

From:
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Consumer Sentiment

Consumer sentiment in December fell both nationally and among Floridians, dropping 1.4 points in Florida from a revised November figure of 97.3 to 95.9, according to the latest University of Florida consumer survey.

Among the five components that make up the index, one increased and four decreased.

Opinions as to whether now is a good time to buy a big-ticket household item rose 3.5 points, from 101.1 to 104.6. Perceptions of one's personal financial situation now compared with a year ago dropped 1.3 points from 90 to 88.7.

"This drop was not found among men, those aged 60 and older, or those with an income under \$50,000. It's worth noting that the biggest drop regarding current personal finances was among respondents with an income of \$50,000 or greater," said Hector H. Sandoval, director of the Economic Analysis Program at UF's Bureau of Economic and Business Research.

The three components representing expectations of future economic conditions all declined this month. Expectations of personal finances a year from now declined 2.9 points from 105.4 to 102.5. Anticipated U.S. economic conditions over the upcoming year decreased 2.5 points, from 96.9 to 94.4. Expectations of U.S. economic conditions over the next five years showed the biggest drop this month, down 3.6 points from 93 to 89.4.

"Most of the pessimism this month comes from unfavorable expectations about the state of the U.S. economy over the next five years. Remarkably, these negative perceptions are shared across all demographics in Florida and are strongest among those with an income level over \$50,000. Additionally, the pessimism may reflect concerns over daily financial debates by the U.S. government this month," Sandoval said.

Florida began 2017 with a three-month, record-breaking increase in consumer sentiment. March 2017 reported the highest consumer sentiment level since March 2002, contributing to an average of 96.1 in the first half of the year. Consumer sentiment readings generally fell every month after August though the average consumer sentiment for the second half of 2017 was 96.3 points, two-tenths of a point higher than the first half. "Notably, the average consumer sentiment in 2017 is 4.6 points higher than last year's average, and it's the highest average since 2000. Overall, Floridians are far more optimistic in 2017," Sandoval said.

Economic indicators in Florida have remained favorable throughout 2017. The labor market experienced solid job gains and a decreasing unemployment rate. The latest figure available shows the monthly unemployment rate in Florida dropped two-tenths of a percentage point to 3.6 percent in October.

The Federal Reserve's recent decision to raise interest rates by a quarter of a percentage point reflects their confidence that nationwide economic activity will continue expanding at a moderate rate and that the labor market will remain strong.

“As the year ends with an overall high level of consumer sentiment and a positive economic outlook among Floridians, there are good financial prospects for 2018. We expect consumer sentiment in January to remain around the average 2017 levels,” Sandoval said.

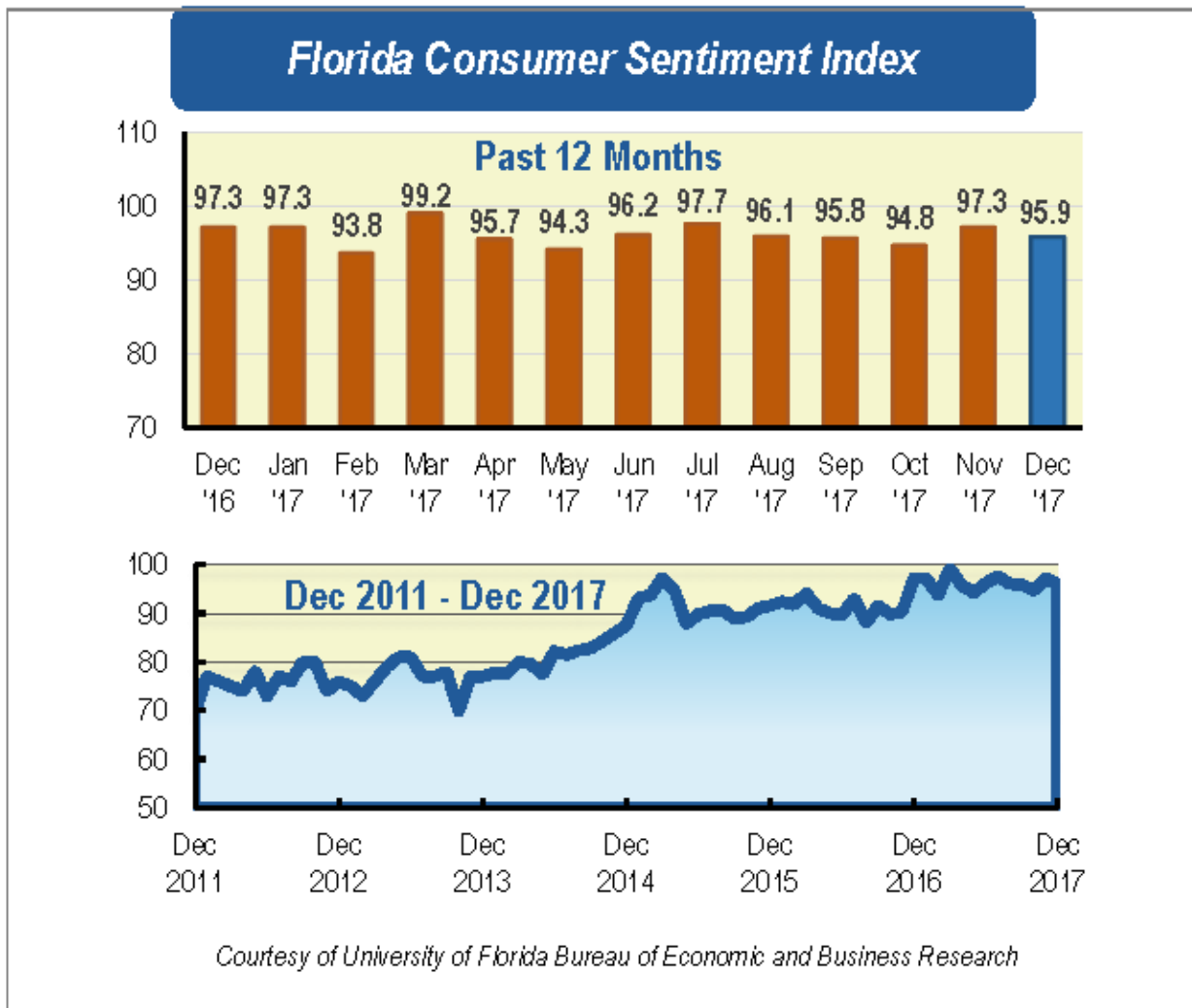
Conducted Dec. 1-18, the UF study reflects the responses of 427 individuals who were reached on cellphones, representing a demographic cross section of Florida.

