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The Conference Board®
U.S. Business Cycle IndicatorsSM

THE CONFERENCE BOARD LEADING ECONOMIC INDEX® (LEI) FOR THE UNITED STATES AND RELATED COMPOSITE ECONOMIC INDEXES FOR JUNE 2014

The Conference Board Leading Economic Index[®] (LEI) for the U.S. increased 0.3 percent, **The Conference Board Coincident Economic Index**[®] (CEI) increased 0.2 percent and **The Conference Board Lagging Economic Index**[®] (LAG) increased 0.5 percent in June.

- The Conference Board LEI for the U.S. increased for the fifth consecutive month in June. The positive contributions from the financial and new orders components more than offset declines in building permits and the labor market indicators. In the first half of this year, the leading economic index increased 2.7 percent (about a 5.5 percent annual rate), slower than the growth of 3.5 percent (about a 7.2 percent annual rate) during the second half of 2013. In addition, the strengths among the leading indicators continue to be more widespread than the weaknesses.
- The Conference Board CEI for the U.S., a measure of current economic activity, also increased in June. The index rose 1.3 percent (about a 2.6 percent annual rate) between December 2013 and June 2014, slightly faster than the growth of 1.0 percent (about a 2.1 percent annual rate) for the previous six months. However, the strengths among the coincident indicators have remained very widespread, with all components advancing over the past six months. The lagging economic index continued to increase, but at a higher rate than the CEI. As a result, the coincident-to-lagging ratio has declined.
- The Conference Board LEI for the U.S. has been increasing since February and its six-month growth rate has remained steady in the past several months. Meanwhile, The Conference Board CEI for the U.S. has also been rising slowly through June, and its six-month growth rate has picked up slightly over the recent six months. Taken together, the current behavior of the composite indexes and their components suggests that the contraction in economic growth in the first quarter should be short-lived and economic activity will continue expanding into the second half of the year.

<u>LEADING INDICATORS.</u> Six of the ten indicators that make up The Conference Board LEI for the U.S. increased in June. The positive contributors – beginning with the largest positive contributor – were the interest rate spread, the Leading Credit IndexTM (inverted), stock prices, the ISM® new orders index, manufacturers' new orders for nondefense capital goods excluding aircraft*, and manufacturers' new orders for consumer goods and materials*. The negative contributors – beginning with the largest negative contributor – were building permits, average weekly manufacturing hours and average weekly initial claims for unemployment insurance (inverted). The average consumer expectations for business conditions held steady in June.

The LEI for the U.S. now stands at 102.2 (2004=100). Based on revised data, this index increased 0.7 percent in May and increased 0.3 percent in April. Over the six-month span through June, the leading

economic index increased 2.7 percent, with seven out of ten components advancing (diffusion index, six-month span equals 70 percent).

COINCIDENT INDICATORS. All four indicators that make up the CEI for the U.S. increased in June. The positive contributors to the index – beginning with the largest positive contributor – were employees on nonagricultural payrolls, personal income less transfer payments*, industrial production, and manufacturing and trade sales*.

The CEI now stands at 109.2 (2004=100). Based on revised data, this index increased 0.3 percent in May and increased 0.2 percent in April. During the six-month period through June, the coincident economic index increased 1.3 percent, with all four components advancing (diffusion index, six-month span equals 100 percent).

LAGGING INDICATORS. The lagging economic index stands at 124.4 (2004=100) in June, with five of its seven components advancing. The positive contributors to the index – beginning with the largest positive contributor - were commercial and industrial loans outstanding*, the average duration of unemployment (inverted), the ratio of consumer installment credit to personal income*, the ratio of manufacturing and trade inventories to sales*, and the change in index of labor cost per unit of output, manufacturing*. The only negative contributor was the change in CPI for services*. The average prime rate charged by banks held steady in June. Based on revised data, the lagging economic index increased 0.3 percent in May and increased 0.4 percent in April.

DATA AVAILABILITY AND NOTES.

The data series used to compute **The Conference Board Leading Economic Index**[®] (LEI) for the U.S., The Conference Board Coincident Economic Index® (CEI) for the U.S. and The Conference Board **Lagging Economic Index**[®] (LAG) for the U.S. and reported in the tables in this release are those available "as of" 8:30 am ET on July 17, 2014. Some series are estimated as noted below.

* Series in The Conference Board LEI for the U.S. based on our estimates are manufacturers' new orders for consumer goods and materials, and manufacturers' new orders for nondefense capital goods excl. aircraft. Series in The Conference Board CEI for the U.S. that are based on our estimates are personal income less transfer payments and manufacturing and trade sales. Series in The Conference Board LAG for the U.S. that are based on our estimates are manufacturing and trade inventories to sales ratio, the change in labor cost per unit of output, manufacturing, consumer installment credit to income ratio, change in CPI for services, and the personal consumption expenditure deflator used to deflate commercial and industrial loans outstanding.

