

The Chinese University of Hong Kong
The Centre for Quality of Life
Results of the Quarterly Survey (September 2017) on Public Perception of the
Economic Conditions

The Centre for Quality of Life at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) conducted a survey on the public perception of the economic conditions from September 25 to 28, 2017. A total of 503 Hong Kong residents aged 18 or above took part in the survey and answered questions about their family financial situation, their perception towards the business environment, the economic outlook, as well as their sentiment over consumption.

Table 1 presents the survey questions and results conducted in June (2nd quarter) and September (3rd quarter) this year respectively. It was revealed that 11.5% of the respondents said their families were financially “worse off” than a year ago, decreased by 3.5 percentage points compared to the survey results in June, while 26.4% said that they were “better off” than a year ago, showed an increase of 0.1 percentage points from the last survey results. There were 57.3% of the respondents said “the same” while about 4.8% said “don’t know or it’s difficult to tell”.

On consumer confidence, about 21.5% of the respondents thought it was a good time to buy major household goods, while 52.3% said the opposite and 26.2% said they “don’t know or it’s difficult to tell”. Comparing with the findings in the second quarter of this year, the percentage saying “yes” decreased by 0.8 percentage points but those saying “no” increased by 0.9 percentage points. Those uncertain answers (don’t know or it’s difficult to tell) decreased by 0.1 percentage points.

There were 12.7% of the respondents believed they would be financially “better off” in the coming year, decreased by 2.0 percentage points from the results in June this year. About 15.7% believed their families would be “worse off” in the coming year, decreased by 1.6 percentage points from the previous result. Those believed that they would be “the same” accounted for 63.2% of the respondents, and about 8.3% said “don’t know or it’s difficult to tell”.

There were 57.3% and 18.9% of the respondents expected the business environment of Hong Kong in the coming year would be “mediocre” and “bad”, respectively. About 12.5% of the respondents perceived the business environment would be “good” in the coming year. Comparing with the figures in June, the amount of pessimistic answers decreased by 3.5 percentage points while that of optimistic answers increased by 1.4 percentage points. The amount of giving “mediocre” answers increased by 1.1 percentage points compared to the last survey results. Besides, there were about 11.3% respondents said “don’t know or it’s difficult to tell”.

There were 19.1% of the respondents stayed “optimistic” about the economic conditions of Hong Kong for the coming five years; while 24.5% found themselves “pessimistic”. Comparing with the results in June, the percentage of “optimistic” answers decreased by 1.2 points and that of the “pessimistic” ones also decreased by 1.7 points. Those believed that they would be “the same” accounted for 43.7%, and 12.7% of the respondents said “don’t know or it’s difficult to tell”.

The survey also found that 17.9% of the respondents expected the employment situation would “deteriorate” in the coming year and 11.1% thought it would “improve”. Comparing with the last survey, those choosing “deteriorate” decreased by 1.2 percentage points and those choosing “improved” also decreased by 1.4 percentage points. About 53.3% expected the employment situation would remain “the same”, increased by 0.1 percentage points compared with the previous result. About 17.7% said “don’t know or it’s difficult to tell”.

Indices of Consumer Confidence, Consumer Sentiment and Employment Confidence are reported in Table 2.

The Index of Consumer Confidence is compiled from the scores of questions number 3, 4 and 5. The higher the index, the stronger is people’s confidence about economic conditions.

The Index of Consumer Sentiment is compiled from the scores of questions number 1 to 5. A higher index indicates people are more optimistic about the present situation and future development of economic conditions.

The Index of Employment Confidence is compiled from the score of the sixth question. A higher index shows a stronger confidence about employment situation.

For the first two indices, the baseline is January 2000 (index = 100). For the Index of Employment Confidence, the baseline is February 2000 (index = 100).

In summary:

- *The Index of Consumer Confidence* in September was 82.1, increased by 1.5% from last quarter and increased by 7.4% from the same quarter of 2016.
- *The Index of Consumer Sentiment* in September was 91.2, increased by 1.4% from last quarter and increased by 8.7% from the same quarter of 2016.
- *The Index of Employment Confidence* in September was 82.2, decreased by 0.2% from last quarter but increased by 12.2% from the same quarter of 2016.

