



## THE CONFERENCE BOARD

**DO NOT RELEASE UNTIL 10:00 AM ET**  
May 26, 2009

### News Release

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Release #5332

### **The Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index™ Increases Sharply** **Index at Highest Level in Eight Months**

**NEW YORK, May 26, 2009**...The Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index™, which had improved considerably in April, posted another large gain in May. The Index now stands at 54.9 (1985=100), up from 40.8 in April. The Present Situation Index increased to 28.9 from 25.5 last month. The Expectations Index rose to 72.3 from 51.0 in April.

The Consumer Confidence Survey™ is based on a representative sample of 5,000 U.S. households. The monthly survey is conducted for The Conference Board by TNS. TNS is the world's largest custom research company. The cutoff date for May's preliminary results was May 19th.

Says Lynn Franco, Director of The Conference Board Consumer Research Center: "After two months of significant improvements, the Consumer Confidence Index is now at its highest level in eight months (Sept. 2008, 61.4). Continued gains in the Present Situation Index indicate that current conditions have moderately improved, and growth in the second quarter is likely to be less negative than in the first. Looking ahead, consumers are considerably less pessimistic than they were earlier this year, and expectations are that business conditions, the labor market and incomes will improve in the coming months. While confidence is still weak by historical standards, as far as consumers are concerned, the worst is now behind us."

Consumers' overall assessment of current-day conditions improved again. Those claiming business conditions are "good" increased to 8.7 percent from 7.9 percent. However, those claiming conditions are "bad" increased to 45.3 percent from 44.9 percent. Consumers' appraisal of the job

market was also more favorable. Those claiming jobs are “hard to get” decreased to 44.7 percent from 46.6 percent in April. Those saying jobs are “plentiful” edged up to 5.7 percent from 4.9 percent.

Consumers’ short-term outlook improved significantly in May. Those expecting business conditions will improve over the next six months increased to 23.1 percent from 15.7 percent, while those anticipating conditions will worsen declined to 17.8 percent from 24.4 percent in April.

The employment outlook was also less pessimistic. The percentage of consumers expecting more jobs in the months ahead increased to 20.0 percent from 14.2 percent, while those anticipating fewer jobs decreased to 25.2 percent from 32.5 percent. The proportion of consumers anticipating an increase in their incomes edged up to 10.2 percent from 8.3 percent.

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## **Consumer Confidence Survey™**

### **May Results**

	2008								2009				
	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.(r)	May(p)
<b>Consumer Confidence Index™</b>	58.1	51.0	51.9	58.5	61.4	38.8	44.7	38.6	37.4	25.3	26.9	40.8	54.9
<b>Present Situation</b>	74.2	65.4	65.8	65.0	61.1	43.5	42.3	30.2	29.7	22.3	21.9	25.5	28.9
<b>Expectations</b>	47.3	41.4	42.7	54.1	61.5	35.7	46.2	44.2	42.5	27.3	30.2	51.0	72.3
<b>Confidence Confidence Index™ by Region</b>													
New England	49.7	26.6	51.4	42.0	42.8	25.2	37.2	28.4	32.4	20.8	18.3	31.4	51.1
Middle Atlantic	45.4	40.9	33.6	44.9	50.1	35.0	45.2	31.7	34.2	24.8	24.5	41.3	45.7
East North Central	34.7	28.3	28.8	38.8	44.5	29.0	34.2	24.6	28.1	21.3	21.0	30.6	37.8
West North Central	55.1	64.0	58.5	62.7	61.4	50.2	61.1	42.4	43.1	32.9	32.5	46.3	56.7
South Atlantic	58.5	51.3	53.4	56.3	64.3	37.3	40.4	35.1	43.1	25.7	25.0	36.3	57.3
East South Central	63.4	56.8	57.5	64.0	83.0	45.2	56.6	46.8	43.6	22.7	34.5	41.8	54.8
West South Central	82.6	82.8	80.0	92.8	93.0	77.0	65.0	65.9	64.4	50.7	46.4	71.0	71.7
Mountain	74.9	69.2	69.0	82.7	75.0	56.2	64.3	37.2	44.0	24.8	32.8	41.1	68.4
Pacific	57.1	51.6	48.4	50.0	62.9	40.4	43.6	37.6	27.9	24.3	26.3	38.9	52.4

US data - top 3 lines - are seasonally adjusted.

Source: The Conference Board, TNS

Source: May 2009 Consumer Confidence Survey, The Conference Board

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*All series seasonally adjusted*