The procedure used to estimate the current month's personal consumption expenditure deflator (used in the calculation of commercial and industrial loans outstanding) now incorporates the current month's consumer price index when it is available before the release of The Conference Board LEI for the U.S.

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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, coincident, and lagging economic indexes are essentially composite averages of several individual leading, coincident, or lagging 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.S. have occurred before those in aggregate economic activity, while the cyclical turning points in The Conference Board CEI for the U.S. have occurred at about the same time as those in aggregate economic activity. The cyclical turning points in The Conference Board LAG for the U.S. generally have occurred after those in aggregate economic activity.

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

Leading Economic	ic Index	<u>Factor</u>
1	Average weekly hours, manufacturing	0.2713
2	Average weekly initial claims for unemployment insurance	0.0336
3	Manufacturers' new orders, consumer goods and materials	0.0830
4	ISM® new orders index	0.1606
5	Manufacturers' new orders, nondefense capital goods excl.	
	aircraft	0.0409
6	Building permits, new private housing units	0.0312
7	Stock prices, 500 common stocks	0.0392
8	Leading Credit Index TM	0.0832
9	Interest rate spread, 10-year Treasury bonds less federal funds	0.1102
10	Avg. consumer expectations for business conditions	0.1468
Coincident Eco	onomic Index	
1	Employees on nonagricultural payrolls	0.5159
2	Personal income less transfer payments	0.2222
3	Industrial production	0.1436
4	Manufacturing and trade sales	0.1183
Lagging Econo	omic Index	
1	Average duration of unemployment	0.0371
2	Inventories to sales ratio, manufacturing and trade	0.1244
3	Labor cost per unit of output, manufacturing	0.0500
4	Average prime rate	0.2922
5	Commercial and industrial loans	0.0964
6	Consumer installment credit to personal income ratio	0.1971
7	Consumer price index for services	0.2028

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. When one or more components are missing, the other factors are adjusted proportionately to ensure that the total continues to sum to 1.

These factors were revised effective with the release in January 2014, and all historical values for the three composite economic indexes were revised at this time to reflect the changes. (Under normal circumstances, updates to the leading, coincident, and lagging economic indexes only incorporate revisions to data over the past six months.) The factors for The Conference Board LEI for the U.S. were calculated using 1984-2012 as the sample period for measuring volatility. A separate set of factors for the 1959-1983 period is available upon request. The primary sample period for the coincident and lagging economic indexes was 1959-2012. For additional information on the standardization factors and the index methodology see: "Benchmark Revisions in the Composite Indexes," *Business Cycle Indicators* December 1997 and "Technical Appendix: Calculating the Composite Indexes" *Business Cycle Indicators* December 1996, or the Web site: http://www.conference-board.org/data/bci.cfm

The trend adjustment factor for The Conference Board LEI for the U.S is -0.0598 (over the 1984 – present) and 0.0904 (over the 1959-1983 period), and the trend adjustment factor for The Conference Board LAG for the U.S is 0.1551.

To address the problem of lags in available data, those leading, coincident and lagging indicators that are not available at the time of publication are estimated using statistical imputation. An autoregressive model is used to estimate each unavailable component. The resulting indexes are therefore constructed using real and estimated data, and will be revised as the unavailable data during 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 data such as stock prices, interest rate spread, and manufacturing hours that are available sooner than other data on real aspects of the economy such as manufacturers' new orders. Empirical research by The Conference Board suggests that there are real gains in adopting this procedure to make all the indicator series as up-to-date as possible.

NOTICES

The Conference Board Leading Economic Index® (LEI) for the U.S. news release schedule for 2014:

Thursday, August 21, 2014 For July 2014 data
Friday, September 19, 2014 For August 2014 data
Thursday, October 23, 2014 For September 2014 data
Thursday, November 20, 2014 For October 2014 data
Thursday, December 18, 2014 For November 2014 data

All releases are at 10:00 AM ET.

