



**THE CONFERENCE BOARD**

**FOR RELEASE: 10:00 A.M. (LONDON TIME), WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2010**

The Conference Board®  
The U.K. Business Cycle Indicators<sup>SM</sup>  
**THE CONFERENCE BOARD LEADING ECONOMIC INDEX®  
(LEI) FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM  
AND RELATED COMPOSITE ECONOMIC INDEXES FOR AUGUST 2010**

**BRUSSELS, October 13, 2010...** The Conference Board Leading Economic Index® (LEI) for the U.K. increased 0.1 percent, and The Conference Board Coincident Economic Index® (CEI) remained unchanged in August.

- The Conference Board LEI for the UK increased again in August, and index levels were revised slightly lower between March and July 2010 as a result of downward revisions to total gross operating surplus. In August, positive contributions from the yield spread, order book volume, and share prices more than offset the negative contributions from consumer confidence and the volume of expected output. Between February and August 2010, the leading economic index increased 2.6 percent (about a 5.2 percent annual rate), substantially slower than the increase of 5.3 percent (about an 11.0 percent annual rate) during the previous six-month period. In addition, the strengths among the leading indicators have only been slightly more widespread than the weaknesses in recent months.
- The Conference Board CEI for the UK, a measure of current economic activity, remained unchanged in August. Index levels were also revised down in recent months as second quarter data for real household disposable income became available. Between February and August 2010, the coincident economic index increased 1.0 percent (about a 2.0 percent annual rate), a reversal from the decline of 0.3 percent (about a -0.6 percent annual rate) between August 2009 and February 2010. In addition, the strengths among the coincident indicators have remained more widespread than the weaknesses in recent months. At the same time, real GDP increased at a 4.6 percent annual rate in the second quarter, following an increase of 2.1 percent annual rate in the previous quarter.
- The Conference Board LEI for the U.K. has been rising since April 2009, though its six-month growth rate has continued to slow. In addition, the strengths among its components were only slightly more widespread than the weaknesses over the past six months. Meanwhile, The Conference Board CEI for the U.K. remained unchanged in August, though it has been generally on an upward trend since February 2010. Taken together, the recent behavior of the composite indexes suggest that economic activity should continue to expand, but at a more modest pace in the near term.

**LEADING INDICATORS.** Four of the seven components that make up The Conference Board LEI for the U.K. increased in August. The positive contributors – from the largest positive contributor to the smallest – were the yield spread, productivity for the whole economy\*, order book volume, and stock prices. The negative contributors – from the largest negative contributor to the smallest – were consumer confidence, volume of expected output, and total gross operating surplus of corporations\*.

The next release is scheduled for Friday, November 12, 2010 at 10:00 A.M. (London Time)  
*In the U.S. – Friday, November 12, 2010 at 5:00 A.M. (ET)*

With the 0.1 percent increase in August, The Conference Board LEI for the U.K. now stands at 103.2 (2004=100). Based on revised data, this index increased 0.2 percent in July and increased 0.5 percent in June. During the six-month span through August, the leading economic index increased 2.6 percent, with four of the seven components advancing (diffusion index, six-month span equals 57.1 percent).

COINCIDENT INDICATORS. Two of the four components that make up The Conference Board CEI for the U.K. increased in August. The positive contributors – from the largest positive contributor to the smallest – were employment\* and industrial production. Retail sales declined while real household disposable income\* remained unchanged in August.

After remaining unchanged in August, The Conference Board CEI for the U.K. now stands at 103.1 (2004=100). Based on revised data, this index increased 0.3 percent in July and increased 0.3 percent in June. During the six-month period through August, the coincident economic index increased 1.0 percent, with three of the four components advancing (diffusion index, six-month span equals 75.0 percent).

DATA AVAILABILITY:

The data series used to compute **The Conference Board Leading Economic Index<sup>®</sup>** (LEI) for the U.K. and **The Conference Board Coincident Economic Index<sup>®</sup>** (CEI) for the U.K. reported in this release are those available “as of” 10 A.M. ET on Friday, October 8, 2010. Some series are estimated as noted below.

