

The MassINC Polling Group Trend Monitor is published once a quarter to provide a snapshot of key metrics over time. The figures contained in the Trend Monitor are based on polls¹ conducted by The MassINC Polling Group. Unless otherwise noted, these figures all represent general population polls, rather than voter polls.

Markey leads Brown in hypothetical 2014 matchup

Towards the end of the recent special senate election, Scott Brown, [claimed](#) that he “could beat Ed Markey, absolutely,” if he had been running instead of Gabriel Gomez. We’ll never know how a Markey/Brown race would have turned out this summer, but our polling suggests that Markey has an edge looking to 2014, should Brown decide to run.

If the 2014 Senate election were held now, 43 percent of registered voters would favor Markey, compared to 38 percent for Brown. This is a reversal from our last matchup between the two (conducted for [WBUR](#)), from December 2012, when Brown trounced Markey 48 to 30 among registered voters.

Markey may lead the horserace, but Brown enjoys a higher favorable/unfavorable ratio (45/29) than Markey (36/29). Markey’s relatively low name ID is largely due to the relatively brief and low-turnout election cycle. Seventeen percent of residents and voters are still not familiar with him, though this will continue to decline.

Hypothetical Senate Match-up (RVs)

| | December 2012 | July 2013 |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| Brown | 48% | 38% |
| Markey | 30% | 43% |
| Other / Don't Know / Refused | 22% | 19% |

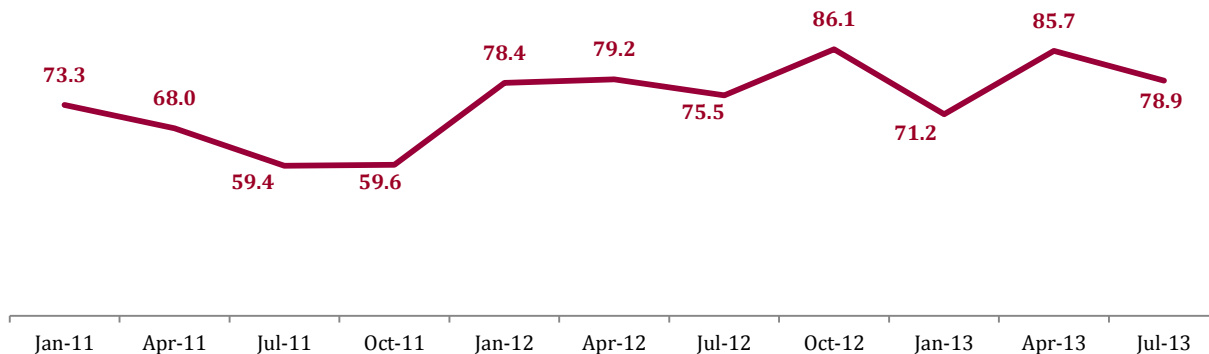
We also tested favorability for President Barack Obama and Markey’s predecessor in the Senate, Secretary of State John Kerry. Obama’s numbers – 56 percent favorable versus 34 unfavorable – has slipped since our last reading in October 2012. At that time, 64 percent of Massachusetts residents had a favorable opinion of the President. This decrease is broadly reflective of a national decline in the President’s approval rating. Kerry’s numbers have moved in the opposite direction since ascending to his new post. Today, 54 percent of residents view him favorably, compared to 50 percent in October 2012.

For the full historical trend for these four public figures and others, see Appendix B.

Consumer Sentiment Index down due to lowered expectations

After hitting a near-record high in April, the index of consumer sentiment declined to 78.9. The biggest downturn seen in the Index of Consumer expectations, which tracks residents’ outlook for the future of the economy. This index dropped 9.5 points since April, compared to a smaller drop (2.9 points) in the Index of Current Economic Conditions.