	2008						2009						
	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.(r)	May(p)
<b>Composite Series: Index Numbers, 1985=100</b>													
<b>Consumer Confidence Index™</b>	58.1	51.0	51.9	58.5	61.4	38.8	44.7	38.6	37.4	25.3	26.9	40.8	54.9
<b>Present Situation</b>	74.2	65.4	65.8	65.0	61.1	43.5	42.3	30.2	29.7	22.3	21.9	25.5	28.9
<b>Expectations</b>	47.3	41.4	42.7	54.1	61.5	35.7	46.2	44.2	42.5	27.3	30.2	51.0	72.3
<b>Appraisal of Present Situation: Percent</b>													
Business Conditions													
Good	13.0	11.5	13.2	13.7	12.8	9.4	10.1	7.7	6.5	7.0	6.9	7.9	8.7
Bad	29.7	31.9	32.6	32.7	33.4	37.1	40.6	45.8	47.9	50.5	51.0	44.9	45.3
Normal	57.3	56.6	54.2	53.6	53.8	53.5	49.3	46.5	45.6	42.5	42.1	47.2	46.0
Employment													
Jobs plentiful	16.1	14.1	13.6	13.5	12.6	9.0	8.7	6.5	7.1	4.6	4.7	4.9	5.7
Jobs not so plentiful	55.6	56.2	56.2	54.8	55.2	54.4	54.2	52.0	51.8	48.5	46.5	48.5	49.6
Jobs hard to get	28.3	29.7	30.2	31.7	32.2	36.6	37.1	41.5	41.1	46.9	48.8	46.6	44.7
<b>Expectations for Six Months Hence: Percent</b>													
Business Conditions													
Better	10.6	8.5	9.2	12.0	13.4	9.6	11.5	13.4	12.8	8.5	9.6	15.7	23.1
Worse	32.9	33.5	32.4	25.2	21.0	36.5	28.3	32.9	31.1	40.7	37.8	24.4	17.8
Same	56.5	58.0	58.4	62.8	65.6	53.9	60.2	53.7	56.1	50.8	52.6	59.9	59.1
Employment													
More jobs	9.0	8.0	8.0	10.7	11.9	7.3	9.2	9.8	9.1	6.8	7.3	14.2	20.0
Fewer jobs	32.3	35.7	37.3	30.0	26.9	41.5	33.7	40.6	36.9	47.0	41.6	32.5	25.2
Same	58.7	56.3	54.7	59.3	61.2	51.2	57.1	49.6	54.0	46.2	51.1	53.3	54.8
Income													
Increase	14.1	13.1	14.3	15.4	15.1	11.1	13.1	12.7	10.3	7.9	7.8	8.3	10.2
Decrease	14.6	15.9	15.9	15.9	13.9	19.2	18.0	18.8	18.4	24.0	23.9	21.4	17.7
Same	71.3	71.0	69.8	68.7	71.0	69.7	68.9	68.5	71.3	68.1	68.3	70.3	72.1
<b>Plans to Buy Within Six Months: Percent</b>													
Automobile													
Yes	5.1	5.1	5.0	5.2	4.9	4.5	3.8	4.8	5.3	4.7	4.0	4.9	5.5
New	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.5	1.5	1.9	1.4	2.0	2.2	2.1	1.9	2.2	2.9
Used	2.1	2.3	2.1	2.3	2.3	1.8	2.0	2.0	2.6	1.8	1.7	2.0	1.9
Uncertain	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.0	1.1	0.8	0.4	0.8	0.5	0.8	0.4	0.7	0.7
Home													
Yes	2.4	2.4	2.8	3.4	2.3	2.6	2.1	2.6	2.5	2.3	2.4	2.6	2.3
New	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.7	0.3	0.4
Lived in	1.3	1.4	1.8	1.6	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.2	1.3	1.7	1.3
Uncertain	0.6	0.5	0.5	1.0	0.5	0.8	0.3	0.8	0.7	1.0	0.4	0.6	0.6
Major appliances													
Total plans	33.6	28.3	28.6	32.5	29.0	26.5	24.5	27.1	23.6	25.0	24.5	26.0	28.7
Refrigerator	4.6	3.8	4.0	4.1	4.0	3.7	3.2	3.7	3.0	3.2	3.5	4.4	3.7
Washing machine	3.7	3.4	3.7	3.8	3.3	3.2	2.7	2.9	2.8	3.4	2.8	3.1	3.4
TV Set	12.6	10.0	10.3	11.4	10.8	9.5	9.1	10.7	8.5	8.7	8.8	8.2	10.0
Vacuum Cleaner	5.0	3.6	3.9	5.1	4.3	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.6	3.1	4.0	4.6
Range	2.9	2.1	2.2	2.7	2.3	2.6	2.0	2.4	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.8
Clothes dryer	3.3	3.4	2.9	3.8	2.5	2.9	2.7	3.0	2.6	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.7
Air conditioner	1.5	2.0	1.6	1.6	1.8	1.3	1.3	0.9	1.2	0.9	1.1	1.1	1.5
Carpet	4.5	3.6	4.0	4.3	4.3	3.4	3.2	3.4	3.9	3.6	2.9	3.1	3.9
<b>Vacation Intended Within Six Months: Percent</b>													
Vacation Intended		36.2		37.3		39.2		37.5		37.3		34.6	
Destination													
U.S.		30.1		30.7		31.4		30.1		31.1		28.9	
Foreign country		7.7		8.0		8.8		8.2		8.1		7.0	
Means of Travel													
Automobile		19.1		19.3		21.2		20.3		20.0		18.2	
Airplane		17.8		16.0		14.5		13.7		15.9		16.5	
Other		2.8		3.8		3.9		3.9		3.2		2.7	

