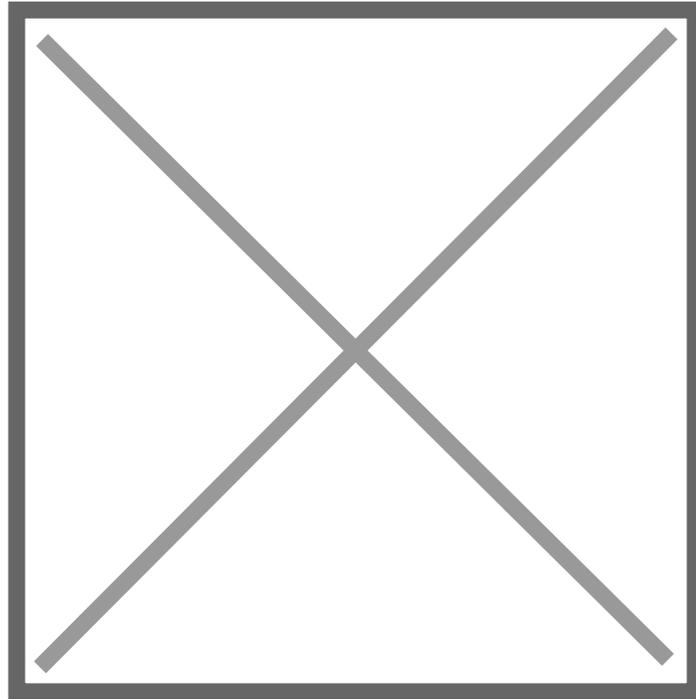


## America's Two Economies Deepen Divide Between Wealth and Affordability



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A recent Wall Street Journal (WSJ) report highlights a widening economic divide in the United States, suggesting the country is effectively operating with two economies moving in different directions. While high-income earners and many older Americans who own assets continue to

benefit from stability, a large segment of the population is facing stagnation or declining financial security.

The report quoted Camelia Kuhnen, a finance professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, who said the U.S. population is increasingly split between asset owners and those struggling to keep pace with rising costs. This divide, she noted, is shaping how Americans experience the economy in daily life.

Several media outlets have pointed to a growing gap between official economic indicators and public sentiment. Although macroeconomic data often signals resilience, many households report ongoing financial pressure. A CBS report found that more than 40 percent of families in New York City struggle to afford weekly food expenses, while about one in three adults nationwide lacks sufficient funds for basic food needs.

In an address to the nation on Dec. 17, 2025, former President Donald Trump said inflation had stopped, wages were rising, and prices were declining, describing economic performance in highly positive terms. However, later media analysis indicates these claims are not widely reflected in public sentiment.

CBS News business analyst Jill Schlesinger said many Americans remain pessimistic about affordability, explaining that rising costs for essentials such as food, housing, and utilities

continue to strain household budgets despite positive economic data.

Recent public opinion polls reinforce this view, showing that living costs and dissatisfaction with economic policies remain among Americans' top concerns.