

**FLORIDA CONSUMER CONFIDENCE INDEX**  
**July 27, 2004**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**UNIVERSITY OF  
FLORIDA**

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*Consumer Confidence*

Consumer confidence among Floridians edged up in July to 96, from 95 in June. Despite the small gain in the overall reading, there was movement in the five components that make up the index. The two components measuring respondents' perceptions of their personal finances fell. Perceptions of personal finances now compared to a year ago fell one point to 85, while perceptions of personal finances a year from now fell nine points to 95. This was balanced by a rise in both components measuring perceptions of the US economy. Short term expectations about the US economy over the next year rose five points to 93 while long term expectations over the next five years rose seven points to 95. Perceptions as to whether it is a good time to buy big-ticket items rose a point to 110.

"The results of the survey this month are somewhat contradictory," said Chris McCarty, the Survey Director. "On the one hand consumers expect their personal finances to decline over the next year, but at the same time they are quite optimistic about the US economy, particularly over the next five years. The personal finances number may have been abnormally high last month, and is now returning to its pre-June trend. Overall consumers in Florida appear quite optimistic."

Nationally the US economy is definitely showing signs of recovery, although not as strong as the recovery of the early 1990s. Jobless claims are at a level indicating job growth and inflation, other than gasoline, appears to be in check. Incomes have been growing, although much of this growth has been offset by the high cost of gasoline. The mortgage industry enjoyed a recent rise in applications due to a lowering of rates, but these will decline as interest rates increase. The stock market is reacting unfavorably to anticipated interest rate increases. It remains to be seen how everyday consumers will fare as interest rate increases translate into higher credit card rates, and loans on big-ticket items such as cars.

"Confidence among Florida seniors rose a point to 87," said McCarty, "but it is still four points below what it was in May. Seniors are exhibiting the biggest contrast in terms of their assessment of their personal finances compared to their expectations about the economy. We're not sure what is driving this, but this month they are certainly more optimistic about future economic conditions than they were last month, although they are pessimistic about their personal finances. As we said in last month's release, these numbers will no doubt come into play as we get closer to the presidential election in November."

**FLORIDA ECONOMIC AND CONSUMER SURVEY**  
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	Jul-03	Aug-03	Sep-03	Oct-03	Nov-03	Dec-03	Jan-04	Feb-04	Mar-04	Apr-04	May-04	Jun-04*	Jul-04†
<b>Consumer Confidence Index</b>													
FLORIDA	92	90	91	95	94	96	97	97	94	96	93	95	96
Men	96	100	96	99	103	105	102	100	101	102	97	100	100
Women	88	83	86	91	84	89	91	95	88	90	89	91	93
Under age 60	94	93	93	98	97	98	99	100	96	98	94	99	99
Aged 60 and over	86	84	84	87	86	91	93	91	88	91	91	86	87
Income under \$30,000	82	75	80	84	80	83	86	83	81	84	84	79	84
Income \$30,000 and over	97	100	96	101	101	105	102	103	101	102	100	102	102
<b>Personal financial situation now compared to a year ago</b>													
FLORIDA	81	82	84	82	81	85	85	88	84	86	82	86	85
Men	81	90	83	84	88	94	90	90	89	93	89	89	87
Women	80	75	84	79	74	78	80	86	81	80	77	83	83
Under age 60	86	88	91	86	87	91	89	93	88	94	90	91	93
Aged 60 and over	68	65	64	72	67	71	77	75	75	71	65	72	66
Income under \$30,000	70	58	74	63	57	74	61	64	63	62	67	58	65
Income \$30,000 and over	87	95	90	91	93	95	96	100	96	98	94	98	95
<b>Personal financial situation expected one year from now</b>													
FLORIDA	105	100	101	101	100	100	102	100	101	102	99	104	95
Men	106	104	104	103	106	101	101	98	113	108	98	109	98
Women	103	96	98	99	95	100	103	102	92	96	100	99	93
Under age 60	110	106	109	108	110	108	112	107	110	111	106	111	100
Aged 60 and over	89	82	77	81	80	83	78	84	81	82	85	85	82
Income under \$30,000	98	86	91	96	91	91	90	90	91	96	95	87	84
Income \$30,000 and over	110	109	108	106	106	109	110	105	107	106	106	109	100
<b>Expected national economic conditions over the next year</b>													
FLORIDA	88	83	85	91	92	97	97	97	87	90	85	88	93
Men	94	97	95	94	106	110	105	101	96	96	93	93	98
Women	84	72	77	88	79	86	90	94	81	84	79	85	91
Under age 60	92	83	85	95	94	96	98	100	88	91	81	91	94
Aged 60 and over	78	85	86	83	88	96	98	92	85	88	95	83	91
Income under \$30,000	82	74	75	74	84	83	87	86	79	74	78	71	84
Income \$30,000 and over	92	89	89	100	96	106	101	102	93	98	88	97	100
<b>Expected national economic conditions over the next 5 years</b>													
FLORIDA	79	82	84	85	88	89	92	84	88	87	90	88	95
Men	87	99	100	93	103	105	101	91	96	94	100	95	98
Women	71	69	72	79	74	78	81	79	82	80	83	81	94
Under age 60	77	82	83	90	91	87	89	84	87	84	89	89	95
Aged 60 and over	85	83	87	77	84	94	97	85	87	93	94	84	95
Income under \$30,000	64	66	74	75	76	76	85	70	78	83	80	78	86
Income \$30,000 and over	86	93	88	92	94	98	93	90	93	89	97	91	99
<b>Is this a good time to buy major household items?</b>													
FLORIDA	106	106	100	114	106	107	109	117	108	115	107	109	110
Men	110	110	100	119	114	114	116	118	111	119	107	112	118
Women	103	102	101	110	99	102	102	115	105	111	107	107	104
Under age 60	106	106	99	113	106	106	108	116	106	112	103	110	112
Aged 60 and over	107	106	106	120	111	110	113	118	112	121	114	107	101
Income under \$30,000	98	91	87	110	91	89	109	107	94	106	99	102	99
Income \$30,000 and over	110	114	106	117	114	116	109	121	116	119	113	113	114

\*Revised. †Preliminary.

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**CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS FOR CURRENT MONTH**

Sample Size	426	Race		Gender	
		% Non-white	19	% Male	38
Average age	49	% White	81	% Female	62
Income Characteristics		Hispanic Origin		Region	
% less than \$20,000	19	% Yes	9	% North	26
% \$20,000 to \$29,999	13	% No	91	% Central	17
% \$30,000 to \$49,999	25			% Southeast	26
% over \$50,000	43			% Southwest	31