The index used by UF researchers is benchmarked to 1966, which means a value of 100 represents the same level of confidence for that year. The lowest index possible is a 2, the highest is 150.

Details of this month’s survey can be found at <http://www.bebr.ufl.edu/csi-data>

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FLORIDA ECONOMIC AND CONSUMER SURVEY†
December 22, 2017
Bureau of Economic and Business Research
University of Florida

	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17
Consumer Sentiment Index													
FLORIDA	97.3	97.3	93.8	99.2	95.7	94.3	96.2	97.7	96.1	95.8	94.8	97.3	95.9
Men	102.5	100.7	101.6	104.4	103.5	102.3	103.5	101.9	100.7	100.9	102.4	104.2	103.1
Women	92.4	93.9	86.3	94.1	88.4	86.9	89.4	93.8	91.8	90.9	87.7	90.8	88.9
Under age 60	99.4	100.3	96.0	101.1	97.9	96.2	98.9	98.6	95.2	95.8	95.6	98.4	96.1
Aged 60 and over	92.1	90.1	89.4	94.2	89.6	89.9	89.6	96.6	98.7	95.8	92.4	94.0	95.4
Income under \$50,000	91.8	89.7	87.7	94.2	83.9	88.0	87.0	92.8	85.0	86.2	87.6	90.4	93.7
Income \$50,000 and over	104.0	105.7	104.0	103.8	107.7	102.1	104.2	105.0	105.3	104.2	100.9	106.7	98.0
Personal financial situation now compared to a year ago													
FLORIDA	82.8	87.7	88.1	88.7	91.0	85.5	91.1	88.2	87.8	87.1	86.5	90.0	88.7
Men	83.1	90.1	96.0	92.7	100.0	91.0	99.9	91.2	96.9	88.9	93.7	97.8	100.6
Women	82.6	85.3	80.6	84.9	82.5	80.4	83.1	85.3	79.3	85.3	79.7	82.6	77.2
Under age 60	86.8	93.7	92.0	93.9	97.8	92.1	98.1	89.9	88.6	90.3	90.3	95.0	91.2
Aged 60 and over	75.4	71.1	80.0	76.8	72.2	70.0	74.9	84.5	87.1	78.2	78.1	78.7	83.4
Income under \$50,000	74.9	77.0	76.6	77.2	75.4	72.9	77.9	78.7	73.5	71.0	72.7	78.5	84.3
Income \$50,000 and over	94.0	100.0	106.8	101.3	106.7	101.8	102.6	95.3	100.7	98.5	99.4	105.9	94.5
Personal financial situation expected one year from now													
FLORIDA	103.9	106.0	99.5	107.5	105.1	101.3	104.7	103.8	104.8	100.8	104.2	105.4	102.5
Men	111.4	110.6	106.9	112.4	109.2	108.0	113.4	109.7	107.4	104.6	109.5	110.1	106.8
Women	96.9	101.6	92.5	102.8	101.2	95.1	96.6	98.2	102.4	97.2	99.2	101.0	98.3
Under age 60	111.8	112.4	105.6	114.0	110.2	110.2	114.8	112.6	109.8	105.3	111.0	111.0	105.7
Aged 60 and over	84.8	90.5	84.6	91.1	92.4	82.5	82.0	85.8	91.0	90.7	89.5	91.5	93.2
Income under \$50,000	102.0	102.2	95.1	107.3	96.5	101.8	101.2	104.5	100.2	94.4	101.9	103.0	104.9
Income \$50,000 and over	106.7	110.2	105.9	108.3	115.4	103.2	110.0	106.5	109.5	108.4	107.6	110.5	101.6
Expected national economic conditions over the next year													
