

Worcester County Community Panel

Survey, July 1, 2009

Process:

A citizens panel was created for the survey and included 45 individuals who were considered leaders in business, government, and the community in Worcester County.

Part A of the survey was open-ended and asked for the five most pressing community issues in the county. This was to allow the group to suggest their own issues without pre-setting their responses to ones suggested by the survey itself.

Part B of the survey grouped and compiled the Part A responses for the second survey which allowed the respondents to rank and prioritize their responses.

Date conducted:

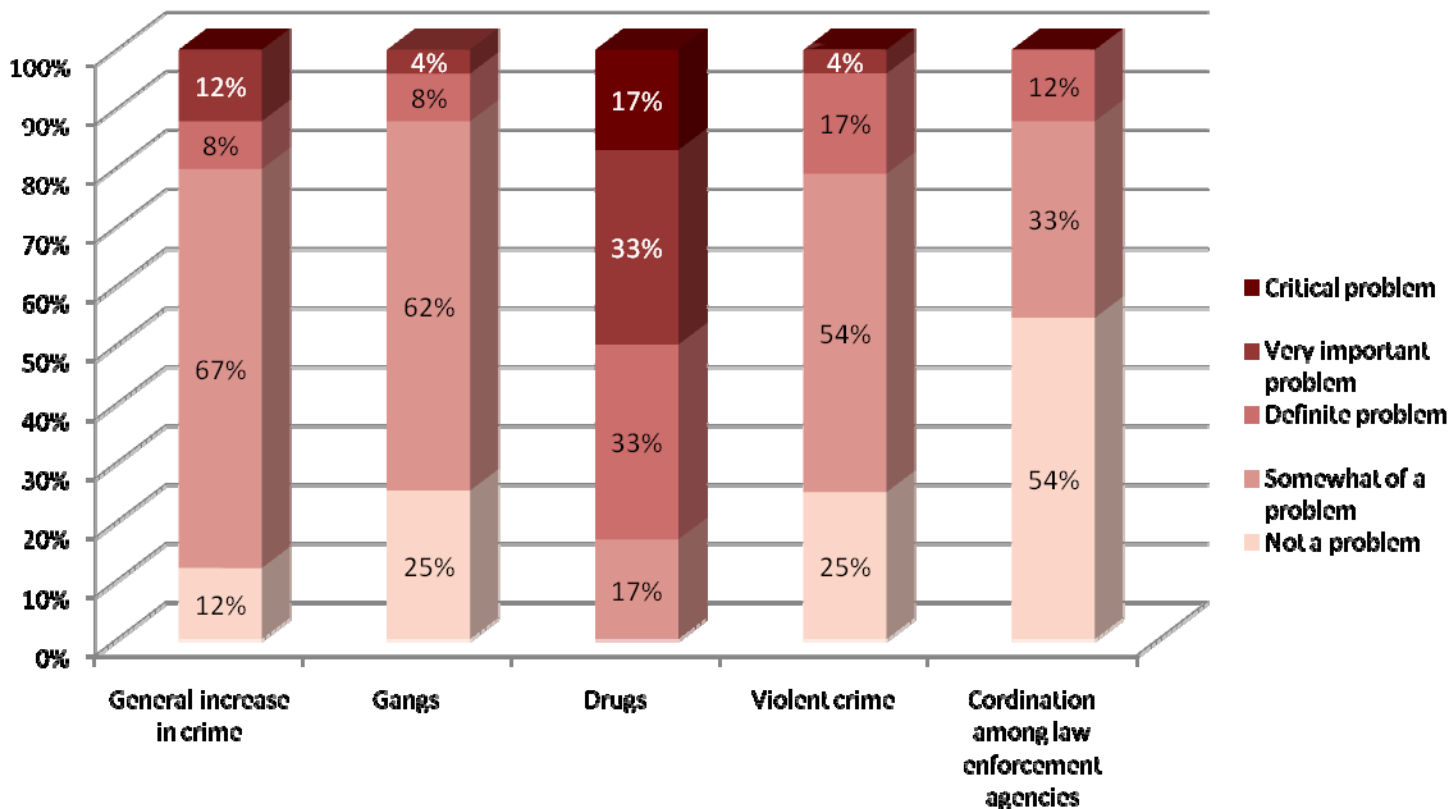
Part A was open in March-April and Part B was open from May to June.

Information summary:

