

2014 REPORT

## An Economy Doing Half Its Job: Findings of Harvard Business School's 2013–14 Survey on U.S. Competitiveness

By: [Michael E. Porter](#) and [Jan Rivkin](#)

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### ABSTRACT

In 2013–14, Harvard Business School (HBS) conducted its third alumni survey on U.S. competitiveness. Our report on the findings focuses on a troubling divergence in the American economy: large and midsize firms have rallied strongly from the Great Recession, and highly skilled individuals are prospering. But middle and working-class citizens are struggling, as are small businesses. We argue that such a divergence is unsustainable, explore its root causes, and examine actions that might mitigate it. We ask in particular, how can we create a U.S. economy in which firms *both* thrive in global competition *and* lift the living standards of the average American?

### KEYWORDS

[Competition](#); [Economy](#); [Financial Crisis](#); [United States](#)

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