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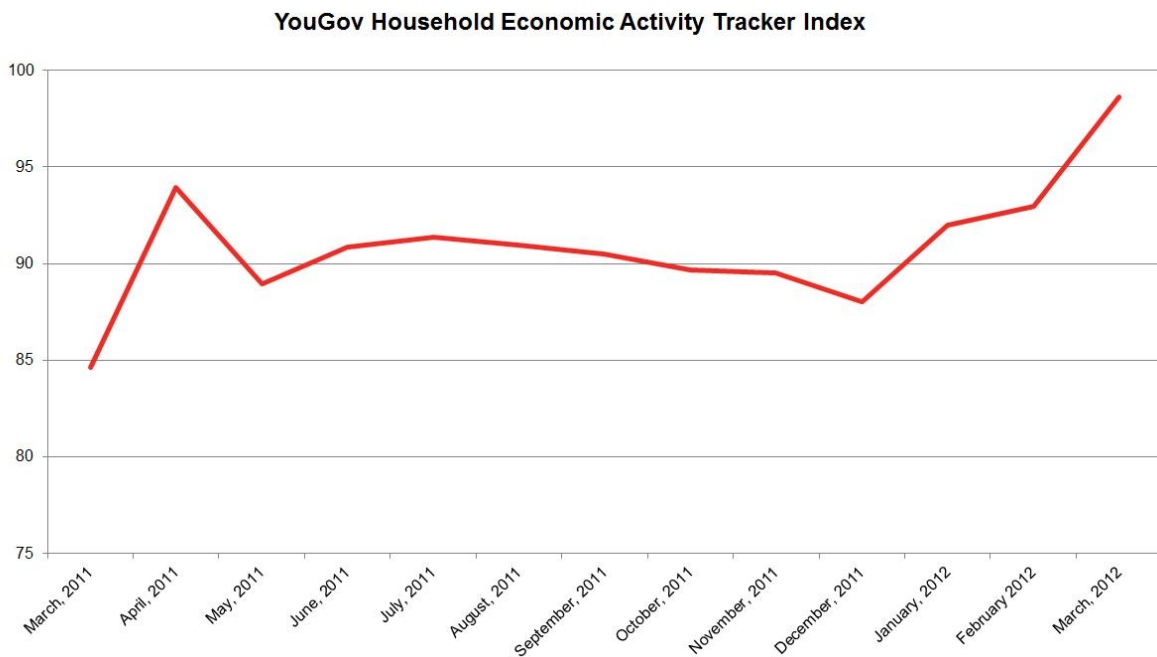
20 March 2012

Brits feeling optimistic as consumer confidence levels are at a one year high

- YouGov's HEAT index reports a six point surge, up to 99
- Increase in consumer confidence for all measures on the index, especially amongst employed Britons
- Job security and business activity levels are at their highest recorded levels since HEAT began

YouGov's latest HEAT findings indicate that consumer confidence is well on the way to recovery with the first half of March's index score surging up six points to 99 (figure 1). January and February saw an optimistic start to the year, with scores of 92 and 93 respectively. If this momentum continues, through to the end of March, consumer confidence will be at a one year high.

Figure 1: UK HEAT Index



Source: YouGov Household Economic Activity Tracker, March 2012

Note: Based on interviews of 3,812 UK residents conducted from 1st-15th March.

Index score is derived from consumer sentiment on 4 metrics (home prices, job security, family financial situation, and business activity) measured retrospectively and prospectively.

This month's optimistic index score can be attributed to an increase in confidence for all measures included in the tracker, bar overall household financial situation which flat-lined for the second month in a row, remaining at 79. Job security levels, prospective and retrospective, amongst employees saw increases of 101 to 105 (prospective) and 85 to 91 (retrospective), whilst business activity levels (prospective) rose from 117 to 120.

Homeowners and the employed are finally feeling better about their economic situations. These groups are the growth drivers of a consumer-led economy and they see their forward-looking economic situation improving. They expect their wealth, tied up in housing, to increase and their work prospects to improve; both future-looking job security and future-looking business activity levels are

not just up, but positive (over 100) and this bodes well for this segment of the economy.

February 2010 stands as the highest post-recession score on the HEAT index, so despite impressive and, in some cases, record scores for many HEAT metrics in the first half of March, the overall HEAT index still falls short of the figure set in February 2010.

Stephan Shakespeare, CEO of YouGov plc, commented on the findings: “Over the past few months we have seen a continual improvement in confidence and several key indicators are now in positive territory. These trends could cement the UK’s economic recovery as increased confidence means that consumer willingness to spend is now higher than it has been for some time.”

-ENDS-

Notes to editor:

YouGov’s HEAT (Household Economic Activity Tracker) index is a monthly consumer sentiment number based on surveys conducted on a daily basis throughout the month.

For further information on YouGov’s Household Economic Activity Tracker visit:
<http://sixthsense.yougov.com/household-economic-activity-tracker.aspx>

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YouGov is considered a pioneer of online market research and has a panel of 2.5 million people worldwide, including over 350,000 people in the UK representing all ages, socio-economic groups and other demographic types.

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