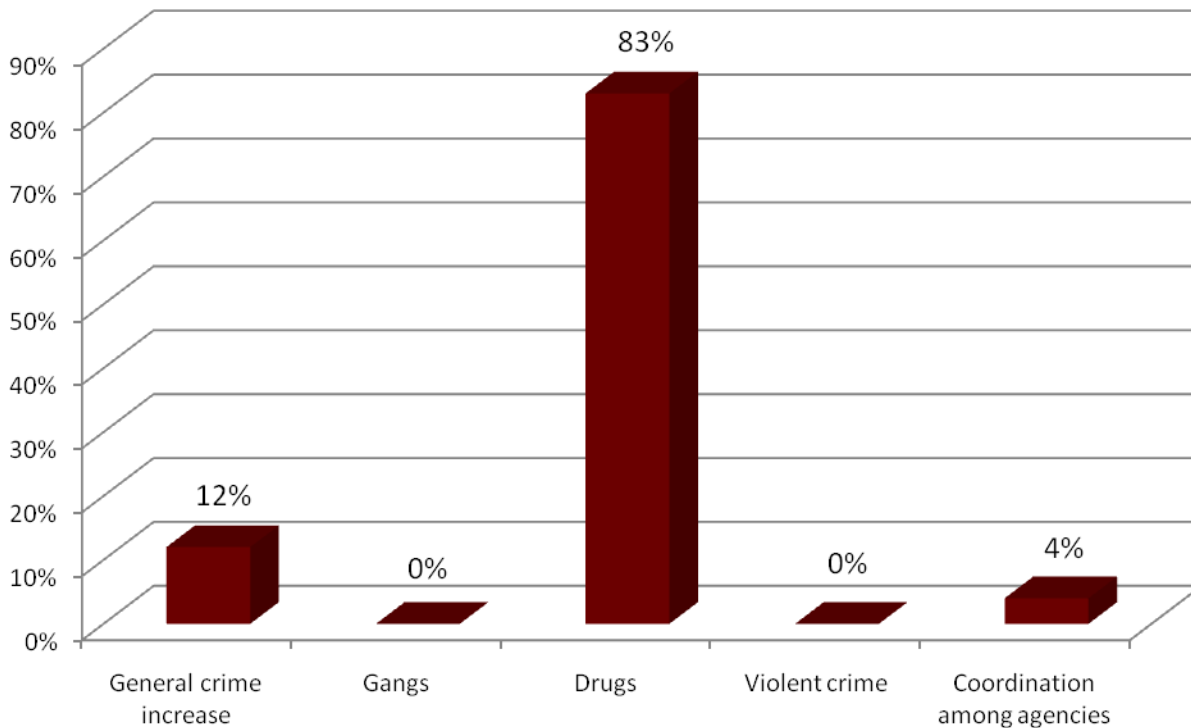
- A. General issues.** The rank order (from the most concerned) of totals of critical problem and very important problem for the general concerns of the county are:
- a. Illegal immigration (41%)
 - b. Housing blight, and lack of arts and entertainment (37% each)
 - c. Transportation for people without vehicles (25%)
 - d. Lack of consolidation of water and sewer systems (25%)
 - e. Lack of adequate public health care (24%)
 - f. Senior needs, and land and water preservation/environmental protection (20% each)
 - g. Decaying infrastructure (19%)
 - h. Crowded roads, and tax differential with cities and county (18% each)
 - i. Changing culture of the county (16%)
 - j. Lack of tourism outside of Ocean City (13%)
 - k. Lack of recreation (12%)
 - l. Lack of consolidation of many governmental agencies (8%)

- B. Crime.** Panel members overwhelmingly saw the biggest crime problem in the county related to drugs with 83 percent. A general crime increase was cited by only 12 percent.
- C. Education.** Funding of education in the county was cited as the most concern by 42 percent of the panel, followed by both minority achievement/dropout gap by 17 percent each. Student discipline (12%) and after-school funding (8%) were more minor concerns.
- D. Growth.** In looking at growth, the primary concern by exactly half of the respondents was the lack of economic growth. About 1/3 were concerned with over-development with poor planning for growth cited by 14 percent and lack of growth control by only five percent.
- E. Financial and Economic.** Unemployment in the county was the biggest financial and economic concern by 42 percent of the panel, followed by 33 percent concerned with the declining job and tax base. The need to reduce taxes was cited by 17 percent.
- F. Political Leadership.** The problem of attracting quality elected officials was the primary concern for one-third of the respondents, with the lack of visionary leadership cited by 24 percent, and leaders not focusing on the common good by 19 percent. Division and hostility and an inability to let go of the past a concern of 10 percent each.
- G. Business conditions.** Half of the panel, at the end of the second quarter, expected business conditions in the county to be much or somewhat better by the third and fourth quarters of this year compared to only 33 percent expecting worse or much worse. Seventeen percent expected conditions to be about the same.
- H. Employment.** While 30 percents expected employment levels in the county to be about the same in the third and fourth quarters, nearly half (47%) expected employment to be somewhat worse or much worse. At the same time, only 22 percent expected an improving employment picture.
- I. Residential Real Estate.** The panel did not see a dramatic change in residential real estate with 38 percent forecasting about the same, while 33 percent expected somewhat better and 29 percent somewhat or much worse.

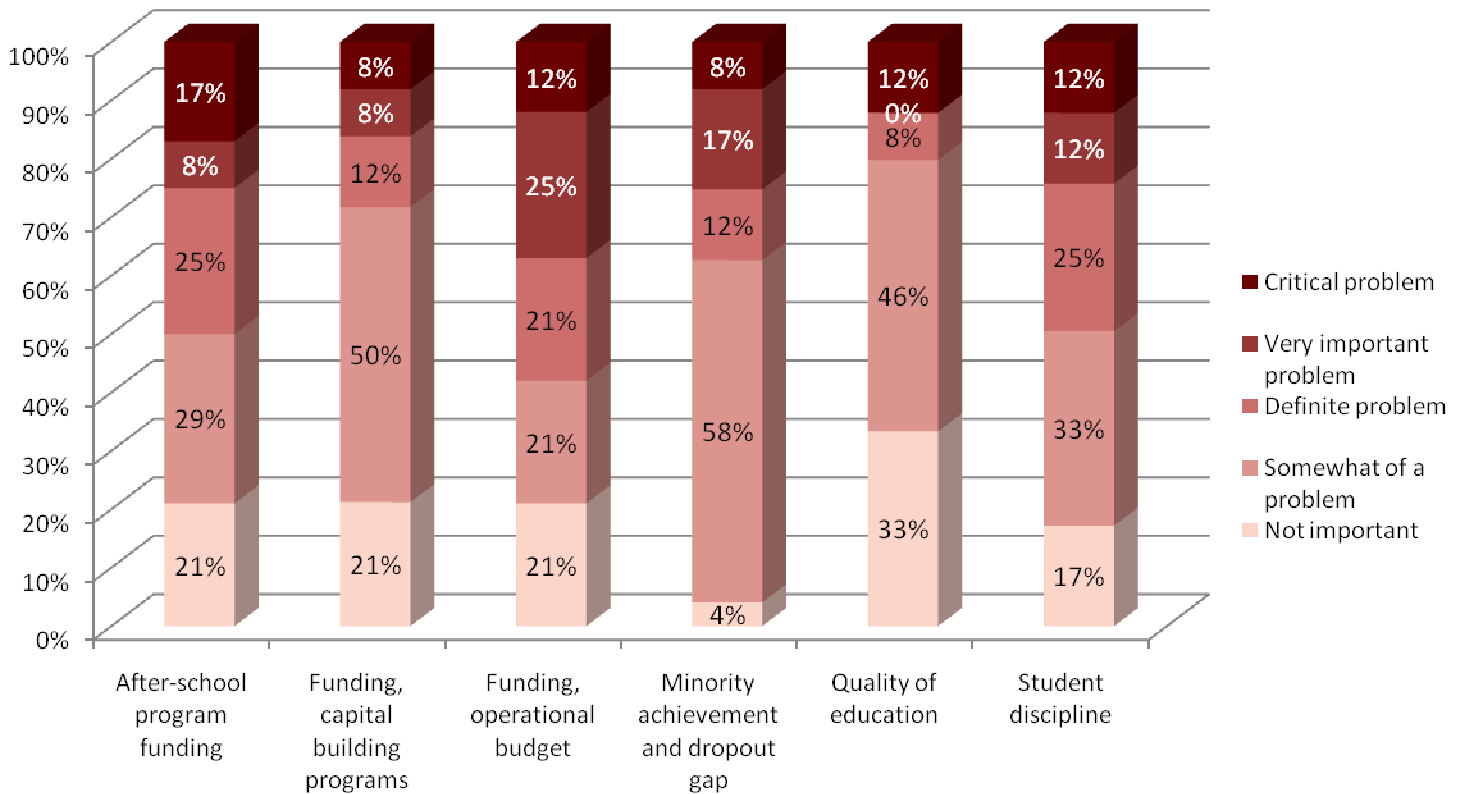
For the following CRIME issues, how much of a problem do you believe that each issue is today in Worcester County?