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Table 1. Summary of U.S. Composite Economic Indexes

rable 1. Summary of 0.3. Composite Economic indexes									
	2013 2014								
	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun		
Leading index	99.5	99.3 r	99.9	100.9	101.2	101.9 r	102.2 p		
Percent change	0.1	2 r	0.6 r	1.0	0.3	0.7 r	0.3 p		
Diffusion index	40	40	50	70	45	85	65		
Coincident index	107.8	107.7 r	108.1	108.5	108.7	109.0	109.2 p		
Percent change	-0.1	-0.1 r	0.4 r	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.2 p		
Diffusion index	50	50	100	100	87.5	100	100		
Lagging index	121.2	122.1	122.3 r	122.9	123.4 r	123.8	124.4 p		
Percent change	0.4	0.7	0.2 r	0.5 r	0.4 r	0.3 r	0.5 p		
Diffusion index	64.3	78.6	50	71.4	78.6	78.6	78.6		
Coincident-lagging ratio	88.9	88.2 r	88.4 r	88.3	88.1 r	88.0	87.8 p		
	Jun to	Jul to	Aug to	Sep to	Oct to	Nov to	Dec to		
	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun		
Leading index									
Percent change	3.5	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.7		
Diffusion index	55	65	60	70	65	70	70		
Coincident index									
Percent change	1.0	0.9	1	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.3		
Diffusion index	100	100	100	100	100	100	100		
Dirasion index	100	100	100	100	100	100	100		
Lagging index	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		
Percent change	1.6 64.3	2.3 92.9	2.2 64.3	2.2 78.6	2.2 92.9	2.6 92.9	2.6 92.9		
Diffusion index	04.3	92.9	04.3	0.0	92.9	92.9	92.9		

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

CALCULATION NOTE: The diffusion indexes measure the proportion of the components that are contributing positively. 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.

The full history of composite and diffusion indexes is available by subscription on our web site at https://www.conference-board.org/data/bcicountry.cfm?cid=1

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

2014

2013

0	2013											
Component	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun					
	U.S. Leading Economic Index component data											
Average w orkw eek, production w orkers, mfg. (hours)	41.9	41.7	41.5	42.0	41.9	42.2 r	42.1					
Average weekly initial claims, state unemployment insurance (thousands)*	352.3	333.8	336.9	320.9	325.2	310.3	315.0					
Manufacturers' new orders, consumer goods and materials (mil. 1982 dol.)	130,584	129,344	132,268 r	132,202	131,881 r	132,799 r	132,930 **					
ISM® New Orders Index (percent)	64.4	51.2	54.5	55.1	55.1	56.9	58.9					
Manufacturers' new orders, nondefense capital goods excl. aircraft (mil. 1982 dol.	41776	40889 r	40954	42871	42302 r	42547 r	42699 **					
Building permits (thous.)	1,022	939	1,011	1,000	1,059	1,005 r	963					
Stock prices, 500 common stocks © (index: 1941-43=10)	1,807.78	1,822.36	1,817.03	1,863.52	1,864.26	1,889.77	1,947.09					
Leading Credit Index™ (std. dev.¹)*	-1.84 r	-1.31 r	-1.44 r	-0.92 r	-0.93 r	-1.34 r	-1.75					
Interest rate spread, 10-year Treasury bonds less federal funds	2.81	2.79	2.64	2.64	2.62	2.47	2.50					
Avg. Consumer Expectations for Business Conditions (std. dev. 1)	-0.34 r	-0.25 r	-0.34 r	-0.15 r	0.03 r	-0.01 r	-0.03					
LEADING INDEX (2004=100) Percent change from preceding month	99.5 0.1	99.3 r -0.2 r	99.9 0.6 r	100.9 1.0	101.2 0.3	101.9 r 0.7 r	102.2 p 0.3 p					
_		U.S	. Leading Eco	nomic Index r	net contributio	ons						
Average w orkw eek, production w orkers, mfg		13	13	.32	06	.19 r	06					
Average weekly initial claims, state unemployment insurance		.18	03	.16	04	.16	05					
Manufacturers' new orders, consumer goods and materials		08	.19 r	.00	02 r	.06 r	.01 **					
ISM® New Orders Index		09	02	01	01	.03	.07					
Manufacturers' new orders, nondefense capital goods excl. aircraft		09 r	.01 r	.19	05 r	.02 r	.01 **					
Building permits		26	.23	03	.18	16 r	13					
Stock prices, 500 common stocks ©		.03	01	.10	.00	.05	.12					
Leading Credit Index™		.11	.12	.08	.08	.11 r	.15					
Interest rate spread, 10-year Treasury bonds less federal funds		.31	.29	.29	.29	.27	.28					
Avg. Consumer Expectations for Business Conditions		04	05	02	.00	.00	.00					

- p Preliminary. r Revised. c Corrected.
- Standard deviation above or below the mean
- * Inverted series; a negative change or value in this component makes a positive contribution to the index.
- ** Statistical Imputation (See page 3 for more details)
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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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Table 3. Data and Net Contributions for Components of the U.S. Coincident Economic Index and U.S. Lagging Economic Index

