

News Release

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For Release 10:00 AM ET, April 20, 2017

***The Conference Board Leading Economic Index® (LEI) for the U.S. Increased in March
Index Points to Continued Economic Growth Through 2017***

NEW YORK, April 20, 2017...The Conference Board Leading Economic Index® (LEI) for the U.S. increased 0.4 percent in March to 126.7 (2010 = 100), following a 0.5 percent increase in February, and a 0.6 percent increase in January.

“The March increase and upward trend in the U.S. LEI point to continued economic growth in 2017, with perhaps an acceleration later in the year if consumer spending and investment pick up,” said Ataman Ozyildirim, Director of Business Cycles and Growth Research at The Conference Board. “The gains among the leading indicators were very widespread, with new orders in manufacturing and the interest rate spread more than offsetting declines in the labor market components in March.”

The Conference Board Coincident Economic Index® (CEI) for the U.S. increased 0.2 percent in March to 114.9 (2010 = 100), following a 0.2 percent increase in February, and no change in January.

The Conference Board Lagging Economic Index® (LAG) for the U.S. was unchanged in March, remaining at 123.6 (2010 = 100), following a 0.2 percent increase in both February and January.

About The Conference Board Leading Economic Index® (LEI) for the U.S.

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. 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.

The ten components of **The Conference Board Leading Economic Index®** for the U.S. include:

- Average weekly hours, manufacturing
- Average weekly initial claims for unemployment insurance
- Manufacturers' new orders, consumer goods and materials
- ISM® Index of New Orders
- Manufacturers' new orders, nondefense capital goods excluding aircraft orders
- Building permits, new private housing units
- Stock prices, 500 common stocks
- Leading Credit Index™*
- Interest rate spread, 10-year Treasury bonds less federal funds
- Average consumer expectations for business conditions

For full press release and technical notes:

<http://www.conference-board.org/data/bcicountry.cfm?cid=1>

For more information about The Conference Board global business cycle indicators:

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

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