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Table 1

| | Survey questions | Answer | Jun 2017 | Sep 2017 | Change in %* |
|-----|---------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 問題一 | 與一年前比較，你和家人目前的財政狀況是變好、變壞或跟一年前一樣？ | 變好 | 26.4% | 26.4% | 0.1% |
| | | 變壞 | 15.1% | 11.5% | -3.5% |
| | | 跟一年前一樣 | 54.8% | 57.3% | 2.5% |
| | | 唔知道/好難講 | 3.8% | 4.8% | 1.0% |
| 問題二 | 你認為現在是否購買主要家庭用品(如傢具、電視機、冰箱、煮食爐等)的好時機？ | 係 | 22.2% | 21.5% | -0.8% |
| | | 唔係 | 51.4% | 52.3% | 0.9% |
| | | 唔知道/好難講 | 26.4% | 26.2% | -0.1% |
| 問題三 | 展望未來一年，你認為你和家人的財政狀況將會變好、變壞或跟現在一樣？ | 變好 | 14.7% | 12.7% | -2.0% |
| | | 變壞 | 17.3% | 15.7% | -1.6% |
| | | 跟現在一樣 | 62.5% | 63.2% | 0.7% |
| | | 唔知道/好難講 | 5.6% | 8.3% | 2.8% |
| 問題四 | 展望未來一年，你認為香港的整體營商環境會好、差或一般？ | 好 | 11.1% | 12.5% | 1.4% |
| | | 差 | 22.4% | 18.9% | -3.5% |
| | | 一般 | 56.2% | 57.3% | 1.1% |
| | | 唔知道/好難講 | 10.3% | 11.3% | 1.0% |
| 問題五 | 你對香港未來五年的整體經濟表現是樂觀、悲觀或跟現在一樣？ | 樂觀 | 20.2% | 19.1% | -1.2% |
| | | 悲觀 | 26.2% | 24.5% | -1.7% |
| | | 跟現在一樣 | 44.6% | 43.7% | -0.9% |
| | | 唔知道/好難講 | 8.9% | 12.7% | 3.8% |
| 問題六 | 你認為香港未來一年失業情況會改善，惡化或跟現在一樣？ | 改善 | 12.5% | 11.1% | -1.4% |
| | | 惡化 | 19.0% | 17.9% | -1.2% |
| | | 跟現在一樣 | 53.2% | 53.3% | 0.1% |
| | | 唔知道/好難講 | 15.3% | 17.7% | 2.4% |

Note. * The balance of change might not equal to zero due to rounding.

Table 2

| | 消費者信心指數 The Index of Consumer Confidence | 消費者情緒指數 The Index of Consumer Sentiment | 就業信心指數 The Index of Employment Confidence |
|----------------|--|---|---|
| January 2000 | 100.0 | 100.0 | - |
| February 2000 | 101.1 | 103.3 | 100.0 |
| March 2000 | 105.3 | 103.3 | 106.1 |
| June 2000 | 84.1 | 85.6 | 84.7 |
| September 2000 | 90.9 | 92.1 | 86.6 |
| December 2000 | 89.8 | 91.7 | 88.8 |
| March 2001 | 75.5 | 79.1 | 69.6 |
| June 2001 | 78.0 | 81.3 | 66.1 |
| September 2001 | 50.3 | 55.9 | 29.1 |
| December 2001 | 70.5 | 77.2 | 45.0 |
| March 2002 | 70.0 | 72.6 | 45.5 |
| June 2002 | 65.5 | 69.4 | 45.0 |
| September 2002 | 64.9 | 67.1 | 51.2 |
| December 2002 | 70.0 | 72.9 | 77.2 |
| March 2003 | 56.4 | 59.1 | 49.5 |
| April 2003 | 55.0 | 57.4 | 40.9 |
| May 2003 | 73.2 | 74.3 | 57.6 |
| June 2003 | 70.7 | 73.8 | 47.8 |
| September 2003 | 96.7 | 95.4 | 102.6 |
| December 2003 | 103.4 | 103.2 | 118.8 |
| March 2004 | 107.6 | 104.5 | 121.2 |
| June 2004 | 99.2 | 100.4 | 114.4 |
| September 2004 | 101.8 | 99.6 | 115.4 |
| December 2004 | 106.1 | 105.2 | 115.6 |
| March 2005 | 110.8 | 109.6 | 128.5 |
| June 2005 | 114.6 | 112.6 | 129.3 |
| September 2005 | 113.2 | 111.1 | 120.3 |
| December 2005 | 113.7 | 114.7 | 118.1 |
| March 2006 | 107.9 | 106.0 | 114.1 |
| June 2006 | 109.2 | 109.9 | 116.7 |
| September 2006 | 105.5 | 105.5 | 109.9 |
| December 2006 | 108.9 | 112.2 | 111.2 |
| March 2007 | 112.1 | 113.7 | 117.3 |
| June 2007 | 115.7 | 116.9 | 112.8 |
| September 2007 | 111.9 | 113.3 | 113.6 |