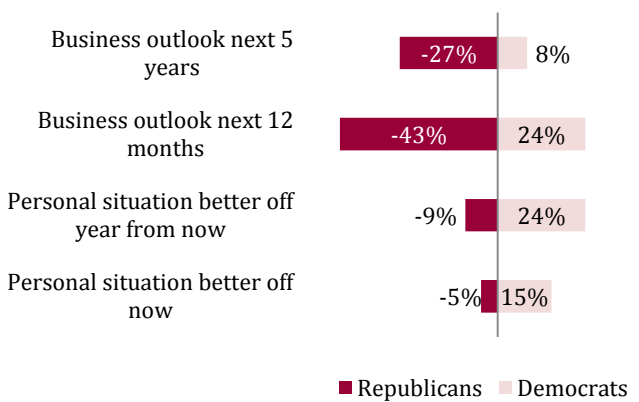
Mass. Index of Consumer Sentiment



The pessimism regarding future economic conditions is reflected in the component questions of the index. Forty-one percent think we'll have bad business conditions in the next 12 months, and 47 percent expect "periods of widespread unemployment or depression" nationwide over the next five years. For both questions, negative responses have increased 10 percentage points since April. The percent offering negative responses rose for other questions as well, but not by as large an amount. For the full historical trend, see Appendix A.

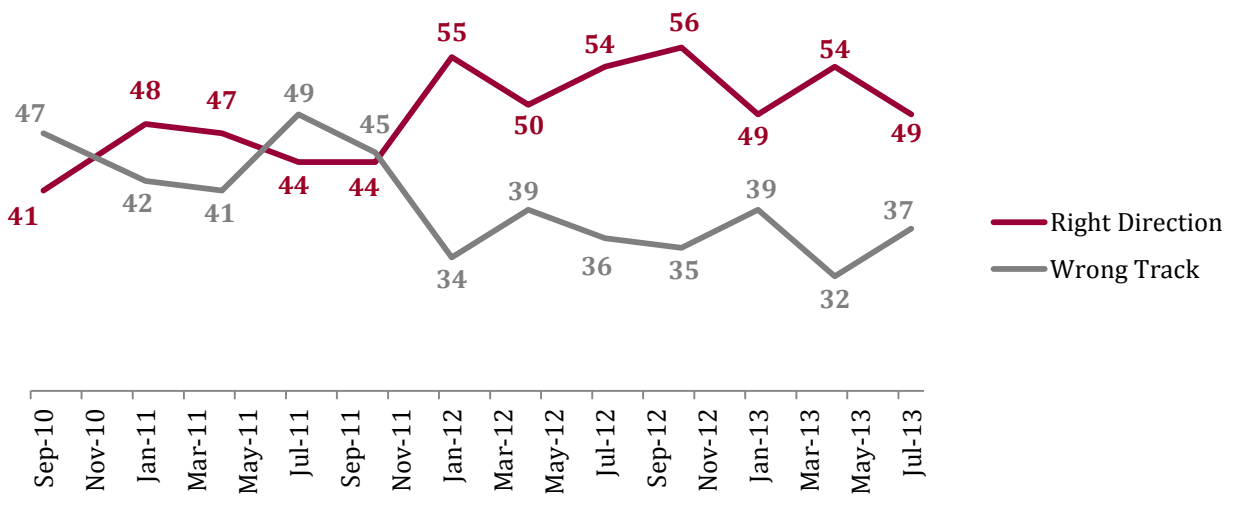
The strong partisan divide in consumer confidence continues, with Bay State Democrats far more optimistic than Republicans. Overall, Democrats have a net positive outlook on each of the component questions (see chart), whereas Republicans have a net negative outlook on four of the five. Independents had a net positive outlook but by a much narrower margin than among Democrats. Independents were split, reporting more pessimism than optimism on 3 of the 5 questions. The net negative margin for independents was much smaller than among Republicans, however.

Positive/Negative Outlook: Democrats & Republicans



Fewer see state headed in right direction

Despite losing ground, this quarter marked the seventh straight with a double-digit positive margin between the right direction and wrong track figures. This quarter's findings – 49 percent right direction, 37 percent wrong track – are very similar to what we found in January of 2013.



