

US Consumer Confidence Increased in October

Confidence revived to June levels as consumer appraisals of both the present situation and expectations for the future improved

NEW YORK, Oct. 27, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- The Conference Board **Consumer Confidence Index**® rose by 7.5 points to 91.7 (1985=100) in October, up from 84.2 in September (a slight upward revision). The **Present Situation Index**—based on consumers' assessment of current business and labor market conditions—increased by 8.6 points to 120.4. The **Expectations Index**—based on consumers' short-term outlook for income, business, and labor market conditions—recovered by 6.9 points to 72.6, only partially reversing three consecutive monthly declines. The survey period for this month's preliminary results was October 1-21.

"Consumer confidence advanced in October, driven primarily by improved perceptions of current and expected business conditions," said **Fergus McCormick, Senior Economist, Global Indicators, The Conference Board**. "The recovery was in line with retail gasoline prices easing from September to October. Yet, despite the increase in October, consumer confidence remained on the long-term downward trend that's persisted over the past few years. Consumers planned less spending on services and durable goods over the next six months. This likely reflected higher price levels and persistent inflation, which eroded consumers' purchasing power."

McCormick continued: "Among **write-in responses** in October, consumers continued to express frustration with rising costs. References to prices, the high cost of food and groceries, and oil and diesel prices rose. Comments about war and conflict eased for a second straight month but remained elevated. Mentions of jobs and employment as an area of concern also ticked up, though to a lesser extent."

The **Present Situation Index** rallied in October. Net views of **current business conditions**—the share saying conditions are "good" versus "bad"—increased by 4.8 percentage points to 3.6% following a notably negative reading last month. Perceptions of **current employment conditions** were moderately more favorable, with the labor market differential—the share of consumers saying jobs are "plentiful" minus the share saying jobs are "hard to get"—improving by 2.4 pts to +5.3%.

The **Expectations Index** was less pessimistic in October as all three of its components saw improvements. Net expectations for **business conditions** became less morose, rising by 5.7 pts to -3.0%. Net expectations for the **labor market** also became slightly less pessimistic, increasing by 1.8 pts to -11.1%. Consumers still expected their household incomes to rise over the next six months. Net expectations for **household income** improved by 3.5 pts to +6.7%.

On a six-month moving average basis, only consumers under **age** 35 and those with a **household income** of \$100k or more expressed an increase in confidence. By **generation**, confidence amongst Gen X, Baby Boomers, and the Silent Generation continued to trail significantly behind Gen Z and Millennials, widening a sharp generational divide that has emerged over the past two years. In October, confidence improved across all **political affiliations**—but much more so for Republicans.

Consumers felt better about their **Family's Current Financial Situation** in October after two weak months. Views of their **Family's Future Financial Situation** over the next six months remained optimistic. Asked to assess the likelihood of a **US recession over the next 12 months**, "somewhat likely" remained consumers' most cited answer. (These measures are not included in calculating the Consumer Confidence Index®).

Consumers' average **12-month inflation expectations** declined in October but remained elevated at 5.8%. Consumers still expected higher **interest rates** over the next 12 months. Overall, more consumers in October expected **stock prices** to increase rather than decrease in the next 12 months.

On a six-month moving average basis, plans to purchase **autos** and **homes** both declined slightly in October. Planned spending on **durable goods** in the month dropped across the board, with expected purchases of electronics such as *smartphones, personal computers, laptops, and tablets* pulling back by over 1%.

Expected **spending on services** over the next six months was generally lower, except for *movies, theater, live entertainment, and sporting events*. The top five spending plans included *restaurants, bars, take-out; streaming, internet, mobile services; utilities; health care; and beauty, personal care*. Notably, expected spending on *beauty, personal care* fell from third to fifth place among services categories.

Anticipated spending on *hotels and airfare* for personal travel moderated. Likewise, **vacation** plans dipped, with 43.3% of consumers planning a vacation in the next six months, down 0.9 pts from an upwardly revised 44.2% in September. More consumers planned domestic trips and fewer planned visits to foreign countries.

Present Situation

Consumers' views of **current business conditions** improved in October:

- 21.4% of consumers said business conditions were "good," down from 18.8% in September.
- 17.8% said business conditions were "bad," down from 20.0%.

Consumers' views of the **labor market** were more positive in October:

- 26.7% of consumers said jobs were "plentiful," up from 24.3% in September.
- 21.4% of consumers said jobs were "hard to get," remaining unchanged.

Expectations Six Months Hence

Consumers were less pessimistic about **future business conditions** in October:

- 17.7% of consumers expected business conditions to improve, up from 16.5% in September.
- 20.7% expected business conditions to worsen, down from 25.2%.

Consumers were also somewhat less negative about the **labor market outlook** in October:

- 15.2% of consumers expected more jobs to be available, up from 14.7% in September.
- 26.3% expected fewer jobs, down from 27.6%.

Consumers' assessments of their **income prospects** also improved in October:

- 18.7% of consumers expected their income to increase, up from 18.1% in September.
- 12.0% expected their income to decline, down from 14.9%.

The monthly Consumer Confidence Survey®, based on an online sample, is conducted for The Conference Board by Toluna, a technology company that delivers real-time consumer insights and market research through its innovative technology, expertise, and panel of over 36 million consumers. **The cutoff date for the preliminary results was October 21.**

Source: October 2026 ***Consumer Confidence Survey***®
The Conference Board

The Conference Board publishes the Consumer Confidence Index® at 10 a.m. ET on the last Tuesday of every month. Subscription information and the technical notes to this series are available on The Conference Board website: <https://www.conference-board.org/data/consumerdata.cfm>.

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