

From:
UF Survey Research Center
Bureau of Economic and Business Research
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
University of Florida
P. O. Box 117145, Gainesville, Florida 32611-7145

Contact:
Chris McCarty, Survey Director
Office: (352) 392-2908 ext. 100

Consumer Confidence

Consumer confidence increased three points in April to 79. Four of the five components that make up the index increased and one stayed the same. Perceptions of personal finances now compared to a year ago increased five points to 70 while expectations of personal finances a year from now increased six points to 78. Perceptions of U.S. economic conditions over the next year rose three points to 80 while expectations of U.S. economic conditions over the next five year rose one point to 77. Perceptions as to whether it is a good time to buy big ticket items such as cars and appliances remained the same at 90.

“This rise in confidence was unexpected,” said Chris McCarty, the Survey Director. “Many economists would have expected confidence to erode in April as the effects of sequestration began to unfold. Nationally consumer confidence as measured by the University of Michigan using the same questions declined two points after recovering from a deeper slide in early April. Overall the effects of both the expiration of the payroll tax cut and sequestration have been minimal on everyday consumers, particularly here in Florida. While this may change over the next few months, currently Floridians are increasingly optimistic. There was a definite split this month between those 60 and under whose overall confidence reading increased 10 points and those over age 60 whose confidence declined by three points. That trend was the same across the five components. This difference may have to do with the unveiling of the Obama administration budget proposal that signaled a willingness to negotiate on aspects of Social Security and Medicare. Optimism among those aged 60 and under is more likely fueled by economic improvements here in Florida.”

Florida continues to show declines in the unemployment rate which came in at 7.5 percent for March, compared to 7.6 percent nationally. Leisure and hospitality showed the biggest job growth and it is notable that construction is now showing slow but positive growth. While there was a decline in the labor force in March (-18,000 overall) this was concentrated among younger Floridians. This is also the trend nationally as older workers delay retirement and younger workers struggle to find jobs. Younger workers in much of the Eurozone are also disproportionately affected as countries such as Greece and Spain struggle with unemployment rates well above 50 percent for those under age 25. Housing prices continue to rise in most of Florida with the median price now \$160,000, the highest median price since October, 2008 and 38 percent down from the peak value of \$257,800 from June, 2006. Mortgage rates continue to be at historical lows. The stock market is still near record highs bolstering retirement accounts for many Floridians. Gas prices have continued a steady slide. Overall economic conditions are improving since the recession.

“Congress passed a continuing resolution in March locking in sequestration,” said McCarty. “So far this has had virtually no impact on consumer confidence among Floridians, which is reflected in current sales tax collections. Many economists still expect the effects of sequestration to be felt throughout the country, including Florida, but it may take

months for the effects here to be fully realized. Meanwhile the next budget battle in Washington will be over the debt ceiling again, most likely in August or September.”

FLORIDA ECONOMIC AND CONSUMER SURVEY†
April 30th, 2013
Bureau of Economic and Business Research
University of Florida

	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13	Apr-13
Consumer Confidence Index													
FLORIDA	74	78	73	77	76	80	80	74	76	75	73	76	79
Men	78	79	74	80	78	79	80	70	75	75	71	78	77
Women	70	77	72	74	74	80	80	77	76	74	76	75	81
Under age 60	77	83	78	81	80	81	84	79	83	80	77	77	87
Aged 60 and over	71	74	70	74	74	80	77	70	70	72	71	75	72
Income under \$30,000	70	70	68	66	66	76	77	71	72	74	72	67	61
Income \$30,000 and over	78	84	79	82	82	83	82	74	80	74	75	81	85
Personal financial situation now compared to a year ago													
FLORIDA	63	62	61	64	61	64	64	57	62	59	64	65	70
Men	67	65	60	69	64	65	66	59	65	60	63	72	66
Women	58	59	61	59	57	63	61	56	60	58	64	58	74
Under age 60	71	67	69	72	65	71	70	64	71	65	69	64	80
Aged 60 and over	55	58	54	55	58	57	57	53	55	56	60	65	60
Income under \$30,000	48	47	49	51	47	50	52	43	43	51	55	51	43
Income \$30,000 and over	72	71	68	71	69	72	69	61	74	60	65	71	78
Personal financial situation expected one year from now													
FLORIDA	79	86	76	85	85	86	85	77	76	75	74	72	78
Men	83	87	73	89	85	81	84	70	76	78	70	74	75
Women	76	85	80	80	84	90	85	84	77	72	80	71	81
Under age 60	91	102	88	97	96	92	94	91	95	88	91	82	95
Aged 60 and over	69	74	67	73	74	80	76	66	61	66	66	64	64
Income under \$30,000	81	85	72	76	68	85	89	78	85	76	76	66	61
Income \$30,000 and over	80	91	80	91	94	87	86	75	78	74	74	78	84
Expected national economic conditions over the next year													
FLORIDA	73	76	73	75	75	81	85	79	76	76	72	77	80
Men	77	71	75	76	74	77	85	71	75	75	67	75	78
Women	68	82	71	75	76	84	86	88	76	78	77	79	82
Under age 60	72	81	74	78	78	81	87	78	80	79	69	76	88
Aged 60 and over	71	72	74	73	73	83	84	80	72	75	74	76	74
Income under \$30,000	73	73	67	64	65	82	83	80	77	86	74	67	60
Income \$30,000 and over	73	81	80	78	78	84	84	77	77	72	74	80	87
Expected national economic conditions over the next 5 years													
FLORIDA	76	84	80	79	82	84	86	77	78	76	69	76	77
Men	77	84	81	81	85	83	85	81	74	77	66	75	79
Women	76	85	79	77	78	85	88	82	81	75	72	78	75
Under age 60	76	85	77	79	83	77	87	80	80	80	72	75	84
Aged 60 and over	76	84	84	80	81	93	86	75	76	74	68	78	72
Income under \$30,000	72	76	76	69	80	84	85	81	77	76	72	74	63
Income \$30,000 and over	77	91	86	83	83	84	86	76	80	74	71	78	82
Is this a good time to buy major household items?													
FLORIDA	80	82	77	82	80	85	79	78	86	87	88	90	90
Men	88	88	83	84	84	92	78	81	87	86	90	93	87
Women	73	76	69	80	75	79	81	75	84	88	85	87	93
Under age 60	74	80	82	77	75	83	80	81	86	89	87	87	88
Aged 60 and over	86	83	72	87	71	87	79	75	86	87	89	92	91
Income under \$30,000	60	70	72	70	70	76	77	73	79	82	82	76	77
Income \$30,000 and over	86	86	80	85	84	88	82	80	89	90	92	96	94
*Revised. †Preliminary.	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13	Apr-13

FLORIDA ECONOMIC AND CONSUMER SURVEY
April 30th, 2013
Bureau of Economic and Business Research
University of Florida

CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS FOR CURRENT MONTH

Sample Size	407	Race		Gender	
		% Non-white	15	% Male	52
Average age	61	% White	85	% Female	48
Income Characteristics		Hispanic Origin		Region	
% less than \$20,000	20	% Yes	8	% North	27
% \$20,000 to \$29,999	10	% No	92	% Central	15
% \$30,000 to \$49,999	17			% Southeast	23
% over \$50,000	53			% Southwest	35