_	2013 2014							
Component	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
_		ι	J.S. Coincident	Economic Inde	x component d	ata		
Employees on nonagricultural payrolls (thousands)	137,395	137,539	137,761	137,964	138,268 r	138,492 r	138,780	
Personal income less transfer payments (ann. rate, bil. chn. 2009 dol.)	10,983	10,994 r	11,019 r	11,057 r	11,078 r	11,097 r	11,124 **	
Industrial production (index: 2007=100)	101.557	101.306 r	102.223 r	103.158 r	103.199 r	103.688 r	103.915	
Manufacturing and trade sales (mil. chn. 2009 dol.)	1,159,516	1,145,215 r	1,151,055 r	1,163,522 r	1,166,343 r	1,169,941 **	1,172,727 **	
COINCIDENT INDEX (2004=100) Percent change from preceding month	107.8 -0.1	107.7 r -0.1 r	108.1 0.4 r	108.5 0.4	108.7 0.2	109.0 0.3	109.2 p 0.2 p	
_		L	J.S. Coincident	Economic Inde	x net contributi	ons		
Employees on nonagricultural payrolls		.05	.08	.08	.11	.08	.11	
Personal income less transfer payments		.02 r	.05	.08 r	.04 r	.04 r	.05 **	
Industrial production		04 r	.13 r	.13 r	.01 r	.07 r	.03	
Manufacturing and trade sales		15 r	.06 r	.13 r	.03 r	.04 **	.03 **	
			U.S. Lagging E	conomic Index	component dat	ta		
Average duration of unemployment (w eeks)*	37.1	35.4	37.1	35.6	35.1	34.5	33.5	
Ratio, manufacturing and trade inventories to sales (chain 2009 dol.)	1.396	1.416 r	1.413	1.400 r	1.403	1.402 **	1.403 **	
Change in index of labor cost per unit of output, mfg. (6-month percent, ann. rate)	-1	1.5 r	-0.6 r	-0.6 r	-0.4 **	-0.1 **	0.0 **	
Average prime rate charged by banks (percent)	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	
Commercial and industrial loans outstanding (mil. chn. 2009 dol.)	1,014,632 r	1,012,129 r	1,038,432 r	1,062,023 r	1,070,346 r	1,074,384 r	1,088,108 **	
Ratio, consumer installment credit outstanding to personal income (percent)	21.66 r	21.70 r	21.73 r	21.75 r	21.85	21.90 r	21.94 **	
Change in CPI for services (6-month percent, ann. rate)	2.2	2.6	2.8	3.1	3.0	3.4	3.3 **	
LAGGING INDEX (2004=100) Percent change from preceding month	121.2 0.4	122.1 0.7	122.3 r 0.2 r	122.9 0.5 r	123.4 r 0.4 r	123.8 0.3 r	124.4 p 0.5 p	
_			U.S. Lagging E	conomic Index	net contribution	ns		
Average duration of unemployment		.17	17	.15	.05	.06	.11	
Ratio, manufacturing and trade inventories to sales		.18 r	03 r	11 r	.03 r	01 **	.01 **	
Change in index of labor cost per unit of output, mfg		.13 r	11 r	.00 r	.01 **	.02 **	.01 **	
Average prime rate charged by banks	****	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	
Commercial and industrial loans outstanding		02 r	.25 r	.22 r	.08	.04	.12 **	
Ratio, consumer installment credit out- standing to personal income		.04	.03 r	.02	.09 r	.05 r	.04 **	
Change in CPI for services		.08	.04	.06	02	.08	02 **	

CPI Consumer Price Index. For additional notes see table 2.

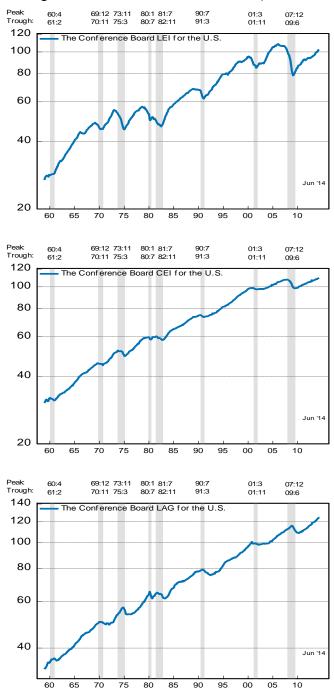
- * Inverted series; a negative change in this component makes a positive contribution to the index.
- ** Statistical Imputation (See page 3 for more details)

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U.S. Composite Economic Indexes (2004=100)



Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research.

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