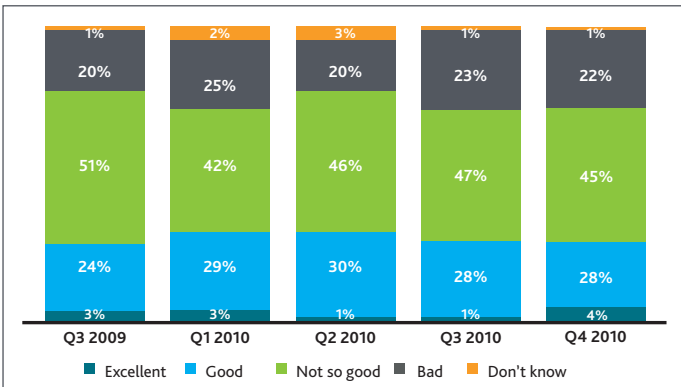
Chart 3: Q Do you think the state of your own personal finances over the next 12 months will be...



Source: Nielsen–Global Consumer Confidence Survey Q4 2010 - IRE results

The economy tops the agenda once again in terms of the nation's number one concern and this is showing no signs of abating. In Q3, the economy was cited as the number one concern by 20% of people. This increased to 23% in Q4 (in line with events surrounding the EU bailout of the Irish economy). People's concerns about their own ability to cope with the economic climate continues to be evident, with debt and job security continuing to be the number 2 and 3 concerns respectively.

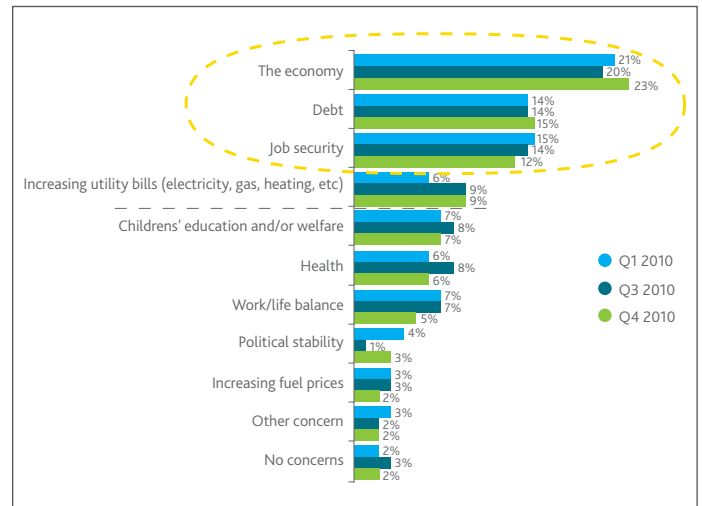
Chart 4: Q Considering the cost of things today and your own personal finances, would you say at this moment the time to buy the things you want and need is..."



Source: Nielsen–Global Consumer Confidence Survey Q4 2010 - IRE results



Chart 5: What is your biggest concern over the next 6 months?"



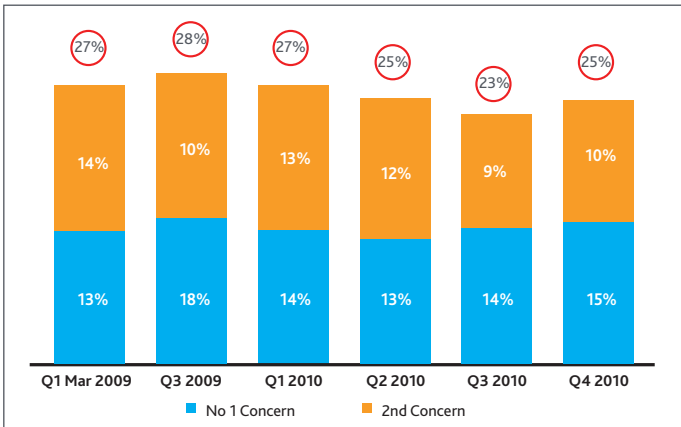
Source: Nielsen–Global Consumer Confidence Survey

Debt continues to remain a persistent concern for a quarter of shoppers. As job prospects and personal financial situations drive down consumer confidence levels, debt worries are on the rise once again for consumers. Furthermore, we continue to see that saving is becoming the norm with Irish consumers. The other point worth noting is that there has been an increase versus Q1 in the proportion of consumers who claim to have no spare cash. The Irish nation has also become more savvy when it comes to household spending, with 87% of respondents claiming to have changed spending habits over the last year.