\* Series in The Conference Board LEI for the U.K. that are based on our estimates are productivity for the whole economy and total gross operating surplus of corporations. Series in The Conference Board CEI for the U.K. that are based on our estimates are employment and real household disposable income.

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For more information:

The Conference Board Europe: + 32 2 675 5405

Email: [indicators@conference-board.org](mailto:indicators@conference-board.org)

Website: <http://www.conference-board.org/data/bci.cfm>

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THE CYCLICAL INDICATOR APPROACH. The composite economic indexes are the key elements in an analytic system designed to signal peaks and troughs in the business cycle. The leading and coincident economic indexes are essentially composite averages of several individual leading or coincident indicators. (See page 3 for details.) They are constructed to summarize and reveal common turning point patterns in economic data in a clearer and more convincing manner than any individual component—primarily because they smooth out some of the volatility of individual components.

Historically, the cyclical turning points in The Conference Board LEI for the U.K. have occurred before those in aggregate economic activity, while the cyclical turning points in The Conference Board CEI for the U.K. have occurred at about the same time as those in aggregate economic activity.

Further explanations of the cyclical indicator approach and the composite economic index methodology appear in The Conference Board's *Business Cycle Indicators* report and website: <http://www.conference-board.org/data/bci.cfm>.

U.K. Composite Economic Indexes: Components and Standardization Factors

<u>Leading Economic Index</u>		<u>Factor</u>
1	Order Book Volume	0.0593
2	Expected Output Volume	0.0478
3	Consumer Confidence	0.0993
4	All Share Price Index	0.0340
5	Yield Spread	0.0866
6	Productivity, Whole Economy	0.5549
7	Operating Surplus, Corporations	0.1181
 <u>Coincident Economic Index</u>		
1	Industrial Production	0.0596
2	Retail Sales	0.0572
3	Employment	0.7240
4	Real Household Disposable Income	0.1592

Notes:

The component factors are inversely related to the standard deviation of the month-to-month changes in each component. They are used to equalize the volatility of the contribution from each component and are “normalized” to sum to 1.

These factors were revised effective with the January 2010 release, and all historical values for the two composite economic indexes were revised at this time to reflect the changes. (Under normal circumstances, updates to the leading and coincident economic indexes only incorporate revisions to data over the past six months.) The factors above for the leading economic index were calculated using 1977-2008 as the sample period for measuring volatility. Separate sets of factors for the 1975-1977 period, the 1974-1975 period, as well as the 1970-1974 period, are available upon request. The factors above for the coincident economic index were calculated using 1992-2008 as the sample period; separate sets of factors for the 1978-1992 period and the 1970-1978 period are available upon request. These multiple sample periods are the result of different starting dates for the component data. When one or more components are missing, the other factors are adjusted proportionately to ensure that their total continues to sum to 1. For additional information on the standardization factors and the index methodology visit our website: <http://www.conference-board.org/data/bci.cfm>.

The trend adjustment factor for the leading index is -0.0464, calculated over the 1970-2008 period.

To address the problem of lags in available data, those leading and coincident indicators that are not available at the time of publication are estimated using statistical imputation. An autoregressive model is used to estimate each component. The resulting indexes are constructed using real and estimated data, and will be revised as the data unavailable at the time of publication become available. Such monthly data revisions are now a regular part of the U.S. Business Cycle and Global Indicators program. The main advantage of this procedure is to utilize in the leading economic index the data such as bond yields, stock prices, and change in consumer confidence that are available sooner than other data on “real” aspects of the economy such as housing starts and new orders. Empirical research by The Conference Board suggests there are real gains in adopting this procedure to make all the indicator series as up-to-date as possible.

