



THE CONFERENCE BOARD

FOR RELEASE: 10:00 A.M. JST, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2010

The Conference Board[®]
Japan Business Cycle IndicatorsSM
**THE CONFERENCE BOARD LEADING ECONOMIC INDEX[®] (LEI)
FOR JAPAN
AND RELATED COMPOSITE ECONOMIC INDEXES FOR AUGUST 2010**

The Conference Board Leading Economic Index[®] (LEI) for Japan increased 0.2 percent and **The Conference Board Coincident Economic Index[®] (CEI)** also increased 0.2 percent in August.

- The Conference Board LEI for Japan increased slightly in August, and July's decline was revised up to a small gain due to revisions in the underlying data. In August, new orders for machinery and construction, the Tankan business conditions index, dwelling units started, and real money supply continued to make positive contributions, more than offsetting the negative contributions from the six-month growth rate of labor productivity and stock prices. Despite this month's small gain, the six-month growth rate in the leading economic index continued to slow -- to 1.3 percent (a 2.6 percent annual rate) from February to August 2010, down sharply from 14.2 percent (about a 30.4 percent annual rate) for the previous six months. In addition, the strengths among the leading indicators have become less widespread in recent months.
- The Conference Board CEI for Japan also increased slightly in August. Despite the gain in August, the six-month growth rate of the coincident economic index also continued to slow -- to 1.7 percent (a 3.5 percent annual rate) for the period through August 2010, down from 3.0 percent (about a 6.2 percent annual rate) for the previous six months. At the same time, real GDP increased by 1.5 percent (annual rate) in the second quarter of 2010, down from 5.0 percent (annual rate) in the first quarter.
- The Conference Board LEI for Japan increased slightly in the past two months, but its six-month growth rate has continued to fall at a rapid pace. In addition, the six-month growth rate in The Conference Board CEI for Japan has also slowed this year. Taken together, the behavior of the composite indexes suggests that the economic recovery should continue, but its pace will likely remain modest in the near term.

LEADING INDICATORS. Seven of the ten components that make up The Conference Board LEI for Japan increased in August. The positive contributors to the index -- in order from the largest positive contributor to the smallest -- include the new orders for machinery and construction component*, the Tankan business conditions survey, dwelling units started, real money supply, the interest rate spread, real operating profits*, and index of overtime worked. The negative contributors include the six-month growth rate of labor productivity and stock prices. The (inverted) business failures remained unchanged in August.

With the increase of 0.2 percent in August, The Conference Board LEI for Japan now stands at 101.8 (2004=100). Based on revised data, this index increased 0.1 percent in July and decreased 1.4 percent in June. During the six-month span through August, the index increased 1.3 percent, and six of the ten components advanced (diffusion index, six-month span equals 60.0 percent).

The next release is scheduled for Wednesday, November 10, 2010 at 10:00 A.M. (JST)

In the U.S – Tuesday, November 9, 2010 at 8:00 P.M (ET)

COINCIDENT INDICATORS. Two of the four components that make up The Conference Board CEI for Japan increased in August. The positive contributors to the index were the retail, wholesale, and manufacturing sales* component and wage and salary income. Industrial production and number of employed persons declined in August.

With the increase of 0.2 percent in August, The Conference Board CEI for Japan now stands at 100.0 (2004=100). Based on revised data, this index increased 0.5 percent in July and increased 0.3 percent in June. During the six-month span through August, the index increased 1.7 percent, and three of the four components advanced (diffusion index, six-month span equals 75.0 percent).

FOR TABLES AND CHARTS, SEE BELOW

DATA AVAILABILITY AND NOTES. The data series used to compute **The Conference Board Leading Economic Index**[®] (LEI) for Japan and **The Conference Board Coincident Economic Index**[®] (CEI) for Japan reported in this release are those available “as of” 5:00 P.M. ET October 5, 2010. Some series are estimated as noted below.

* The series in The Conference Board LEI that are based on our estimates are real operating profits and new orders for machinery. The series in The Conference Board CEI that is based on our estimates is real manufacturing sales.

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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 economic 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 leading economic index have occurred before those in aggregate economic activity, while the cyclical turning points in the coincident economic index have occurred at about the same time as those in aggregate economic activity.