Appendix A – Consumer Sentiment Historical Data

| | MA Index of Consumer Sentiment | MA Index of Current Economic Conditions | MA Index of Consumer Expectations |
|-----------|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| July 2013 | 78.9 | 83.8 | 75.7 |
| Apr 2013 | 85.7 | 86.7 | 85.2 |
| Jan 2013 | 71.2 | 74.0 | 69.4 |
| Oct 2012 | 86.1 | 82.5 | 88.4 |
| Jul 2012 | 75.5 | 76.9 | 74.6 |
| Apr 2012 | 79.2 | 78.4 | 79.8 |
| Jan 2012 | 78.4 | 80.2 | 77.2 |
| Oct 2011 | 59.6 | 64.2 | 56.5 |
| Jul 2011 | 59.4 | 64.5 | 56.1 |
| Apr 2011 | 68.0 | 71.0 | 66.1 |
| Jan 2011 | 73.3 | 72.8 | 73.7 |

The Massachusetts Index of Consumer Sentiment measures views of both current and future economic conditions. The ICS is made up two component indices, the Index of Current Economic Conditions, which measures present sentiments, and the Index of Consumer Expectations, which represents future prospects. The ICS is scaled such that the 1966 national ICS represents 100.

The questions shown below are the components of the Index of Consumer Sentiment.

| We are interested in how people are getting along financially these days. Would you say that you (and your family living there) are better off or worse off financially than you were a year ago? | | | |
|--|------------|----------|-----------|
| | Better off | The same | Worse off |
| July 2013 | 36 | 23 | 37 |
| Apr 2013 | 37 | 30 | 31 |
| Jan 2013 | 29 | 24 | 46 |
| Oct 2012 | 38 | 26 | 34 |
| Jul 2012 | 30 | 30 | 38 |
| Apr 2012 | 30 | 27 | 41 |
| Jan 2012 | 32 | 29 | 38 |
| Oct 2011 | 25 | 27 | 47 |
| Jul 2011 | 25 | 24 | 49 |
| Apr 2011 | 29 | 24 | 45 |
| Jan 2011 | 27 | 27 | 45 |

| Now looking ahead--do you think that a year from now you (and your family living there) will be better off financially, or worse off, or just about the same as now? | | | |
|---|------------|----------|-----------|
| | Better off | The same | Worse off |
| July 2013 | 25 | 54 | 16 |
| Apr 2013 | 29 | 55 | 11 |
| Jan 2013 | 24 | 48 | 24 |
| Oct 2012 | 36 | 43 | 8 |
| Jul 2012 | 30 | 49 | 13 |
| Apr 2012 | 33 | 45 | 14 |
| Jan 2012 | 31 | 50 | 13 |
| Oct 2011 | 21 | 54 | 18 |
| Jul 2011 | 19 | 54 | 23 |
| Apr 2011 | 25 | 52 | 20 |
| Jan 2011 | 28 | 51 | 17 |

| Now turning to business conditions in the country as a whole--do you think that during the next twelve months we'll have good times financially or bad times? | | | |
|--|-------------------|--|------------------|
| | Good times | Mixed, or both good and bad times | Bad times |
| July 2013 | 43 | 5 | 41 |
| Apr 2013 | 51 | 11 | 31 |
| Jan 2013 | 37 | 9 | 47 |
| Oct 2012 | 46 | 11 | 30 |
| Jul 2012 | 33 | 14 | 43 |
| Apr 2012 | 41 | 14 | 37 |
| Jan 2012 | 40 | 10 | 44 |
| Oct 2011 | 22 | 8 | 62 |
| Jul 2011 | 25 | 6 | 64 |
| Apr 2011 | 35 | 7 | 53 |
| Jan 2011 | 43 | 10 | 43 |

| Looking ahead, which would you say is more likely--that in the country as a whole we'll have continuous good times during the next five years or so, or that we will have periods of widespread unemployment or depression? | | | |
|--|-------------------|--|--|
| | Good times | Mixed, or both good and bad times | Widespread unemployment or depression |
| July 2013 | 40 | 4 | 47 |
| Apr 2013 | 39 | 15 | 37 |
| Jan 2013 | 38 | 5 | 51 |
| Oct 2012 | 43 | 11 | 32 |
| Jul 2012 | 34 | 13 | 42 |
| Apr 2012 | 38 | 10 | 41 |
| Jan 2012 | 40 | 7 | 45 |
| Oct 2011 | 22 | 9 | 62 |
| Jul 2011 | 27 | 5 | 62 |
| Apr 2011 | 32 | 8 | 55 |
| Jan 2011 | 35 | 10 | 52 |