# NOTICES

The next release for **The Conference Board Leading Economic Index<sup>®</sup>** (LEI) for the U.K. is:

September 2010 Data

Friday, November 12, 2010

October 2010 Data

Thursday, December 9, 2010

All releases are at 10:00 A.M. (London Time)

## **ABOUT THE CONFERENCE BOARD**

The Conference Board is a global, independent business membership and research association working in the public interest. Our mission is unique: To provide the world's leading organizations with the practical knowledge they need to improve their performance *and* better serve society. The Conference Board is a non-advocacy, not-for-profit entity holding 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt status in the United States.

## **AVAILABLE FROM THE CONFERENCE BOARD**

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### **BCI Handbook (published 2001)**

\$25

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The Conference Board U.K. Business Cycle Indicators

Table 1.--Summary of U.K. Composite Economic Indexes

	2010						
	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.
Leading index	100.6	101.6 r	102.2 r	102.4 r	102.9 p	103.1 p	103.2 p
Percent change	0.7	1.0 r	0.6	0.2 r	0.5 p	0.2 p	0.1 p
Diffusion index	78.6	78.6	64.3	42.9	42.9	42.9	42.9
Coincident index	102.1	102.3 r	102.4 r	102.5 r	102.8 p	103.1 p	103.1 p
Percent change	0.1	0.2 r	0.1 r	0.1 r	0.3 p	0.3 p	0.0 p
Diffusion index	87.5	75.0	37.5	75.0	50.0	75.0	62.5
	Aug to Feb	Sep to Mar	Oct to Apr	Nov to May	Dec to Jun	Jan to Jul	Feb to Aug
Leading index							
Percent change	5.3	5.2 r	4.5 r	3.6 r	3.7 p	3.2 p	2.6 p
Diffusion index	85.7	85.7	85.7	78.6	42.9	42.9	57.1
Coincident index							
Percent change	-0.3	-0.2 r	-0.1 r	0.1 r	0.5 p	1.1 p	1.0 p
Diffusion index	25.0	25.0	50.0	50.0	62.5	75.0	75.0

p Preliminary. r Revised (noted only for index levels and one-month percent changes).

CALCULATION NOTE: The diffusion indexes measure the proportion of the components that are rising. Components that rise more than 0.05 percent are given a value of 1.0, components that change less than 0.05 percent are given a value of 0.5, and components that fall more than 0.05 percent are given a value of 0.0.

For more information, visit our Web site at [www.conference-board.org/economics/bci](http://www.conference-board.org/economics/bci)

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### The Conference Board U.K. Business Cycle Indicators

Table 2.--Data and Net Contributions for Components of the U.K. Leading Economic Index

Component	2010						
	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.
U.K. Leading Economic Index component data							
Order Book Volume, CBI Monthly Enquiry (3 month moving average).....	-39.0	-37.3	-36.3	-30.3	-25.7	-19.0	-17.7
Volume of Expected Output, CBI Monthly Enquiry (3 month moving average).....	1.3	5.3	8.7	12.0	15.3	12.7	10.3
Consumer Confidence (3 month moving average).....	-5.7	-4.1	-4.5	-7.0	-8.9	-12.6	-13.8
Stock prices, FTSE all share prices index (Apr. 10, 1962=100).....	2679.4	2875.7	2939.9	2701.8	2653.2	2664.6	2721.6
Yield Spread, 10 years minus Bank Rate.....	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.3	3.1	3.0	2.7
Productivity, Whole Economy Index (2006=100, Q)	98.5 r	98.7 r	99.0 r	99.2	99.4 **	99.6 **	99.7 **
Total Gross Operating Surplus of Corporations (Deflated with IPD, Q)	70655.8 r	70067.8 r	69480.6 r	68900.3 r	68533.3 **	68303.6 **	68162.5 **
<b>LEADING INDEX (2004=100).....</b>	<b>100.6</b>	<b>101.6 r</b>	<b>102.2 r</b>	<b>102.4 r</b>	<b>102.9 p</b>	<b>103.1 p</b>	<b>103.2 p</b>
Percent change from preceding month.....		1.0 r	0.6	0.2 r	0.5 p	0.2 p	0.1 p
U.K. Leading Economic Index net contributions							
Order Book Volume, CBI Monthly Enquiry (3 month moving average).....	....	0.10	0.06	0.36	0.27	0.40	0.08
Volume of Expected Output, CBI Monthly Enquiry (3 month moving average).....	....	0.19	0.16	0.16	0.16	-0.12	-0.11
Consumer Confidence (3 month moving average).....	....	0.16	-0.04	-0.25	-0.19	-0.37	-0.12
Stock prices, FTSE all share prices index (Apr. 10, 1962=100).....	....	0.24	0.08	-0.29	-0.06	0.01	0.07
Yield Spread, 10 years minus Bank Rate.....	....	0.31	0.31	0.29	0.27	0.26	0.23
Productivity, Whole Economy Index (2006=100, Q)	....	0.13 r	0.13 r	0.13 r	0.11 **	0.09 **	0.08 **
Total Gross Operating Surplus of Corporations (Deflated with IPD, Q)	....	-0.10 r	-0.10 r	-0.10 r	-0.06 **	-0.04 **	-0.02 **