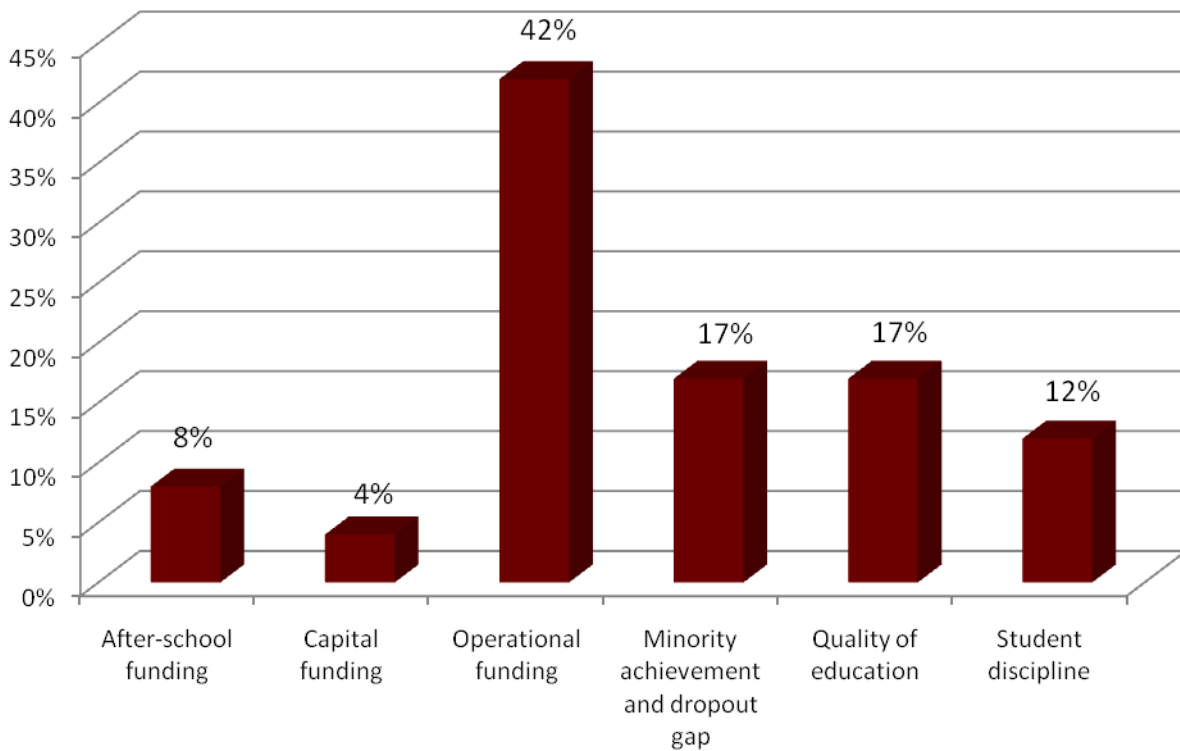
Which is the most important CRIME issue facing citizens in Worcester County today?



