

FOR RELEASE: 10:00 A.M. JST, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2015

The Conference Board®

Japan Business Cycle IndicatorsSM

THE CONFERENCE BOARD LEADING ECONOMIC INDEX® (LEI) FOR JAPAN

AND RELATED COMPOSITE ECONOMIC INDEXES FOR AUGUST 2015

The Conference Board Leading Economic Index $^{(\!R)}$ (LEI) for Japan increased 0.2 percent and The Conference Board Coincident Economic Index $^{(\!R)}$ (CEI) decreased 0.1 percent in August.

- The Conference Board LEI for Japan increased in August, with the largest positive contributions coming from (inverted) business failures and real money supply. The leading economic index rose by 1.1 percent (about a 2.1 percent annual rate) between February and August 2015, moderately lower than the increase of 1.4 percent (about a 2.8 percent annual rate) over the prior six months. However, the strengths among the leading indicators continue to be more widespread than the weaknesses.
- The Conference Board CEI for Japan, a measure of current economic activity, decreased for the second consecutive month in August. The coincident economic index remained unchanged during the six months ending in August 2015, after increasing by 1.0 percent (about a 2.1 percent annual rate) over the prior six months. The weaknesses among the coincident indicators have become more widespread than the strengths in recent months. At the same time, real GDP contracted by 1.2 percent (annual rate) in the second quarter, after expanding by 4.5 percent (annual rate) in the first quarter.
- The Conference Board LEI for Japan increased in August after declining in July. Its sixmonth growth rate has improved in recent months, but is lower compared to the prior six months. The CEI declined for the second straight month, and as a result its sixmonth growth rate has been flat. Taken together, the recently improved sixmonth growth and widespread strength in the LEI suggests that the current economic contraction should ease in the near-term.

<u>LEADING INDICATORS.</u> Eight 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 (inverted) business failures, real money supply, the six-month growth rate of labor productivity, real operating profits*, the Tankan business conditions survey, the index of overtime worked, dwelling units started, and the yield spread. The negative contributors were stock prices and the new orders for machinery and construction component*.

The next release is scheduled for Friday, November 13, 2015 at 10:00 A.M. (JST) *In the U.S* – Thursday, November 12, 2015 at 8:00 P.M. (ET)

With the increase of 0.2 percent in August, The Conference Board LEI for Japan now stands at 104.3 (2010=100). Based on revised data, this index decreased 0.2 percent in July and increased 0.8 percent in June. During the six-month span through August, the index increased 1.1 percent, and eight of the ten components advanced (diffusion index, six-month span equals 80.0 percent).

<u>COINCIDENT INDICATORS.</u> Only one of the four components that make up The Conference Board CEI for Japan increased in August. The positive contributor to the index was the retail, wholesale, and manufacturing sales* component. Industrial production, number of employed persons and wage and salary income declined in August.

With the decrease of 0.1 percent in August, The Conference Board CEI for Japan now stands at 98.2 (2010=100). Based on revised data, this index decreased 0.2 percent in July and increased 0.6 percent in June. During the six-month span through August, the index was flat, and only one of the four components advanced (diffusion index, six-month span equals 37.5 percent).

FOR TABLES AND CHARTS, SEE BELOW

<u>DATA AVAILABILITY AND NOTES.</u> 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" 9:00 A.M. ET October 9, 2015. Some series are estimated as noted below.

* The series in The Conference Board LEI that are based on our estimates are the six-month growth rate of labor productivity, 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	0.0516
2 Dwelling Units Started	0.0298
3 Business Failures	0.0618
4 Index of Overtime Worked	0.0910
5 Stock Prices (TOPIX)	0.0385
6 Six-Month Growth Rate of Labor Productivity	0.1031
7 Tankan Business Conditions Survey	0.0885
8 Money Supply	0.2996
9 Yield Spread	0.1811
10 New Orders for Machinery and Construction	0.0550
Coincident Economic Index	
1 Number of Employed Persons	0.5625
2 Industrial Production	0.0934
3 Wage and Salary Income	0.1866
4 Real Retail, Wholesale, and Manufacturing Sales	0.1575