p Preliminary. r Revised. n.a. Not available. c Corrected.

\* Inverted series; a negative change in this component makes a positive contribution to the index.

\*\* Statistical Imputation (See page 2 for more details)

Q Quarterly series; these series are converted to a monthly series through a linear interpolation.

**Data Sources:** National Statistics, Thomson Financial, Bank of England, Confederation of British Industry and The European Commission

**CALCULATION NOTE--**The percent change in the index does not always equal the sum of the net contributions of the individual components (because of rounding effects and base value differences).

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**The Conference Board U.K. Business Cycle Indicators**

**Table 3.--Data and Net Contributions of the U.K. Coincident Economic Index**

Component	2010						
	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.
	U.K. Coincident Economic Index component data						
Industrial Production (2006=100).....	87.7	89.4	88.8	89.3	88.9	89.2 r	89.4
Retail Sales, Volume (2005=100).....	105.8 r	106.1 r	106.1 r	106.8 r	107.5 r	108.3 r	107.8
Employment, (average, thousands).....	28839.0	28872.0	28980.0	29023.0	29158.0 r	29218.5 **	29248.9 **
Real Household Disposable Income (2006 Constant Price, Q).....	219080.0 r	217935.0 r	216790.0 r	215646.0 r	215150.8 **	215008.7 **	215058.8 **
<b>COINCIDENT INDEX (2004=100).....</b>	<b>102.1</b>	<b>102.3 r</b>	<b>102.4 r</b>	<b>102.5 r</b>	<b>102.8 p</b>	<b>103.1 p</b>	<b>103.1 p</b>
Percent change from preceding month		0.2 r	0.1 r	0.1 r	0.3 p	0.3 p	0.0 p
	U.K. Coincident Economic Index net contributions						
Industrial Production (2006=100).....	....	0.11	-0.04	0.03	-0.03	0.02 r	0.01
Retail Sales, Volume (2005=100).....	....	0.02 r	0.00 r	0.04 r	0.04	0.04 r	-0.03
Employment, (average, thousands).....	....	0.08	0.27	0.11	0.34 r	0.15 **	0.08 **
Real Household Disposable Income (2006 Constant Price, Q).....	....	-0.08 r	-0.08 r	-0.08 r	-0.04 **	-0.01 **	0.00 **

p Preliminary. r Revised. n.a. Not available. c Corrected.

\* Inverted series; a negative change in this component makes a positive contribution to the index.

\*\* Statistical Imputation (See page 2 for more details)

Q Quarterly series; these series are converted to monthly through a linear interpolation.