FLORIDA	99.9	96.8	92.0	99.3	92.8	93.6	91.8	98.1	95.8	94.0	91.5	96.9	94.4
Men	107.2	102.9	101.0	104.7	103.7	104.1	100.9	104.1	101.3	101.3	102.5	108.1	102.1
Women	93.2	90.9	83.4	94.2	82.5	83.9	83.4	92.6	90.7	87.0	81.2	86.5	87.0
Under age 60	101.2	98.2	94.1	98.5	92.5	93.2	92.8	95.8	94.4	91.6	89.5	96.4	93.4
Aged 60 and over	95.9	93.4	87.5	100.4	92.6	95.4	90.3	104.6	98.5	100.8	94.2	98.1	97.2
Income under \$50,000	95.7	89.1	86.2	94.0	80.2	86.4	82.3	96.8	82.0	87.5	83.7	89.5	94.4
Income \$50,000 and over	104.6	105.9	102.9	103.1	106.3	100.4	100.4	104.2	106.4	101.4	95.8	106.0	94.0
Expected national economic conditions over the next 5 years													
FLORIDA	98.5	95.1	89.5	96.8	88.1	90.8	91.1	95.8	89.6	93.2	89.1	93.0	89.4
Men	106.9	99.4	98.4	103.9	97.9	102.1	99.1	99.5	92.8	102.2	98.6	99.1	95.9
Women	90.7	90.9	81.1	90.0	78.8	80.4	83.8	92.3	86.5	84.7	80.3	87.3	83.1
Under age 60	99.6	97.8	90.0	96.4	88.0	89.0	88.8	93.8	85.1	91.2	86.9	92.9	88.8
Aged 60 and over	94.8	89.8	90.5	97.3	87.0	93.3	95.8	101.2	102.5	97.4	92.4	92.4	91.2
Income under \$50,000	91.1	84.5	87.6	94.9	73.0	83.8	84.6	91.2	77.2	86.3	85.5	89.0	87.9
Income \$50,000 and over	106.9	105.2	93.7	96.7	100.4	98.9	96.3	102.6	99.9	99.6	91.3	100.2	89.1
Is this a good time to buy major household items?													
FLORIDA	101.2	100.7	99.7	103.4	101.7	100.3	102.1	102.8	102.6	103.7	102.7	101.1	104.6
Men	103.8	100.5	105.8	108.4	106.7	106.2	104.3	105.1	105.0	107.3	107.8	106.1	110.2
Women	98.8	100.9	93.9	98.7	97.0	94.8	100.0	100.6	100.3	100.4	98.0	96.4	99.1
Under age 60	97.5	99.4	98.2	102.9	101.2	96.5	100.0	100.7	98.0	100.8	100.0	96.8	101.5
Aged 60 and over	109.8	105.6	104.5	105.6	103.6	108.4	104.9	106.8	114.5	112.1	107.9	109.4	111.6
Income under \$50,000	95.0	95.7	93.3	97.6	94.3	95.3	89.4	92.9	92.3	91.7	94.1	92.0	97.0
Income \$50,000 and over	107.7	106.9	110.5	109.7	109.7	106.2	111.8	116.5	109.9	113.3	110.4	110.7	110.7
*Revised. †Preliminary.	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17

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CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS FOR CURRENT MONTH

Sample Size	427	Race		Gender	
		% Non-white	28	% Male	56
Average age	47	% White	72	% Female	44
Income Characteristics		Hispanic Origin		Region	
% less than \$20,000	15	% Yes	26	% North	21
% \$20,000 to \$29,999	13	% No	74	% Central	20
% \$30,000 to \$49,999	20			% Southeast	31
% over \$50,000	52			% Southwest	28

Data Collection Dates: December 1 to 18, 2017