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 release in January 2015, 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 2013 period as the sample period for measuring volatility. Separate sets of factors for the December 1973 to August 1974 period, the February 1973 to November 1973 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 2013 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 -0.3201 (calculated over the 1992-2013 period) and -0.2633 (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 Conference Board Leading Economic Index[®] (LEI) for Japan news releases schedule for 2015:

Thursday, November 12, 2015 For September 2015 data Thursday, December 10, 2015 For October 2015 data

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

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The Conference Board Leading Economic Index® (LEI) and The Conference Board Coincident Economic Index® (CEI) for Japan

Table 1. - Summary of Japan Composite Economic Indexes

Table 1 Summary of Japan Composite Economic Indexes											
	2015										
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug				
Leading index	103.2	103.1	103.4	103.5	104.3 p	104.1 p	104.3 p				
Percent change	-0.1	-0.1	0.3	0.1	0.8 p	-0.2 p	0.2 p				
Diffusion index	60.0	65.0	65.0	50.0	90.0	60.0	80.0				
Coincident index	98.2	98.1	98.0	97.9	98.5 p	98.3 p	98.2 p				
Percent change	-0.4	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	0.6 p	-0.2 p	-0.1 p				
Diffusion index	12.5	25.0	75.0	25.0	100.0	50.0	37.5				
	Aug to	Sep to	Oct to	Nov to	Dec to	Jan to	Feb to				
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug				
Leading index											
Percent change	1.4	0.4	0.5	-0.1	0.8 p	0.8 p	1.1 p				
Diffusion index	90.0	80.0	70.0	70.0	70.0	80.0	80.0				
Coincident index											
Percent change	1.0	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.5 p	-0.3 p	0.0 p				
Diffusion index		87.5	75.0		75.0	50.0	37.5				

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 Leading Economic Index® (LEI) and The Conference Board Coincident Economic Index® (CEI) for Japan

Table 2. - Data and Net Contributions for Components of The Conference Board Leading Economic Index® (LEI) for Japan

				2015			
Component	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.
Real Operating Profits, (Bill. 2010 Yen, S.A., Q)		15267.41	g Economic 15893.00	c Index Cor 16518.59	nponent Dat 16977.39 **	a 17311.33 **	17560.44 **
	14041.01	10207.41	10000.00	10010.00	10011.00	17011.00	17000.44
Dw elling Units Started (Thous, S.A.)	75.41	76.66	76.11	75.93	86.09	76.19	77.60
Business Failures, (Number, S.A.)* (3 mo. moving avg.)	110.40	r 112.84	113.63 r	114.22 r	110.77 r	103.36 r	95.74
Index of Overtime Worked, Mfg. (2010=100, S.A.)	112.3	r 111.4 r	111.2 r	110.0 r	111.1 r	110.8 r	111.5
Stock Price Index, (Jan. 4, 1968=100)	1523.85	1543.11	1592.79	1673.65	1630.40	1659.52	1537.05
Six-Month Growth Rate of Labor Productivity Mfg. (3 mo. moving avg., pct.)	-0.17	r -1.83	-1.84	-2.37 r	-0.67 r	-0.96 r	-0.06 **
Fankan Business Conditions, All Enterprises, All Industries (Balance +/-, Q)	1.0	2.3	3.7	5.0	5.7	6.3	7.0
Real Money Supply, M2 + CD Money, (10 Bill. 2010 Yen, S.A.)	86699.28	86731.32	86779.83	87217.48	87288.92	87626.04	88060.78
Yield Spread, 10 year gov bonds minus 3 month interbank rate)	0.17	0.22	0.16	0.22	0.27	0.23	0.21
New Orders for Machinery and Construction, (3 mo. moving avg., 100 Mill. 2010 Yen, S.A.)	2073	r 2129 r	2201 r	2171 r	2201 r	2079 r	2028
EADING INDEX (2010=100)	103.2	103.1	103.4	103.5	104.3 p	104.1 p	104.3 p
Percent change from preceding month	-0.1	-0.1	0.3	0.1	0.8 p	-0.2 p	0.2 p
		Japar	Leading E	conomic In	dex Net Con	tributions	
Real Operating Profits, (Bill. 2010 Yen, S.A., Q)		0.22	0.21	0.20	0.14 **	0.10 **	0.07 **
Ow elling Units Started Thous, S.A.)		0.05	-0.02	-0.01	0.37	-0.36	0.05
Business Failures, (Number, S.A.)*							
(3 mo. moving avg.)		-0.13 r	-0.04 r	-0.03 r	0.19 r	0.43 r	0.47
ndex of Overtime Worked, Mfg. (2010=100, S.A.)		-0.07 r	-0.02	-0.10	0.09	-0.02	0.06
Stock Price Index, (Jan. 4, 1968=100)		0.05	0.12	0.19	-0.10	0.07	-0.30
Six-Month Growth Rate of Labor Productivity							
/lfg. (3 mo. moving avg., pct.)		-0.17	0.00	-0.05	0.18	-0.03 r	0.09 **
ankan Business Conditions, All Enterprises, All Industries (Balance +/-, Q)		0.12	0.12	0.12	0.06	0.05	0.06
Real Money Supply, M2 + CD Money, (10 Bill. 2010 Yen, S.A.)		0.01	0.02	0.15	0.02	0.12	0.15
ield Spread,							
10 year gov bonds minus 3 month interbank rate)		0.04	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.04
New Orders for Machinery and Construction, (3 mo. moving avg., 100 Mill. 2010 Yen, S.A.)		0.15	0.18 r	-0.08 r	0.08	-0.31 r	-0.14

