The Two-Way - NPR's News Blog

Consumer Confidence Rose This Month

Categories: National News, Economy

10:25 am

December 27, 2011

by MARK MEMMOTT

American consumers felt better this month about how things are going for the U.S. economy and their own financial situations, the private research group The Conference Board just reported.

Its consumer confidence index rose to 64.5 from [illegible] in November and is back at a level not seen since last April.

But in a statement, the director of the board's consumer research center advises viewing the again with caution.

"While consumers are ending the year in a somewhat more upbeat mood, it is too soon to tell if this is a rebound from earlier declines or a sustainable shift in attitudes," said Lynn Franco.

Indeed, the index remains well below the 100+ readings that come when times are good. And the report comes after some other data that signal the economy is still growing slowly — including today's news that home prices fell again in most cities in October.

But, since consumers purchase about 70 percent of all the goods and services the economy churns out, any sign that they're in a better mood could be a signal that they will be helping to keep the economy going in coming months.

Tags: The Conference Board, consumer confidence, economy