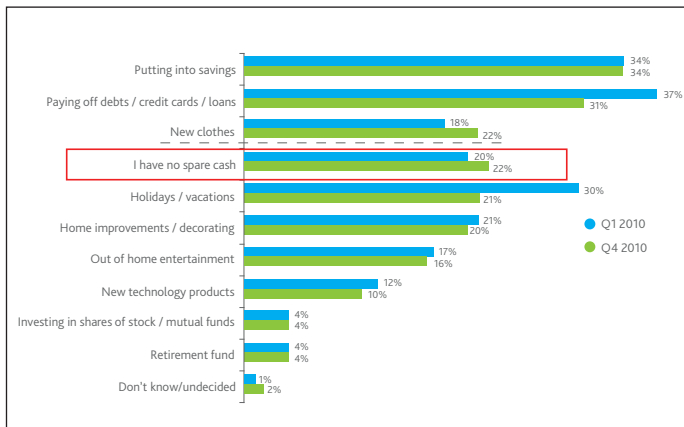
# Breaking News

Chart 6: As Ireland experiences recession, debt remains a persistent concern for over 1 out 4 shoppers ...



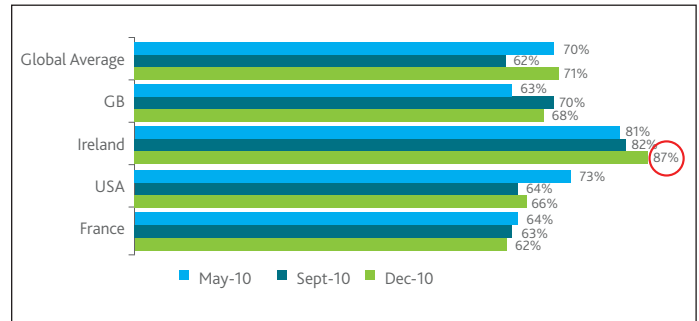
Source: Nielsen–Global Consumer Confidence Survey Q4 2010 - IRE results

Chart 7: Once you have covered your essential living expenses, which of the following statements best describes what you do with your spare cash...?



Source: Nielsen–Global Consumer Confidence Survey Q4 2010 - IRE results

Chart8: Compared to this time last year, have you changed your spending to save on household expenses?



Source: Nielsen–Global Consumer Confidence Survey Q4 2010 - IRE results

## Other highlights in the survey from a global perspective included:

- Global CCI remained unchanged from Q3 (90), but fell 2 points compared to Q1 2010.
- A year ago, half of the world's consumers thought they would be out of recession by now. However, in the latest round of the survey these consumers projected that the recession would last another 12 months.
- The number of cash strapped consumers globally has risen in the past year to its highest level on record.
- Asia Pacific is the most confident region in Q4 (CCI of 97), although 4 points below its mid-year high of 101.
- LATAM is second most confident region in the world in Q4, despite a 2 point drop from its mid-year high of 102.
- Europe remained the world's most depressed region with a flat regional index of 79 in Q4.
- The U.S. recorded its lowest CCI ever (79).
- The most optimistic country in Q4 was India (130) and the least was Portugal (45).
- The biggest CCI gainers were Switzerland (+10) and Turkey (+6)

## About The Nielsen Company

The Nielsen Company is a global information and media company with leading market positions in marketing and consumer information, television and other media measurement, online intelligence, mobile measurement, trade shows and business publications. The privately held company is active in approximately 100 countries, with headquarters in New York, USA. For more information, please visit, [www.nielsen.com](http://www.nielsen.com).