Japan Composite Economic Indexes: Components and Standardization Factors

<u>Leading Economic Index</u>	<u>Factor</u>
1 Operating Profits	0.0608
2 Dwelling Units Started	0.0349
3 Business Failures	0.0618
4 Index of Overtime Worked	0.0987
5 Stock Prices (TOPIX)	0.0380
6 Six Month Growth Rate of Labor Productivity	0.1209
7 Tankan Business Conditions Survey	0.0875
8 Money Supply	0.2809
9 Yield Spread	0.1668
10 New Orders for Machinery and Construction	0.0497
 <u>Coincident Economic Index</u>	
1 Number of Employed Persons	0.5520
2 Industrial Production	0.1120
3 Wage and Salary Income	0.1720
4 Real Retail, Wholesale, and Manufacturing Sales	0.1640

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 on the release for January 2010, 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 Conference Board LEI were calculated using the September 1974 to December 2008 period as the sample period for measuring volatility. Separate sets of factors for the March 1974 to August 1974 period, the February 1973 to February 1974 period, and February 1965 to January 1973 period, are available upon request. The factors above for The Conference Board CEI were calculated using the August 1978 to December 2008 period as the sample period. Separate sets of factors for the February 1970 to July 1978 period, and the February 1965 to January 1970 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 the total continues to sum to 1. For additional information on the standardization factors and the index methodology visit our Web site: www.conference-board.org/data/bci.cfm

The trend adjustment factors for The Conference Board LEI are -0.2127 (calculated over the 1992-2008 period) and -0.2218 (calculated over the 1965 – 1991 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 The Conference Board LEI 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 2010 schedule for **The Conference Board Leading Economic Index[®]** (LEI) news releases is:

September 2010 Data ... Tuesday, November 09, 2010
October 2010 Data ... Tuesday, December 07, 2010

All releases are at 10:00 A.M. JST (following day), 8:00 P.M. (9:00 P.M. EST) ET

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE BOARD

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The Conference Board Japan Business Cycle Indicators

Table 1.--Summary of Japan Composite Economic Indexes

	2010						
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Leading index	100.5	103.1	103.4	102.9	101.5 p	101.6 p	101.8 p
Percent change	1.0	2.6	0.3	-0.5	-1.4 p	0.1 p	0.2 p
Diffusion index	60.0	90.0	50.0	55.0	60.0	75.0	70.0
Coincident index	98.3	98.7	99.1	99.0	99.3 p	99.8 p	100.0 p
Percent change	-0.2	0.4	0.4	-0.1	0.3 p	0.5 p	0.2 p
Diffusion index	25.0	75.0	75.0	50.0	75.0	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	14.2	13.5	10.9	7.7	4.3 p	2.1 p	1.3 p
Diffusion index	80.0	90.0	90.0	90.0	60.0	50.0	60.0
Coincident index							
Percent change	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.5	2.2 p	1.3 p	1.7 p
Diffusion index	100.0	87.5	75.0	75.0	75.0	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 <http://www.conference-board.org/data/bci.cfm>

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The Conference Board Japan Business Cycle Indicators

