

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONSUMER CONFIDENCE IN FUTURE A GROWING CONCERN: SURVEY

TORONTO, May 21, 2010 – The latest results from TNS Canadian Facts' *Consumer Confidence Index* suggest that Canadians may still not actually be ready to cross that threshold when it comes to their confidence in the Canadian economy. Although Canadians are pretty okay with the here-and-now, concern about the future is growing. Overall, the index fell below the 100-point marker after finally passing it last month for the first time in two years. It ended the month at 98.7, down 1.8 points from April's 100.5.

"It feels like the acceleration and deceleration you get from ABS brakes," said Dr. Michael Antecol, vice-president of TNS Canadian Facts and director of the marketing research firm's monthly tracking study. "Canadians seems to be lurching forward and back based on the news they're getting – last month the news was positive, this month it's negative. It seems that we can expect this bumpy ride to continue along with the uneven economic news landscape."

The *Present Situation Index*, which captures evaluations of the overall state of the current economic and employment situations, stayed steady at 93.6. It was up just 0.3 points after April's strong 4.4-point jump.

But future-oriented confidence fell. The *Expectations Index*, which measures consumers' estimation of the economy, household income and employment in the next six months, dropped for the second consecutive month. It declined 1.8 points from April's close of 109.7, which itself was off 2.2 points from March's historic high. The index now stands at 107.9.

Likewise, the *Buy Index*, which gauges the degree to which people think the current period is a good time to make major purchases, compounded the slight declines recorded in both March and April with a 4.5-point drop this month to settle at 96.4, putting it below 100 for the first time since last November.

“While the media may not tell people what to think, they do tell people what to think about. After a period of some solidly good economic news, the airwaves and broadsheets have been full of stories recently about the unfolding debt crisis in Greece, the big stock market drop, and growing fears about interest rate increases. Not surprisingly, today’s economy seems pretty good to Canadians. It’s what is lurking around the corner that – at least for the moment – is making them feel super jumpy,” added Dr. Antecol.

Consumer Confidence Index tracks Canadians’ attitudes about the economy each month and is part of a global study conducted by TNS in 18 countries. Three indices are produced each month to show how confidence in the economy is changing: *Present Situation Index*; an *Expectations Index*; and a *Buy Index*. The Canadian fieldwork is conducted using the firm’s national bi-weekly telephone omnibus service, TNS Express Telephone. A total of 1,015 nationally representative Canadian adults were interviewed between May 10 and 13, 2010. For a survey sample this size, the margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

TNS Canadian Facts (www.tns-cf.com) is one of Canada's most prestigious full-service marketing, opinion and social research organizations.

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Media Contacts:

Dr. Michael Antecol

Vice President

Tel: (604) 668-3306

e-mail: michael.antecol@tns-global.com

David Stark

Vice President, Public Affairs

Tel: (416) 924-5751 x238

e-mail: david.stark@tns-global.com