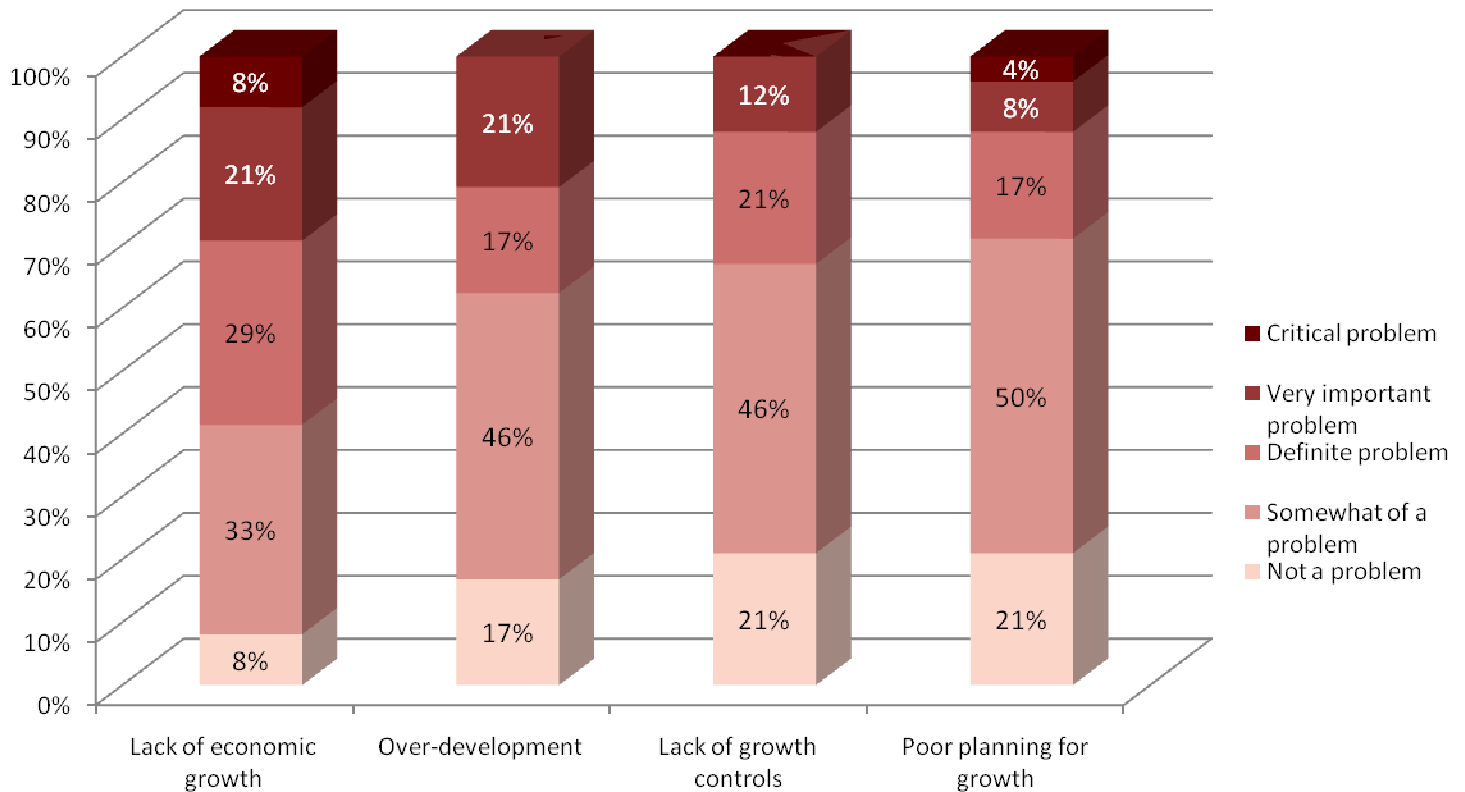
For the following K-12 EDUCATION issues, how much of a problem do you believe that each issue is today in Worcester County?



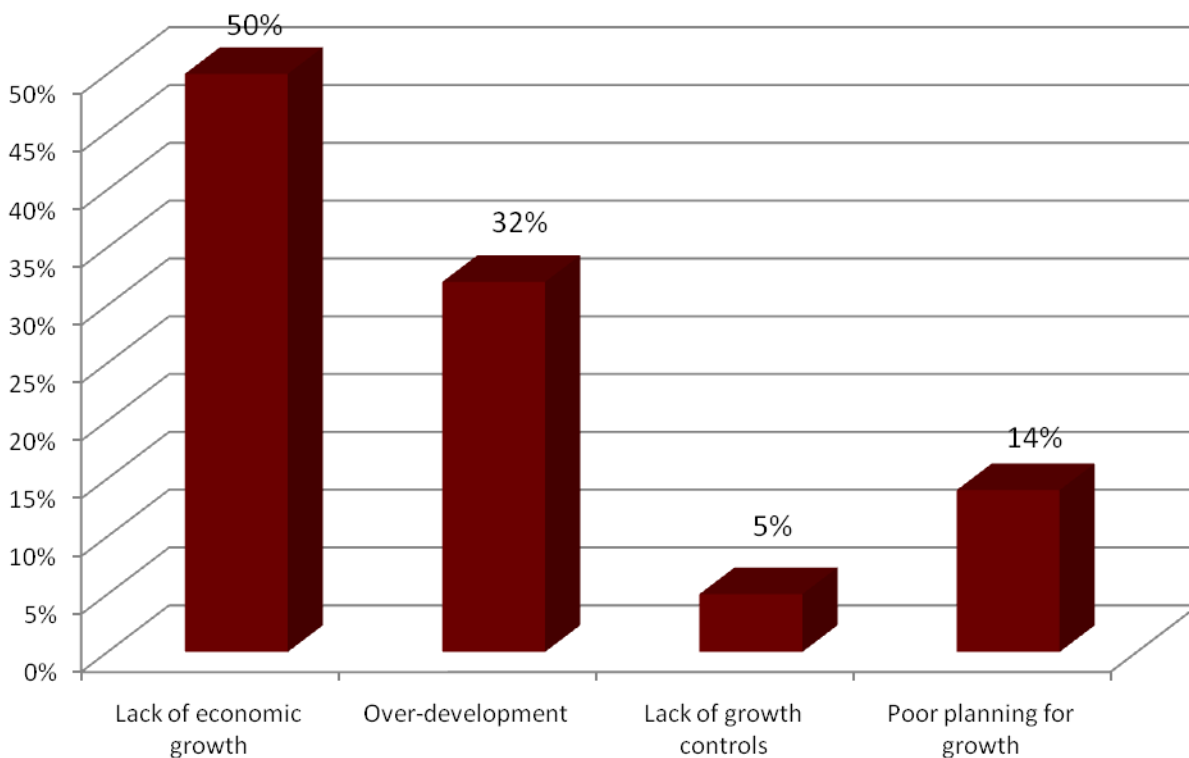
What is the most important K-12 EDUCATION issue facing citizens in Worcester County today?



