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suggesting a healthier U.S. economy.

Isaac M. O'Bannon • May. 29, 2013

NEW YORK — The latest [Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index](#) shows another increase, suggesting a healthier U.S. economy. The index, which had improved in April, increased again in May and now stands at 76.2 (1985=100), up from 69.0 in April. The Present Situation Index increased to 66.7 from 61.0. The Expectations Index improved to 82.4 from 74.3 last month.

The monthly Consumer Confidence Survey, based on a probability-design random sample, is conducted for The Conference Board by Nielsen, a leading global provider of information and analytics around what consumers buy and watch. The cutoff date for the preliminary results was May 15.

Says Lynn Franco, Director of Economic Indicators at The Conference Board: “Consumer Confidence posted another gain this month and is now at a five-year high (Feb. 2008, Index 76.4). Consumers’ assessment of current business and labor-market conditions was more positive and they were considerably more upbeat about future economic and job prospects. Back-to-back monthly gains suggest that consumer confidence is on the mend and may be regaining the traction it lost due to the fiscal cliff, payroll-tax hike, and sequester.”

Consumers’ appraisal of present-day conditions improved in May. Those saying business conditions are “good” increased to 18.8 percent from 17.5 percent, while those stating business conditions are “bad” decreased to 26.0 percent from 27.6 percent. Consumers’ assessment of the labor market was also more positive. Those claiming jobs are “plentiful” increased to 10.8 percent from 9.7 percent, while those claiming jobs are “hard to get” edged down to 36.1 percent from 36.9 percent.

Consumers were considerably more optimistic about the short-term outlook. Those

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percent from 15.9 percent.

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