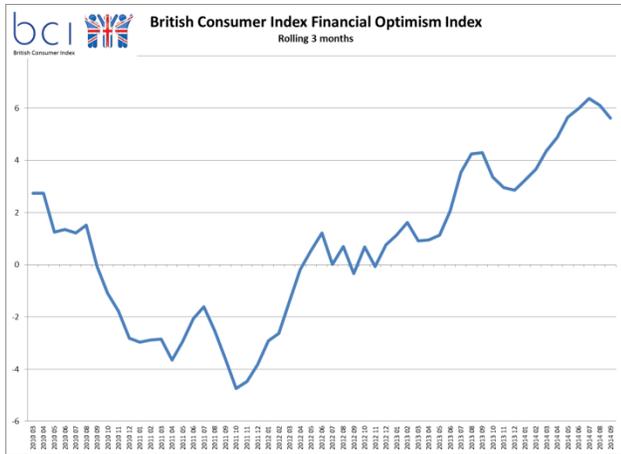


BCI – Financial Optimism Index; September 2014

Consumer Confidence Continues to Fall in September.

The British Consumer Index (BCI) has today (25 September 2014) released the latest Financial Optimism Index.

The Financial Optimism Index measures how people think their personal financial situation will change over the next few months.



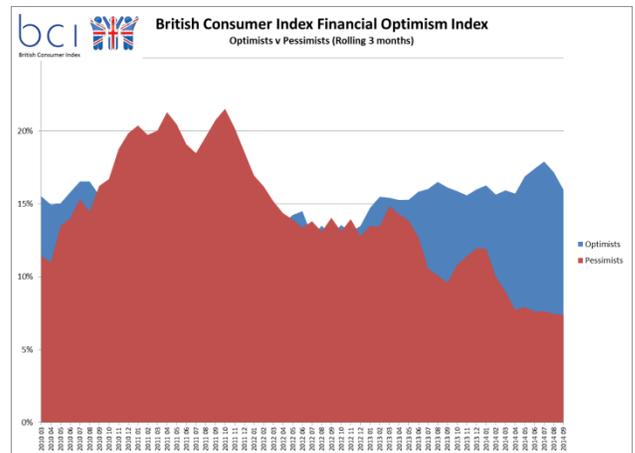
The September figures show a continued stalling of the recovery in confidence which commenced in late 2011 following the downturn post 2008.

The chart (left) shows the trend in Financial Optimism for the population as a whole using a 3 month rolling average.

Optimists continue to outnumber Pessimists.

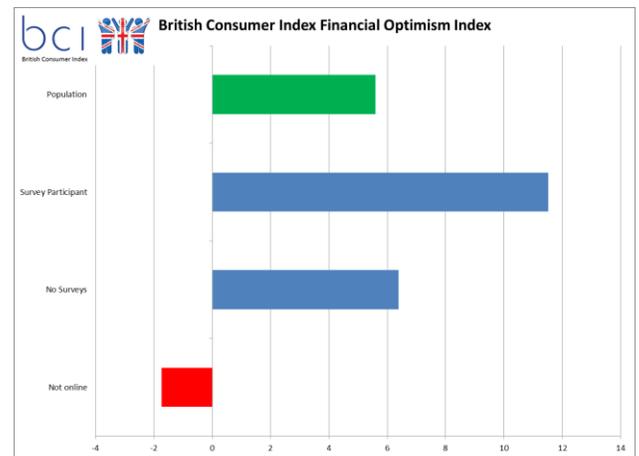
The British Consumer Index has been monitoring consumer confidence since January 2010. Over that period 'Pessimists' have outnumbered 'Optimists' for the majority of the time. However, Quarter 1 of 2012 began a period of equality followed in Q1 2013 by a significant drop in the number of pessimists, and modest rise in the number of optimists, putting the optimists into the majority.

The latest figures show a slight narrowing of the gap due mainly to a fall in the number of Optimists.



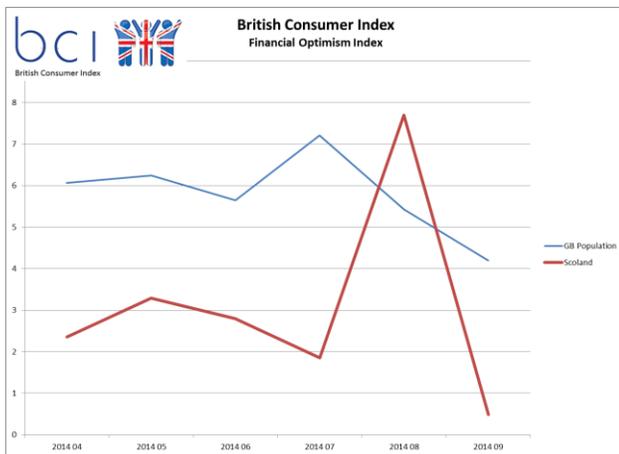
Does Completing On Line Surveys make you more Optimistic?

One of the things which BCI monitors every month is the difference in attitude between those who respond to on line surveys and those who don't. The reason for this is that it is easy to weight on line surveys to make them representative of the population in terms of general demographics such as age and gender it is less easy to quantify attitudinal differences. As can be seen from the chart (right) those who respond to on line surveys are more optimistic than the population as a whole. Those not on line, as perhaps expected, are far less optimistic. This does not necessarily mean that completing on line surveys makes you happier!



Financial Optimism and the Scottish Referendum

While the level of optimism fell in September across Britain in general but in Scotland the fall was far more pronounced. After a surge in optimism in August it can be seen from the chart below that as the campaigns progressed optimism fell sharply.



Whether the fall was due to indications that the 'Yes' vote would prevail or just a general nervousness is not clear. The October figures will be interesting!

Field work was conducted between the 5th and the 11th September in the run up to the vote.

For further information, analysis and comment contact:

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Notes: Figures are collected by The British Population Survey by face to face in home interviews with a population representative sample of 1,000 adults aged 15+ per month (total sample size = 57,881). Financial Optimism Index values range between 100 (fully positive) and -100 (fully negative).