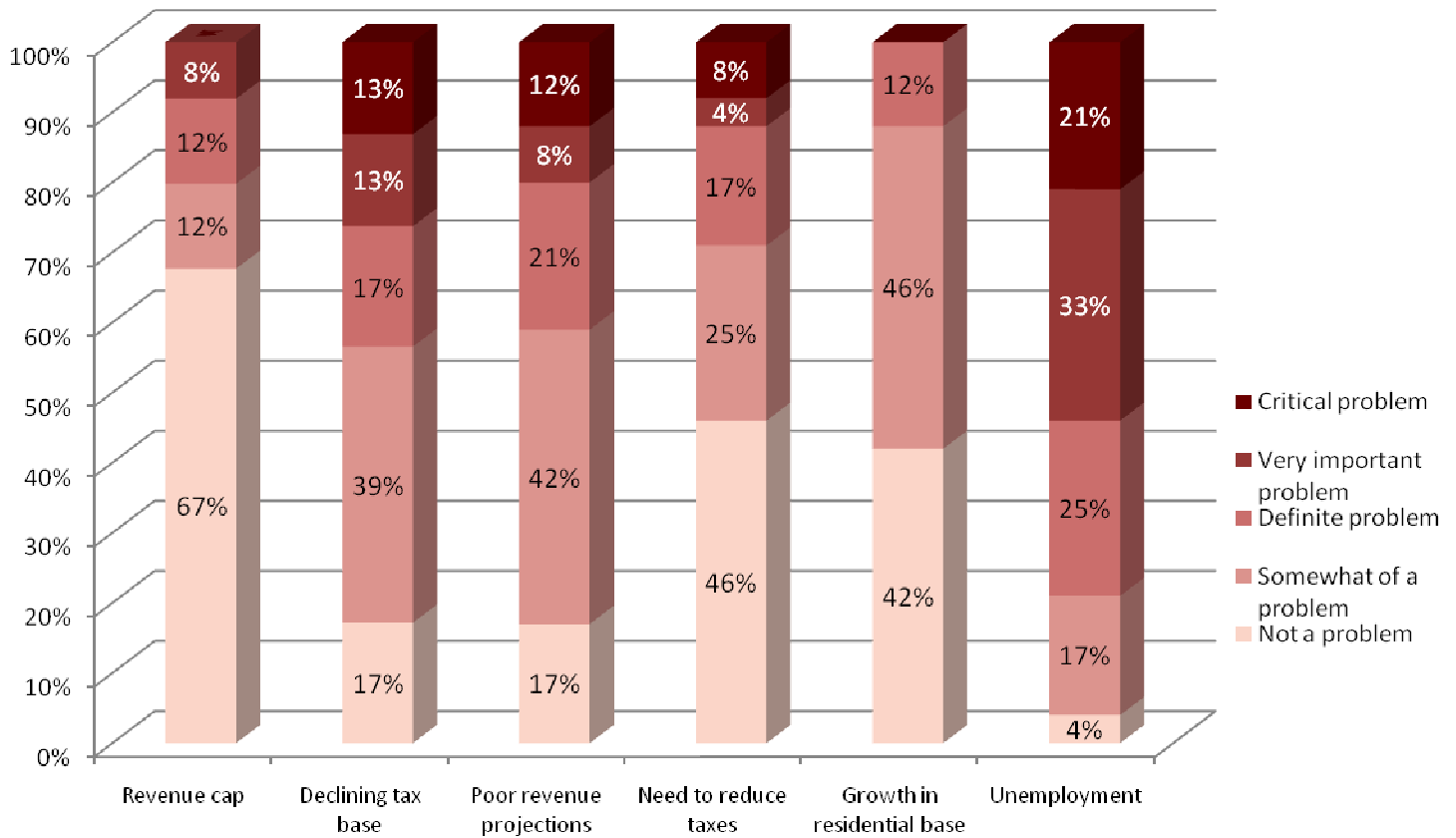
For the following GROWTH issues, how much of a problem do you believe that each issue is today in Worcester County?



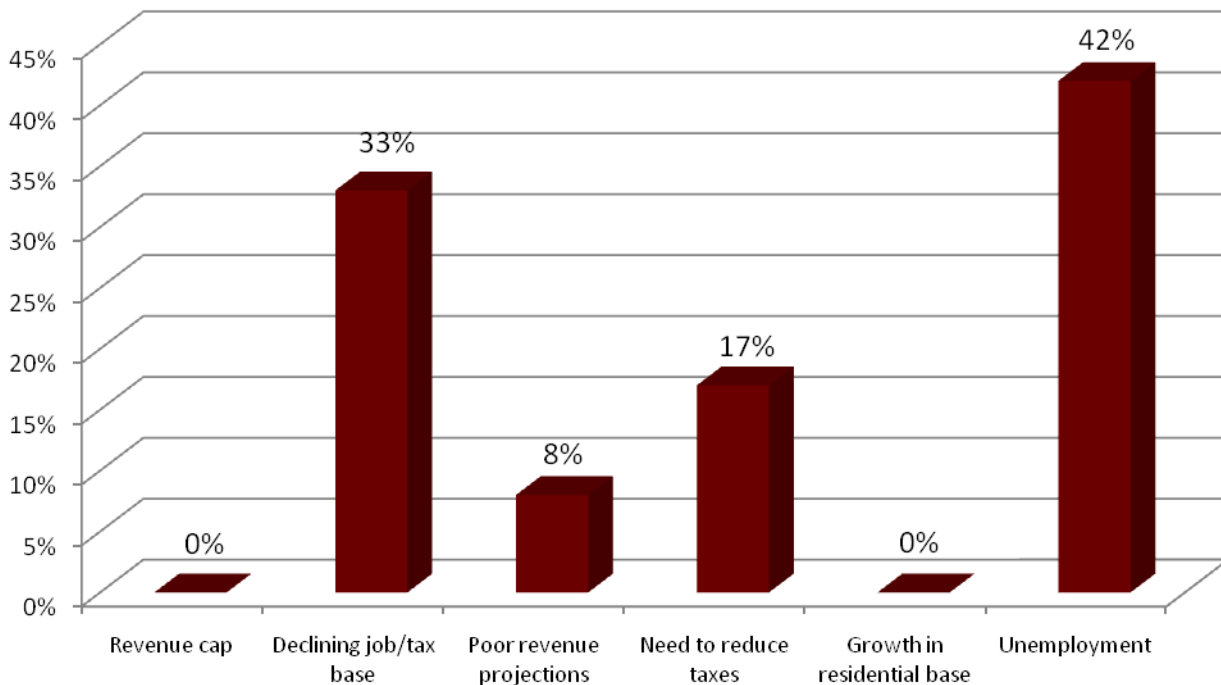
Which is the most important GROWTH issue facing Worcester County today?