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

Component	2010							
	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	
Japan Leading Economic Index Component Data								
Real Operating Profits, (Bill. 2005 Yen, S.A., Q).....	11494.29 r	12134.19 r	12774.10 r	13414.00 r	13868.57 **	14183.61 **	14393.72 **	
Dw elling Units Started, (Tens, S.A.) (3 mo. moving avg.).....	6359.20	6216.20	6270.10	6382.90	6505.57	6579.47	6981.50	
Business Failures, (Number, S.A.)* (3 mo. moving avg.).....	271.42 r	266.01 r	266.18 r	267.69 r	256.78	258.14 r	258.23	
Index of Overtime Worked, Mfg. (2005=100, S.A.)	85.5	87.4	87.1	87.2	87.4	88.2 r	88.3	
Stock Price Index, (Jan. 4, 1968=100).....	894.10	978.81	987.04	880.46	841.42	849.50	804.67	
Six Month Grow th Rate of Labor Productivity Mfg. (3 mo. moving avg., pct.).....	33.48	36.18	33.77	30.93	25.79	19.81 r	14.49	
Tankan Business Conditions, All Enterprises, All Industries (Balance +/-, Q).....	-34.0	-31.3	-28.7	-26.0	-22.7	-19.3	-16.0	
Real Money Supply, M2 + CD Money, (10 Bill. 2005 Yen, S.A.).....	76547.85	76754.15	77387.07	77761.14	77853.05	78147.10	78547.99	
Yield Spread, 10 year minus 3 months.....	0.86	0.97	0.88	0.87	0.71	0.69	0.69	
New Orders for Machinery and Construction, (3 mo. moving avg., 100 Mill. 2005 Yen, S.A.).....	15337	19059	18435	17267	12982	13727	14798 **	
LEADING INDEX (2004=100).....	100.5	103.1	103.4	102.9	101.5 p	101.6 p	101.8 p	
Percent change from preceding month.....	1.0	2.6	0.3	-0.5	-1.4 p	0.1 p	0.2 p	
Japan Leading Economic Index Net Contributions								
Real Operating Profits, (Bill. 2005 Yen, S.A., Q).....	....	0.33 r	0.31 r	0.30 r	0.20 **	0.14 **	0.09 **	
Dw elling Units Started, (Tens, S.A.) (3 mo. moving avg.).....	....	-0.08	0.03	0.06	0.07	0.04	0.21	
Business Failures, (Number, S.A.)* (3 mo. moving avg.).....	....	0.12 r	0.00 r	-0.04 r	0.26	-0.03 r	0.00	
Index of Overtime Worked, Mfg. (2005=100, S.A.)	....	0.22	-0.03	0.01	0.02	0.09 r	0.01	
Stock Price Index, (Jan. 4, 1968=100).....	....	0.34	0.03	-0.43	-0.17	0.04	-0.21	
Six Month Grow th Rate of Labor Productivity Mfg. (3 mo. moving avg., pct.).....	....	0.33	-0.29	-0.34	-0.62	-0.72 r	-0.64	
Tankan Business Conditions, All Enterprises, All Industries (Balance +/-, Q).....	....	0.24	0.23	0.24	0.29	0.30	0.29	
Real Money Supply, M2 + CD Money, (10 Bill. 2005 Yen, S.A.).....	....	0.08	0.23	0.14 r	0.03 r	0.11 r	0.14	
Yield Spread, 10 year minus 3 months.....	....	0.16	0.15	0.15	0.12	0.12	0.12	
New Orders for Machinery and Construction, (3 mo. moving avg., 100 Mill. 2005 Yen, S.A.).....	....	1.08	-0.17	-0.33	-1.41	0.28 r	0.37 **	

p Preliminary. r Revised. n.a. Not available. c Corrected. -- * Inverted series; a negative change in this component makes a positive contribution.

** Statistical Imputation (See page 2 for more details)-- Q: Quarterly series; these series are converted to monthly through a linear interpolation

Data Sources: Economic and Social Research Institute - Cabinet Office, M.E.T.I. Japan, M anagement and Co ordination Agency, M inistry of Finance

Datastream, M inistry of Labor, Japan Securities Dealers Association

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 Japan Business Cycle Indicators

Table 3.--Data and Net Contributions for Japan Coincident Economic Index

Component	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	2010 May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.
Japan Coincident Economic Index Component Data							
Number of Employed Persons, (Thousands of persons, S.A.).....	62780	62730	62450	62210	62250	62460	62450
Industrial Production, (2005=100, S.A.).....	93.7	94.8	96.0	96.1	95.0	94.8 r	94.5
Wage and Salary Income, (2005=100, S.A.).....	101.1	101.5	102.0	101.8	102.1	102.8 r	103.3
Real Retail, Wholesale, and Manuf. Sales (Billions of 2005 Yen, S.A.).....	136481.9 r	138621.3 r	142410.5 r	143587.5 r	146606.9 **	148966.9 **	150299.2 **
COINCIDENT INDEX (2004=100).....	98.3	98.7	99.1	99.0	99.3 p	99.8 p	100.0 p
Percent change from preceding month....	-0.2	0.4	0.4	-0.1	0.3 p	0.5 p	0.2 p
Japan Coincident Economic Index Net Contributions							
Number of Employed Persons, (Thousands of persons, S.A.).....	....	-0.04 r	-0.25 r	-0.21 r	0.04 r	0.19 r	-0.01
Industrial Production, (2005=100, S.A.).....	....	0.13	0.14	0.01	-0.13	-0.02 r	-0.04
Wage and Salary Income, (2005=100, S.A.).....	....	0.07	0.08	-0.03	0.05	0.12 r	0.08
Real Retail, Wholesale, and Manuf. Sales (Billions of 2005 Yen, S.A.).....	....	0.25	0.44	0.13 r	0.34 **	0.26 **	0.15 **