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

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

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

Haver Analytics, Ministry 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 Leading Economic Index® (LEI) and The Conference Board Coincident Economic Index® (CEI) for Japan

Table 3. - Data and Net Contributions for Components of The Conference Board Coincident Economic Index® (CEI) for Japan

				2015	· · · ·	•	
Component	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.
	Japan Coincident Economic Index Component Data						
Number of Employed Persons,							
(Thousands of persons, S.A.)	63760	63660	63380	63570	63910	63780	63750
Industrial Production, (2010=100, S.A.)	98.9	98.1	99.3	97.2	98.3	97.5 r	97.0
Wage and Salary Income, (2010=100, S.A.)	91.3	91.2	91.4	90.7 r	90.9	91.0 r	90.9
Real Retail, Wholesale, and Manuf. Sales (Billions of 2010 Yen, S.A.)	129677.7 r	130044.5 r	130659.4 r	130539.7 r	131930.8 **	132226.0 **	132363.1 **
COINCIDENT INDEX (2010=100)	98.2	98.1	98.0	97.9	98.5 p	98.3 p	98.2 p
Percent change from preceding month	-0.4	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	0.6 p	-0.2 p	-0.1 p
	Japan Coincident Economic Index Net Contributions						;
Number of Employed Persons,							
(Thousands of persons, S.A.)		-0.09	-0.25	0.17	0.30	-0.11	-0.03
Industrial Production, (2010=100, S.A.)		-0.08	0.11	-0.20	0.11	-0.08 r	-0.05
Wage and Salary Income, (2010=100, S.A.)		-0.02	0.04	-0.14 r	0.04 r	0.02 r	-0.02
Real Retail, Wholesale, and Manuf. Sales (Billions of 2010 Yen, S.A.)		0.04 r	0.07 r	-0.01	0.17 **	0.04 **	0.02 **

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

Data Sources: Economic and Social Research Institute, M.E.T.I. Japan, Management & Coordination Agency, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labor, Haver Analytics 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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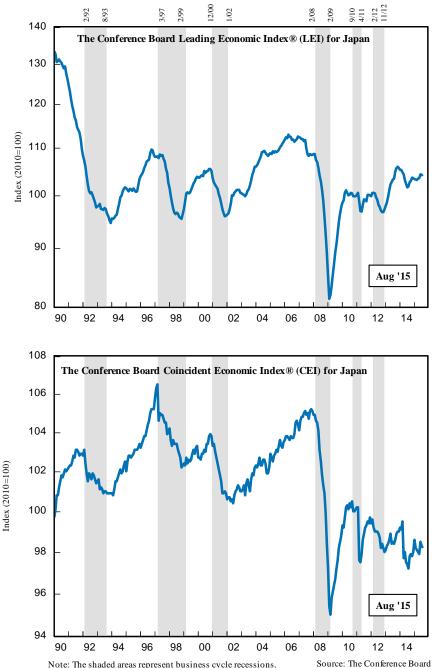
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^{**} Statistical Imputation (See page 2 for more details)

Japan 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.

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