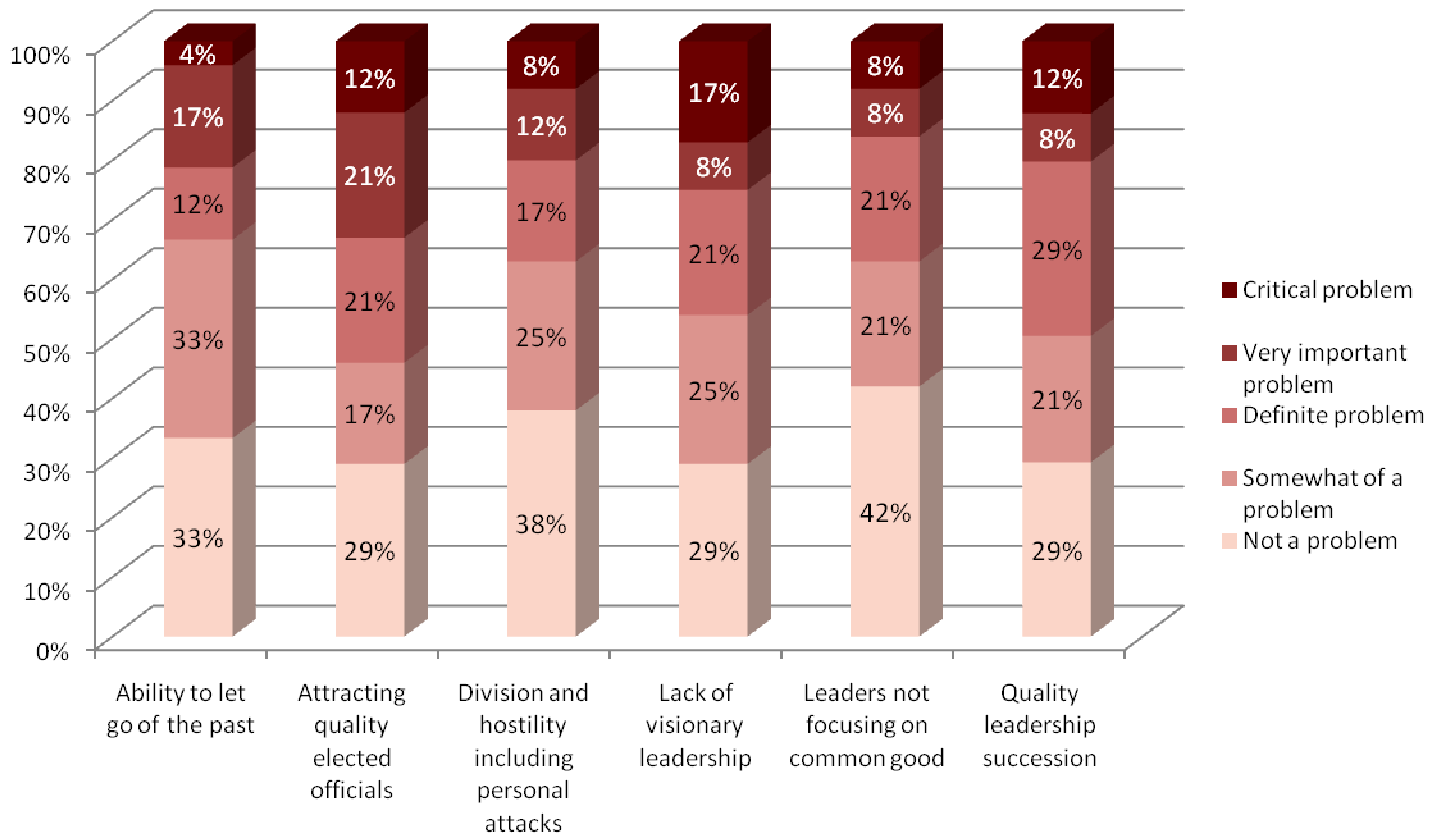
For the following FINANCIAL and ECONOMIC issues, how much of a problem do you believe that each issue is for citizens today in Worcester County?