(p) - preliminary (r) - revised

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Seasonally unadjusted  
 Index numbers:  
 U.S. Average, 1985 = 100

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	2008							2009					
	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.(r)	May(p)
<b>NEW ENGLAND</b>													
<b>Consumer Confidence Index™</b>	49.7	26.6	51.4	42.0	42.8	25.2	37.2	28.4	32.4	20.8	18.3	31.4	51.1
Present Situation	56.8	36.2	64.4	38.9	49.7	41.8	24.6	27.4	16.0	15.8	8.1	10.3	9.7
Expectations	45.0	20.1	42.8	44.1	38.3	14.1	45.6	29.0	43.3	24.1	25.0	45.4	78.7
<b>MIDDLE ATLANTIC</b>													
<b>Consumer Confidence Index™</b>	45.4	40.9	33.6	44.9	50.1	35.0	45.2	31.7	34.2	24.8	24.5	41.3	45.7
Present Situation	53.9	49.2	40.2	51.6	54.5	42.0	48.0	28.7	20.2	15.5	17.0	24.3	20.0
Expectations	39.7	35.4	29.2	40.4	47.1	30.3	43.3	33.7	43.5	31.0	29.5	52.6	62.8
<b>EAST NORTH CENTRAL</b>													
<b>Consumer Confidence Index™</b>	34.7	28.3	28.8	38.8	44.5	29.0	34.2	24.6	28.1	21.3	21.0	30.6	37.8
Present Situation	34.1	27.9	32.6	31.1	32.4	21.9	29.0	18.0	11.5	11.0	8.6	14.9	9.8
Expectations	35.1	28.6	26.3	44.0	52.6	33.8	37.7	29.1	39.1	28.2	29.2	41.2	56.4
<b>WEST NORTH CENTRAL</b>													
<b>Consumer Confidence Index™</b>	55.1	64.0	58.5	62.7	61.4	50.2	61.1	42.4	43.1	32.9	32.5	46.3	56.7
Present Situation	75.5	101.4	82.3	83.8	73.9	64.4	83.2	40.0	38.6	36.2	25.8	33.9	41.6
Expectations	41.5	39.0	42.7	48.7	53.1	40.7	46.4	44.0	46.1	30.6	37.0	54.5	66.8
<b>SOUTH ATLANTIC</b>													
<b>Consumer Confidence Index™</b>	58.5	51.3	53.4	56.3	64.3	37.3	40.4	35.1	43.1	25.7	25.0	36.3	57.3
Present Situation	74.7	63.4	64.7	60.8	62.5	34.6	30.3	23.3	27.8	15.7	18.8	15.5	29.5
Expectations	47.8	43.3	45.9	53.3	65.5	39.2	47.1	42.9	53.3	32.4	29.2	50.2	75.9
<b>EAST SOUTH CENTRAL</b>													
<b>Consumer Confidence Index™</b>	63.4	56.8	57.5	64.0	83.0	45.2	56.6	46.8	43.6	22.7	34.5	41.8	54.8
Present Situation	75.0	75.7	71.7	76.2	91.3	46.0	50.1	36.8	37.7	16.2	23.9	38.0	33.2
Expectations	55.7	44.3	48.1	55.8	77.5	44.6	60.9	53.4	47.5	27.0	41.7	44.4	69.1
<b>WEST SOUTH CENTRAL</b>													
<b>Consumer Confidence Index™</b>	82.6	82.8	80.0	92.8	93.0	77.0	65.0	65.9	64.4	50.7	46.4	71.0	71.7
Present Situation	119.7	125.0	124.8	122.6	120.8	112.6	90.6	90.5	92.3	71.5	61.2	80.4	78.6
Expectations	58.0	54.6	50.2	72.9	74.5	53.3	47.9	49.6	45.8	36.9	36.5	64.7	67.0
<b>MOUNTAIN</b>													
<b>Consumer Confidence Index™</b>	74.9	69.2	69.0	82.7	75.0	56.2	64.3	37.2	44.0	24.8	32.8	41.1	68.4
Present Situation	102.7	102.9	96.3	96.7	80.9	77.2	74.8	22.7	27.1	22.1	26.8	17.5	38.4
Expectations	56.4	46.8	50.9	73.4	71.1	42.3	57.2	47.0	55.2	26.6	36.9	56.9	88.4
<b>PACIFIC</b>													
<b>Consumer Confidence Index™</b>	57.1	51.6	48.4	50.0	62.9	40.4	43.6	37.6	27.9	24.3	26.3	38.9	52.4
Present Situation	73.8	62.9	54.9	55.2	60.9	46.4	33.9	24.1	13.5	13.4	13.2	16.4	18.7
Expectations	45.9	44.1	44.1	46.5	64.3	36.4	50.0	46.6	37.6	31.5	35.1	53.9	74.9

(p) - preliminary (r) - revised

Not Seasonally Adjusted	2008							2009					
	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.(r)	May(p)
<b>Expectations for Twelve Months Hence: Percent</b>													
<b>Inflation Rate</b>													
Average	7.7	7.7	7.5	6.6	6.2	6.8	5.9	5.8	5.6	5.9	5.8	5.9	5.6