| | 消費者信心指數 The Index of Consumer Confidence | 消費者情緒指數 The Index of Consumer Sentiment | 就業信心指數 The Index of Employment Confidence |
|----------------|---|--|--|
| December 2007 | 110.4 | 111.8 | 119.5 |
| March 2008 | 100.0 | 100.7 | 106.7 |
| June 2008 | 78.4 | 78.1 | 76.5 |
| September 2008 | 66.1 | 66.8 | 44.1 |
| December 2008 | 67.7 | 70.5 | 27.1 |
| March 2009 | 80.9 | 76.9 | 42.8 |
| June 2009 | 87.4 | 86.4 | 61.4 |
| September 2009 | 96.0 | 93.6 | 83.4 |
| December 2009 | 96.0 | 94.8 | 93.1 |
| March 2010 | 97.8 | 96.3 | 101.0 |
| June 2010 | 96.3 | 96.2 | 91.9 |
| September 2010 | 96.3 | 97.2 | 88.7 |
| December 2010 | 95.0 | 95.6 | 87.6 |
| March 2011 | 87.2 | 90.3 | 82.6 |
| June 2011 | 80.6 | 84.4 | 80.0 |
| September 2011 | 74.6 | 76.7 | 69.1 |
| December 2011 | 70.9 | 75.2 | 68.6 |
| March 2012 | 79.2 | 83.2 | 74.2 |
| June 2012 | 74.9 | 78.1 | 71.2 |
| September 2012 | 73.4 | 78.1 | 71.8 |
| December 2012 | 79.6 | 84.5 | 75.9 |
| March 2013 | 78.9 | 84.1 | 75.0 |
| June 2013 | 75.0 | 82.3 | 72.5 |
| September 2013 | 75.3 | 82.0 | 73.4 |
| December 2013 | 75.6 | 81.8 | 76.4 |
| March 2014 | 77.2 | 84.8 | 79.9 |
| June 2014 | 76.5 | 84.2 | 77.6 |
| September 2014 | 72.3 | 81.9 | 71.1 |
| December 2014 | 77.4 | 88.7 | 71.3 |
| March 2015 | 76.4 | 84.1 | 65.1 |
| June 2015 | 77.9 | 85.3 | 72.8 |
| September 2015 | 75.3 | 83.6 | 65.3 |
| December 2015 | 74.6 | 88.2 | 66.1 |
| March 2016 | 73.2 | 85.9 | 66.2 |
| June 2016 | 69.2 | 78.5 | 62.1 |

| | 消費者信心指數 The Index of Consumer Confidence | 消費者情緒指數 The Index of Consumer Sentiment | 就業信心指數 The Index of Employment Confidence |
|---|--|---|---|
| September 2016 | 74.7 | 82.5 | 70.0 |
| December 2016 | 77.7 | 87.0 | 76.0 |
| March 2017 | 82.4 | 90.2 | 81.3 |
| June 2017 | 80.6 | 89.8 | 82.4 |
| September 2017 | 82.1 | 91.2 | 82.2 |
| Change (Comparing with the figures of the previous quarter) | 1.5 | 1.4 | -0.2 |

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