| About the big things people buy for their homes--such as furniture, a refrigerator, stove, television, and things like that. Generally speaking, do you think now is a good or bad time for people to buy major household items? | | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|------------------------|
| | Good time to buy | Mixed, or both good and bad time | Bad time to buy |
| July 2013 | 49 | 5 | 32 |
| Apr 2013 | 48 | 9 | 31 |
| Jan 2013 | 45 | 6 | 38 |
| Oct 2012 | 44 | 10 | 35 |
| Jul 2012 | 41 | 12 | 35 |
| Apr 2012 | 47 | 10 | 34 |
| Jan 2012 | 49 | 5 | 37 |
| Oct 2011 | 35 | 7 | 48 |
| Jul 2011 | 38 | 6 | 49 |
| Apr 2011 | 41 | 7 | 43 |
| Jan 2011 | 45 | 9 | 40 |

**Note: Totals for this battery of questions do not add up to 100% due to "Don't know" and "Refused" responses.*

Appendix B – Favorables: People and Groups, All Periods

The table below contains results of people and groups included in past MPG Trend Monitors, where we asked about the person or group at least twice.

Favorable / Unfavorable Ratios (all residents)

| | July 2013 | April 2013 | Jan. 2013 | Oct. 2012 | July 2012 | April 2012 | Jan. 2012 | Oct. 2011 | July 2011 | April 2011 | Jan. 2011 | Sept. 2010 |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Ed Markey | 36/29 | N/A | 21/23 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Scott Brown | 45/29 | N/A | 48/32 | 47/39 | 48/30 | 44/31 | 50/28 | 47/30 | 48/30 | 50/28 | 51/25 | 57/24 |
| John Kerry | 54/25 | N/A | N/A | 50/33 | N/A | 50/34 | N/A | 53/29 | N/A | 56/28 | N/A | 59/31 |
| Barack Obama | 56/34 | N/A | N/A | 64/34 | 63/30 | 64/33 | N/A | N/A | 57/41 | N/A | N/A | 58/38 |
| Elizabeth Warren | N/A | 50/29 | N/A | 48/38 | 43/24 | 34/23 | 33/18 | 32/14 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Mass. State Legislature | N/A | 34/30 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 41/37 | 38/38 | 41/37 | N/A |
| Mass. State Police | N/A | 86/4 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Deval Patrick | N/A | 61/23 | N/A | N/A | N/A | 51/37 | N/A | 51/36 | 47/40 | 54/36 | 57/33 | 42/45 |
| U.S. Congress | N/A | N/A | 24/49 | N/A | 29/55 | 28/59 | N/A | N/A | 27/63 | N/A | 46/41 | N/A |
| Mitt Romney | N/A | N/A | N/A | 36/56 | 35/52 | N/A | 42/45 | N/A | N/A | 42/40 | N/A | N/A |
| The Tea Party | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 28/42 | 26/45 | 29/47 | 30/46 | 37/35 |

**Note: Totals do not add up to 100% due to "Don't know" and "Refused" responses. People and groups included in the favorables section change each quarter.*

Questions or comments?

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¹ **About the Polls** - These results are based on questions from The MassINC Polling Group statewide polls of Massachusetts residents. Live telephone interviews are conducted via both landline and cell phone using conventional random digit dialing (RDD) sampling methods. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish. Question wording and additional methodological details are available upon request, but are excluded from this document for simplicity and length.

² **About the Index of Consumer Sentiment** - The national Index of Consumer Sentiment is a consumer confidence index published monthly by the University of Michigan and Thomson Reuters. The ICS is made up two component indices, the Index of Current Economic Conditions, which measures present sentiments, and the Index of Consumer Expectations, which represents future prospects. The consumer confidence measures were devised in the late 1940's by George Katona at the University of Michigan. The measures have now developed into an ongoing, nationally representative survey based on telephonic household interviews. The Index of Consumer Sentiment (ICS) is developed from these interviews. The Index of Consumer Expectations (a sub-index of ICS) is included in the Leading Indicator Composite Index published by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis.