



**THE CONFERENCE BOARD**

FOR RELEASE: 10:00 A.M. (BRUSSELS TIME), WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2010

The Conference Board®  
Euro Area Business Cycle Indicators<sup>SM</sup>  
**THE CONFERENCE BOARD LEADING ECONOMIC INDEX®**  
**(LEI) FOR THE EURO AREA**  
**AND RELATED COMPOSITE ECONOMIC INDEXES FOR SEPTEMBER 2010**

**BRUSSELS, October 27, 2010...** The Conference Board Leading Economic Index® (LEI) for the Euro Area increased 0.3 percent and The Conference Board Coincident Economic Index® (CEI) decreased 0.1 percent in September.

- The Conference Board LEI for the Euro Area increased again in September. Positive contributions from the interest rate spread, the Economic Sentiment Index, and stock prices more than offset a negative contribution from the Markit Purchasing Managers' Index (manufacturing). Between March and September 2010, the leading economic index increased by 3.0 percent (about a 6.1 percent annual rate), slower than the 4.9 percent increase (about a 10.0 percent annual rate) between September 2009 and March 2010. Despite September's increase, the weaknesses among the leading indicators have become more widespread than the strengths in recent months.
- The Conference Board CEI for the Euro Area, a measure of current economic activity, declined in September after increasing slightly in August, according to preliminary estimates. Between March and September 2010, the coincident economic index increased by 0.3 percent (about a 0.6 percent annual rate), below the 0.7 percent increase (about a 1.4 percent annual rate) for the previous six months. Additionally, the strengths among the coincident indicators have become somewhat less widespread in recent months, though they remain more widespread than the weaknesses. At the same time, real GDP increased at a 3.9 percent annual rate during the second quarter of 2010, following an increase of 1.4 percent annual rate during the first quarter.
- The Conference Board LEI for the Euro Area continued to increase in September. However, its six-month growth rate has continued to fall, and is now at the slowest pace since the middle of 2009. Meanwhile, The Conference Board CEI for the Euro Area has been largely flat for the past four months, after mostly increasing since October 2009. The recent behavior of the composite indexes suggests that economic activity should continue to grow, though at a modest pace in the near term.

**LEADING INDICATORS.** Five of the eight components in The Conference Board LEI for the Euro Area increased in September. The positive contributors -- in order from the largest positive contributor to the smallest -- are the interest rate spread, real money supply\*, the Economic Sentiment Index, the EURO STOXX® Index, and the Markit business expectations index (services). The negative contributors -- in order from largest to smallest -- are the Markit Purchasing Managers' Index (manufacturing), new orders of capital goods\*, and residential building permits.

The next release is scheduled for Monday, November 29, 2010 at 10:00 A.M. (Brussels Time)

*In New York – Monday, November 29, 2010 at 4:00 A.M. (ET)*

With the 0.3 percent increase in September, The Conference Board LEI for the Euro Area now stands at 113.1 (2004=100). Based on revised data, this index increased 0.7 percent in August and increased 0.9 percent in July. During the six-month span through September, the index increased 3.0 percent, with three of the eight components increasing (diffusion index, six-month span equals 37.5 percent).

COINCIDENT INDICATORS. One of the four components that make up The Conference Board CEI for the Euro Area increased in September. The positive contributor was retail trade\*. Manufacturing turnover\* declined in September while employment\*and industrial production\* remained unchanged.

With the 0.1 percent decline in September, The Conference Board CEI for the Euro Area now stands at 102.6 (2004=100). Based on revised data, this index increased 0.2 percent in August and remained unchanged in July. During the six-month period through September, the index increased 0.3 percent, with two of the four components increasing (diffusion index, six-month span equals 75.0 percent).

*\* See notes under data availability.*

FOR TABLES AND CHARTS, SEE BELOW

DATA AVAILABILITY The data series used to compute **The Conference Board Leading Economic Index**<sup>®</sup> (LEI) for the Euro Area and **The Conference Board Coincident Economic Index**<sup>®</sup> (CEI) for the Euro Area reported in this release are those available “as of” 10:00 A.M. ET October 25, 2010. Some series are estimated as noted below.

NOTES: Series in The Conference Board LEI for the Euro Area that are based on our estimates are real money supply, residential building permits and new orders of capital goods. Series in The Conference Board CEI for the Euro Area that are based on our estimates are employment, industrial production, retail trade and manufacturing turnover.

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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 Euro Area have occurred before those in aggregate economic activity, while the cyclical turning points in The Conference Board CEI for the Euro Area 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>.

Euro Area Composite Economic Indexes: Components and Standardization Factors

<u>Leading Economic Index</u>	<u>Factor</u>
1. Yield Spread cumulated, 10 year minus policy rate	0.2423
2. Economic Sentiment Index	0.0975
3. Markit Purchasing Managers' Index (Manufacturing)	0.1384
4. Markit Business Expectations Index (Services)	0.0707
5. EURO STOXX® Index	0.0302
6. Money Supply	0.3289
7. New Orders of Capital Goods	0.0413
8. Residential Building Permits	0.0507
<u>Coincident Economic Index</u>	
1. Employment	0.7436
2. Industrial Production	0.0806
3. Retail Trade	0.1370
4. Manufacturing Turnover	0.0388

Notes:

The standardization 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 on the release for January 2010, and all historical values for the two composite indexes were revised at this time to reflect the changes. (Under normal circumstances, updates to the leading and coincident indexes only incorporate revisions to data over the past six months.) The factors above were calculated using 2000-2008 as the sample period for measuring volatility for The Conference Board LEI for the Euro Area. Separate sets of factors for 1987-1993, 1994-1995, 1995-1997, 1997-1998 and 1998-2000 are available upon request. The factors above for The Conference Board CEI for the Euro Area were calculated using 1995-2008 as the sample period. A separate set of factors is available for 1987-1995. 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 the 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 factors for The Conference Board LEI for the Euro Area are -0.3065 calculated over 1987-1996 and -0.3039 calculated over 1997-2008.

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 revisions are part of the monthly data revisions, now a regular part of the U.S. Business Cycle Indicators program. The main advantage of this procedure is to utilize in the leading economic index the data, such as stock prices, that are available sooner than other data on “real” aspects of the economy, such as new orders and changes in inventory. 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 2010 schedule for “**The Conference Board Leading Economic Index**® (LEI) for the Euro Area” news release is:

October 2010 Data..... Monday, November 29, 2010  
November 2010 Data..... Monday, December 27, 2010

All releases are at 10:00 A.M. (Brussels 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.

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## The Conference Board Euro Area Business Cycle Indicators

Table 1.--Summary of Euro Area Composite Economic Indexes

	2010						
	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.
Leading index	109.8	110.8 r	110.7	111.0 r	112.0 p	112.8 p	113.1 p
Percent change	1.6	0.9 r	-0.1 r	0.3 r	0.9 p	0.7 p	0.3 p
Diffusion index	75.0	75.0	37.5	56.3	75.0	62.5	62.5
Coincident index	102.3	102.1	102.5	102.5 p	102.5 p	102.7 p	102.6 p
Percent change	0.3	-0.2	0.4	0.0 p	0.0 p	0.2 p	-0.1 p
Diffusion index	87.5	37.5	87.5	50.0	62.5	62.5	50.0
	Sep to Mar	Oct to Apr	Nov to May	Dec to Jun	Jan to Jul	Feb to Aug	Mar to Sep
Leading index							
Percent change	4.9	5.4 r	4.7	4.1 r	4.0 p	4.3 p	3.0 p
Diffusion index	75.0	75.0	62.5	75.0	62.5	87.5	37.5
Coincident index							
Percent change	0.7	0.5	0.8	0.7 p	0.5 p	0.7 p	0.3 p
Diffusion index	75.0	87.5	87.5	87.5	87.5	87.5	75.0

p Preliminary. r Revised (both 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 Euro Area Business Cycle Indicators

Table 2.--Data and Net Contributions for Components of the Euro Area Leading Economic Index

Component	2010						
	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.
Euro Area Leading Economic Index component data							
Yield Spread, 10 year ECB Benchmark Rate minus ECB Minimum Bid Rate-----	2.99	3.16	2.68	2.70	2.62	2.44	2.50
Economic Sentiment Index (Index of five sentiment surveys) Average value 1990-2009 = 100-----	97.9	100.6	98.4	98.9	101.1	102.3 r	103.2
Markit Purchasing Managers' Index (Manufacturing) 50 = Balanced Positive and Negative Responses-----	56.65	57.57	55.84	55.64	56.69	55.10	53.66
Markit Business Expectations Index (Services) 50 = Balanced Positive and Negative Responses-----	68.68	69.30	67.60	66.14	66.49	67.12	68.03
Stock Price (Average Closing Price) EURO STOXX® Index, 12/31/1991=100-----	272.65	278.86	252.70	253.19	255.12	258.87	264.63
Money Supply (M2) In Billions of 2005 Euros-----	7521.36 r	7507.19 r	7529.04 r	7551.8 r	7614.7 r	7645.5 r	7671.5 **
Capital Goods New Orders Index (2005=100)-----	88.87 r	87.35 r	91.23 r	94.59 r	90.23 r	97.53 r	95.44 **
Index of Residential Building Permits (Index, 2005 = 100) Square meters of usable floor area-----	51.52 r	52.65 r	54.12 r	51.65 r	51.81 **	51.60 **	51.44 **
<b>LEADING INDEX (2004=100).....</b>	<b>109.8</b>	<b>110.8 r</b>	<b>110.7</b>	<b>111.0 r</b>	<b>112.0 p</b>	<b>112.8 p</b>	<b>113.1 p</b>
Percent change from preceding month.....		0.9 r	-0.1 r	0.3 r	0.9 r	0.7 p	0.3 p
Euro Area Leading Economic Index net contributions							
Yield Spread, 10 year ECB Benchmark Rate ECB Minimum Bid Rate	----	0.77	0.65	0.65	0.63	0.59	0.60
Economic Sentiment Index (Index of five sentiment surveys) Average value 1990-2009 = 100	----	0.26	-0.21	0.05	0.21	0.12 r	0.09
Markit Purchasing Managers' Index (Manufacturing) 50 = Balanced Positive and Negative Responses	----	0.13	-0.24	-0.03	0.14	-0.22	-0.20
Markit Business Expectations Index (Services) 50 = Balanced Positive and Negative Responses	----	0.04	-0.12	-0.10	0.02	0.04	0.06
Stock Price (Average Closing Price) EURO STOXX® Index, 12/31/1991=100	----	0.07	-0.30	0.01	0.02	0.04	0.07
Money Supply (M2) In Billions of 2005 Euros	----	-0.06	0.10	0.10 r	0.27 r	0.13 r	0.11 **
Capital Goods New Orders Index (2005=100)	----	-0.07 r	0.18	0.15	-0.19 r	0.32 r	-0.09 **
Index of Residential Building Permits (Index, 2005 = 100) Square meters of usable floor area	----	0.11 r	0.14 r	-0.24 r	0.02 **	-0.02 **	-0.02 **

p Preliminary. r Revised. s.a. Seasonally Adjusted

\* 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: Eurostat, ECB, Reuters Thomson, Markit Economics, STOXX Limited**

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 Euro Area Business Cycle Indicators

Table 3.--Data and Net Contributions for Components of the Euro Area Coincident Economic Index

Component	Mar.	Apr.	May.	2010			
				Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.
Euro Area Coincident Economic Index Component Data							
Number of Employees Thous. Of Employees, S.A. Q	144460.4 r	144457.2 r	144454.0 r	144450.8 **	144447.5 **	144444.2 **	144440.9 **
Industrial Production, Volume Index (2005=100). S.A.	95.2	95.9	97.0	96.9	97.0 r	98.1 r	98.1 **
Retail Trade, Volume Index (2005=100). S.A.	101.8	100.9 r	101.4	101.8 r	102.0 r	101.5 r	101.8 **
Manufacturing Turnover, Index (2005=100). S.A.	97.0	94.0 r	97.8 r	97.7 r	96.8 r	100.2 r	99.2 **
<b>COINCIDENT INDEX (2004=100).....</b>	<b>102.3</b>	<b>102.1</b>	<b>102.5</b>	<b>102.5 p</b>	<b>102.5 p</b>	<b>102.7 p</b>	<b>102.6 p</b>
Percent change from preceding month.....		-0.2	0.4	0.0 p	0.0 p	0.2 p	-0.1 p
Euro Area Coincident Economic Index net contributions							
Number of Employees Thous. Of Employees, S.A. Q	-----	0.00	0.00	0.00 **	0.00 **	0.00 **	0.00 **
Industrial Production, Volume Index (2005=100). S.A.	-----	0.05 r	0.09	-0.01	0.01 r	0.09 r	0.00 **
Retail Trade, Volume Index (2005=100). S.A.	-----	-0.12	0.07 r	0.05 r	0.02	-0.06 r	0.03 **
Manufacturing Turnover, Index (2005=100). S.A.	-----	-0.12	0.15	0.00	-0.04 r	0.13 r	-0.04 **

p Preliminary. r Revised. s.a. Seasonally Adjusted

\* 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: Eurostat, ECB, Reuters Thomson**

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).

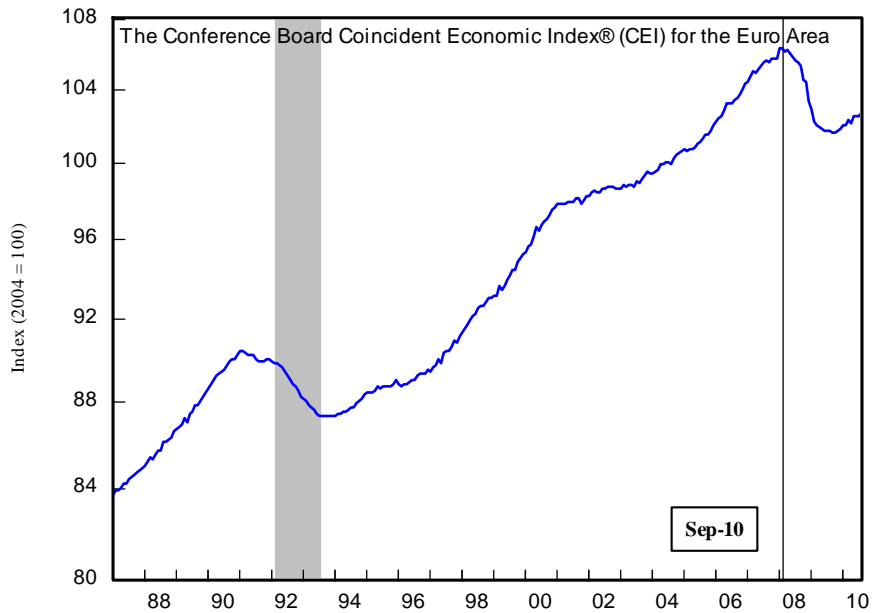
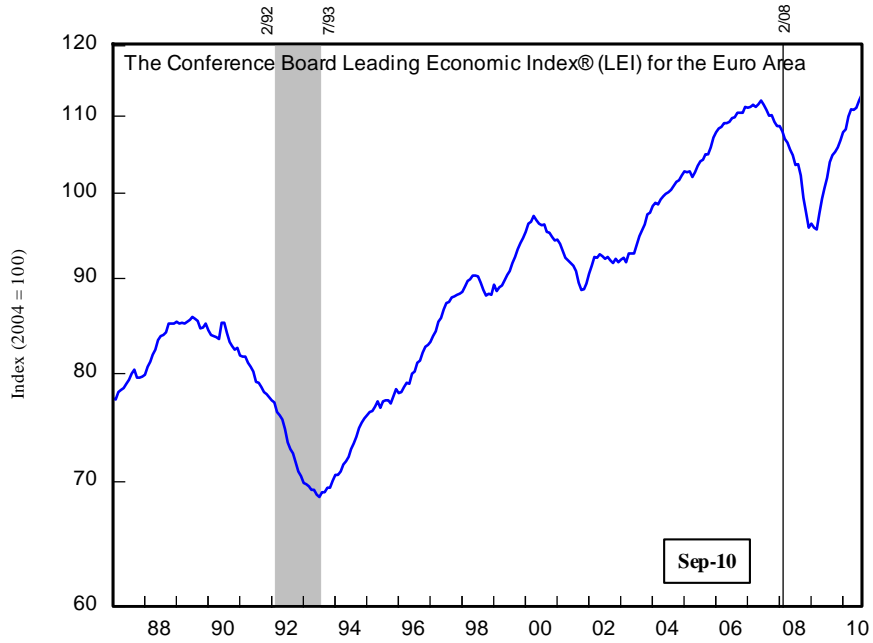
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## Euro Area Composite Economic Indexes



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