

The Boston Globe

Mass. consumer confidence rose last month

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Consumer confidence in Massachusetts jumped last month, soaring to its highest level since the fall of 2007 as residents sensed the worst for the economy is over, according to quarterly index published by a Boston consulting firm.

The Massachusetts Consumer Confidence Index jumped to 65 from 38 in January, a 27 point gain, according to [Mass Insight Corp.](#) It was the highest level since October 2007, when the financial crisis was beginning to intensify.

In January, when confidence in the state hit a record low, 80 percent of those surveyed said the worst was yet to come. Only 51 percent felt that way in April, according to the survey.

"Many consumers in our survey believe the worst is over," said William Guenther, president of Mass Insight, which specializes in organizing public-private initiatives. "In general, economists agree that while we're not out of the woods yet, the economy is no longer in free fall."

Massachusetts consumers, however, are not yet optimistic about the economy. A reading above 100 signals that consumers are generally optimistic. Below that level, they are pessimistic.

Still, Massachusetts residents have a brighter outlook than consumers nationwide. A similar national survey, published by the Conference Board, a nonprofit research group in New York, recorded a reading of 39 in April, 26 points below Mass Insight's index.

(By Robert Gavin, Globe staff)