**Data Sources:** National Statistics, Thomson Financial

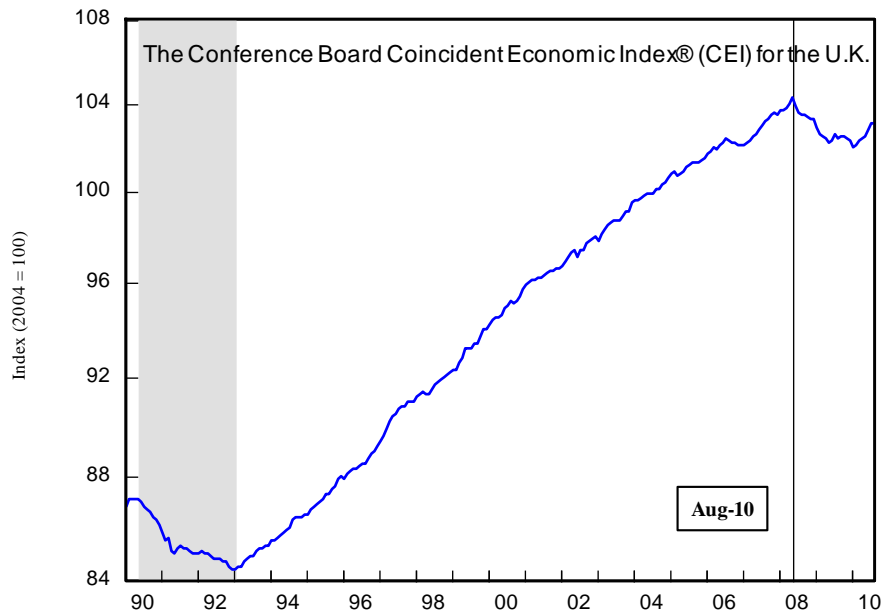
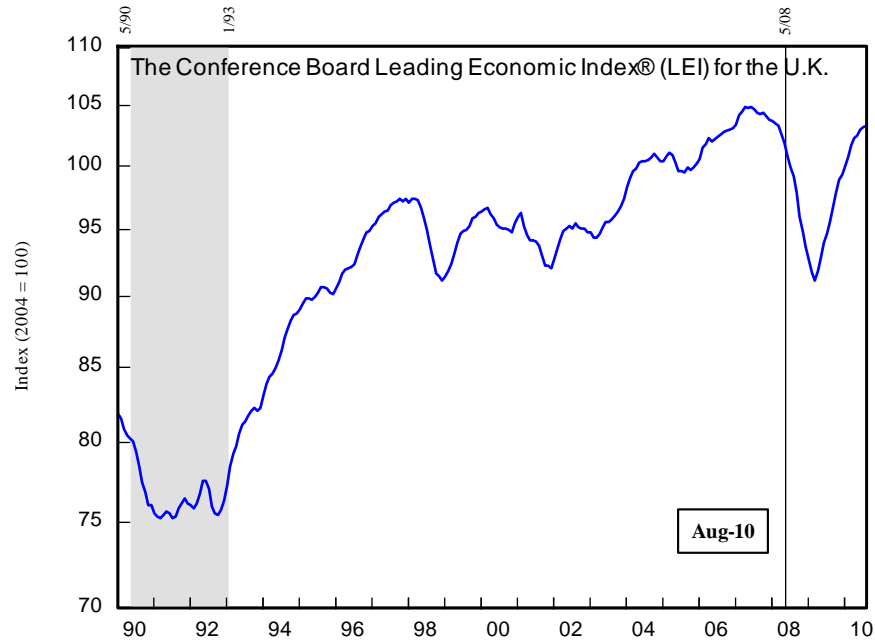
**CALCULATION NOTE--**The percent change in the index does not always equal the sum of the net contributions of the individual components (because of rounding effects and base value differences).

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## United Kingdom Composite Economic Indexes



Note: The shaded areas represent business cycle recessions.  
The peaks and troughs are designated by The Conference Board based on the coincident index and real GDP.

Source: The Conference Board