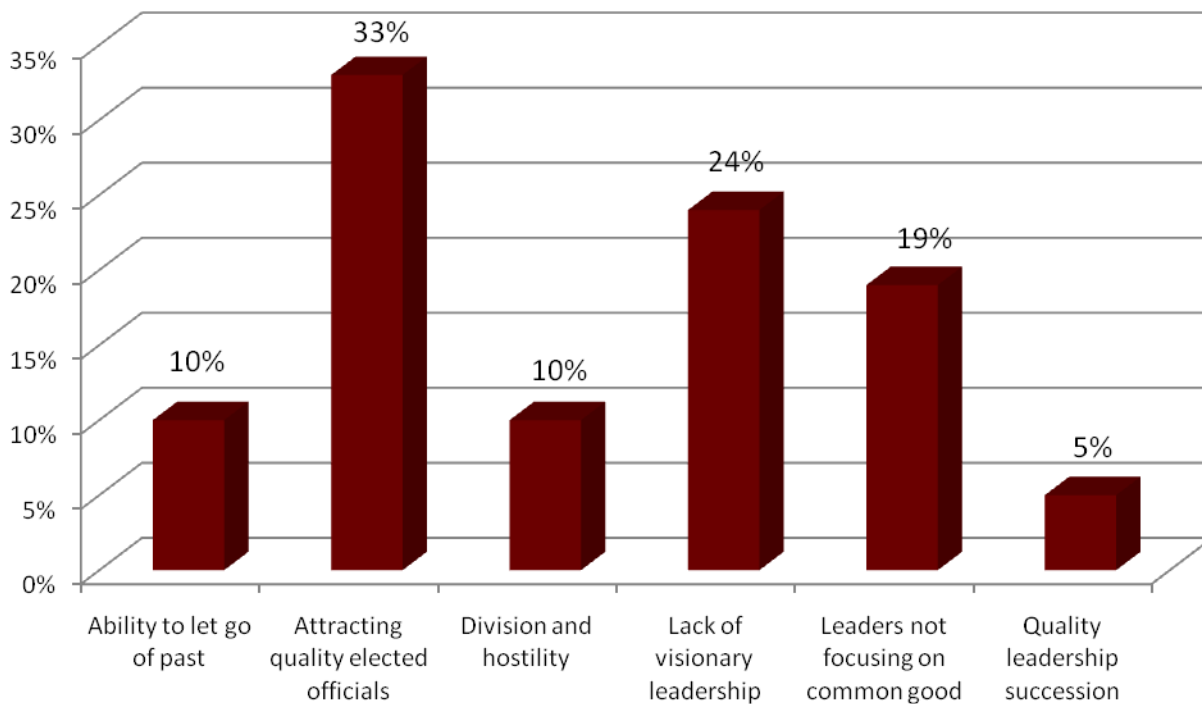
Which is the most important FINANCIAL/ECONOMIC issue facing citizens in Worcester County today?



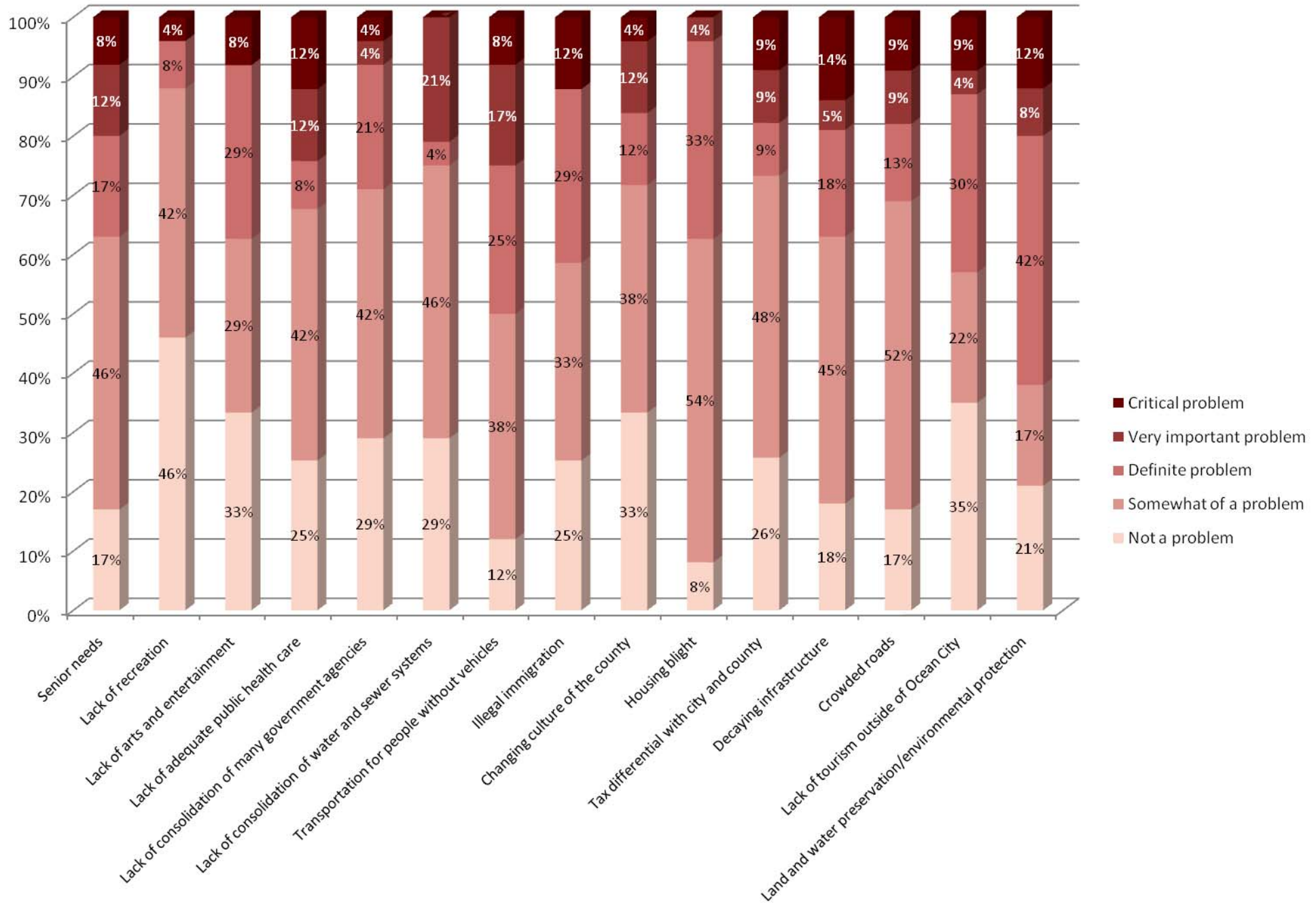
For the following POLITICAL LEADERSHIP issues, how much of a problem do you believe that each issue is for citizens today in Worcester County?