One of the sales components: manufacturing sales, is a quarterly series and converted to monthly through a linear interpolation
And missing months are estimated by The Conference Board

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

Data Sources: Economic and Social Research Institute, M.E.T.I. Japan, Management & Coordination Agency, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labor
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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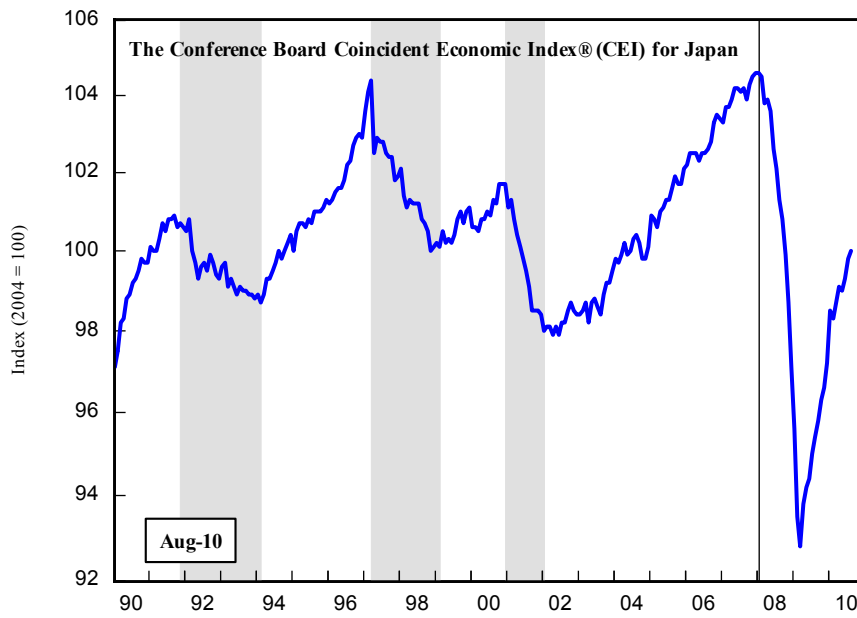
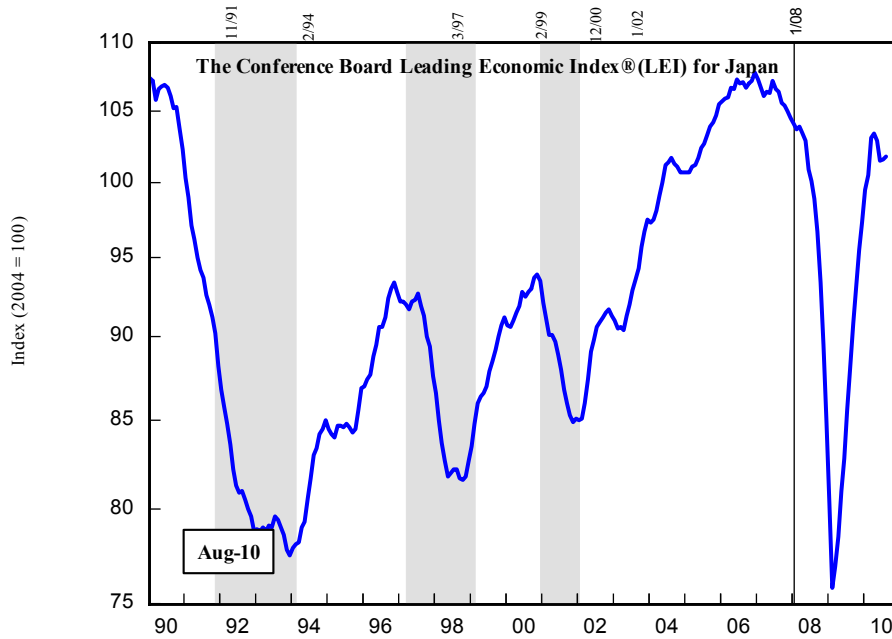
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Japan



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