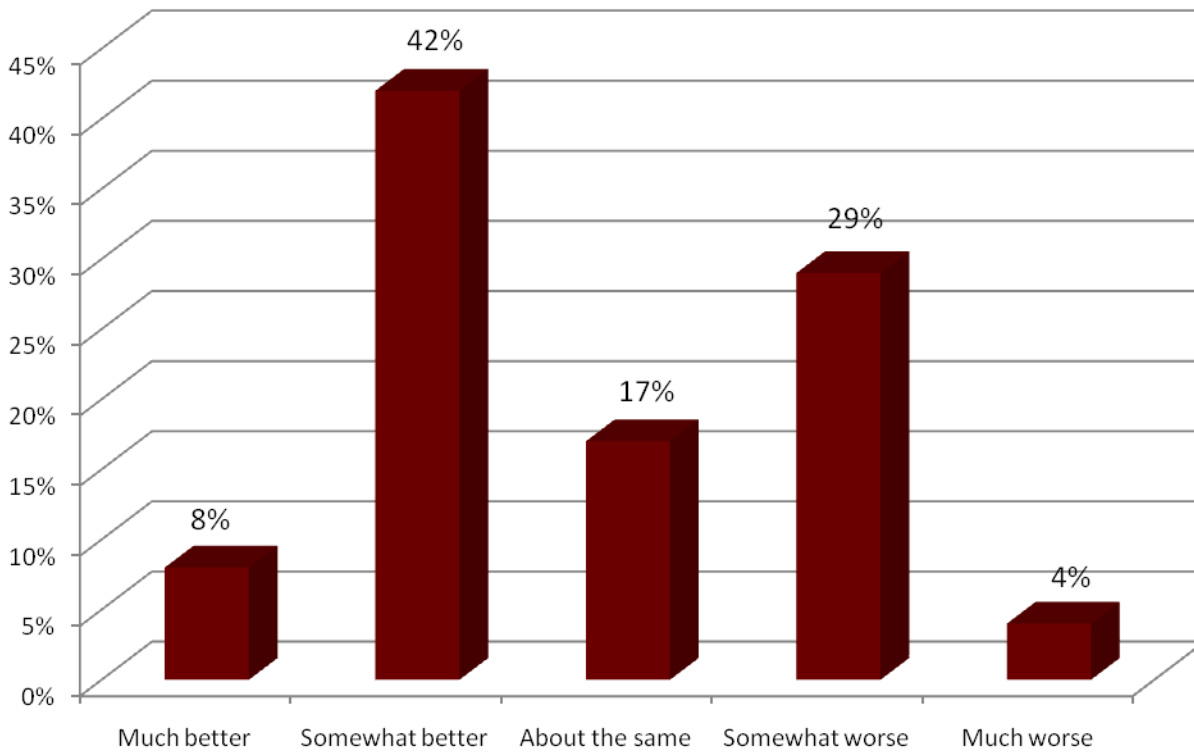
What is the most important POLITICAL LEADERSHIP issue facing citizens in Worcester County today?



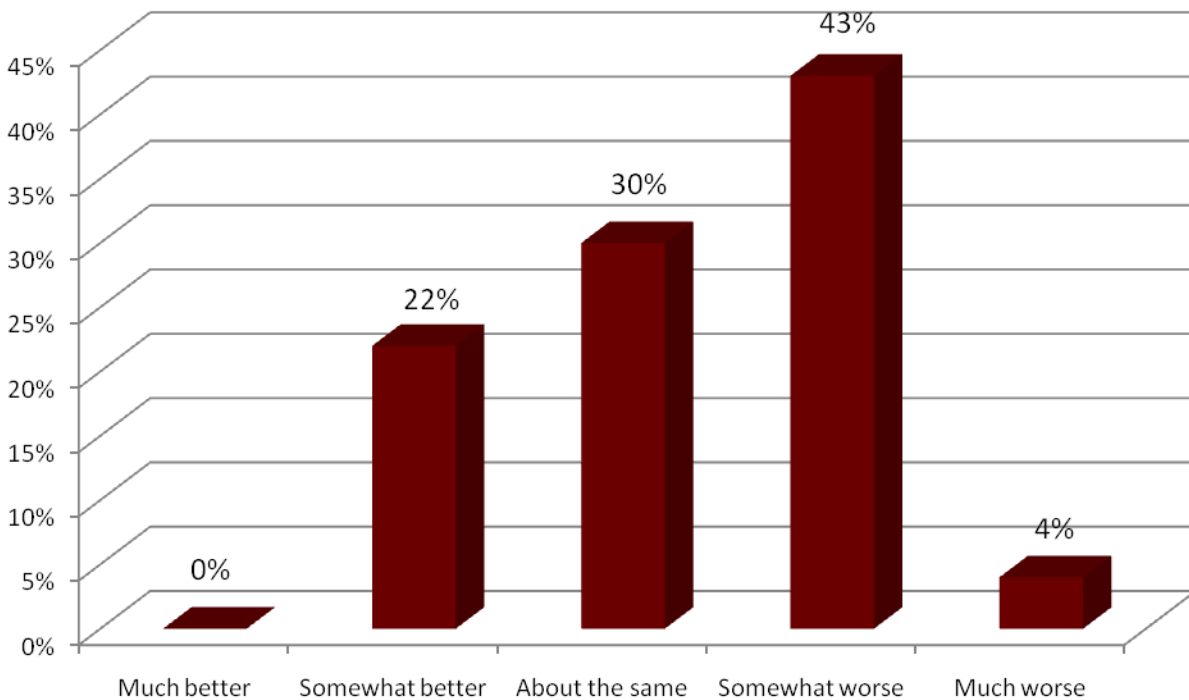
For the following GENERAL issues, how much of a problem do you believe that each issue is for citizens today in Worcester County?



I predict that, compared to the third and fourth quarters of 2008, BUSINESS CONDITIONS in Worcester County in the third and fourth quarter of 2009 will be:



I predict that, compared to calendar year the third and fourth quarters of 2008, EMPLOYMENT LEVELS in Worcester County in the third and fourth quarters of 2009 will be:



I predict that, compared to the third and fourth quarters of 2008, BUSINESS CONDITIONS in Worcester County in the RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE SECTOR in the third and fourth quarters of 2009 will be:

