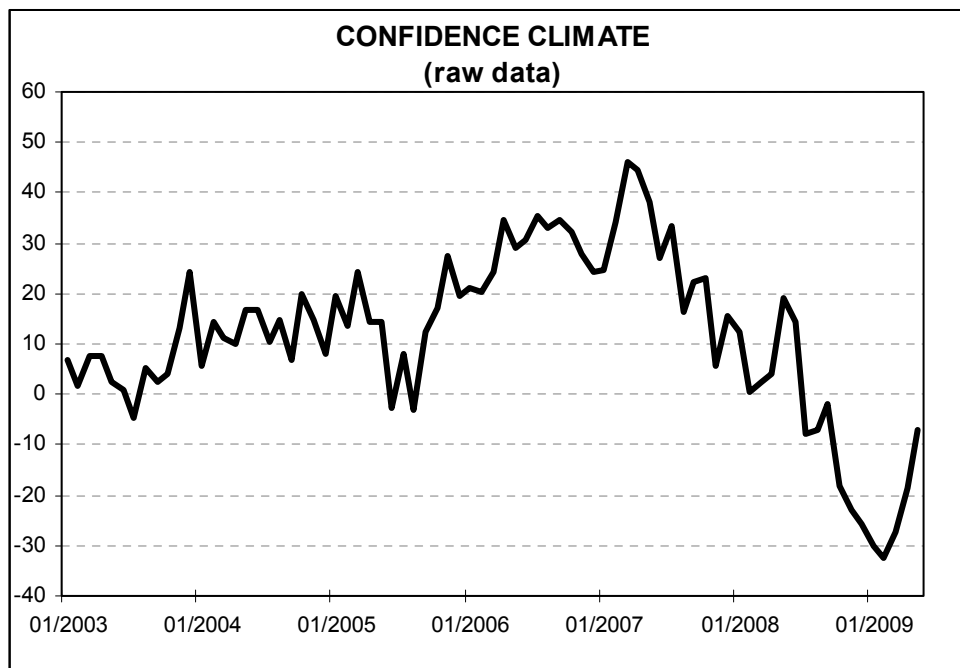




Date: May 28, 2009

CONFIDENCE AMONG MARKET SERVICES RECOVERS AGAIN IN MAY

- The confidence climate rose to -7 (from -19 in April), due to decidedly better prospects for orders and to the recovery in expectations for the overall economy. The raw balance for current orders posted instead a moderate decline
- The index remained however clearly below its year earlier level, when it stood at 19
- The improvement in confidence was particularly strong in household and financial services (to 1 from -29 and to 9 from -29, respectively). The indicator worsened, on the contrary, in business services (to -15 from -9), where negative assessments on the trend in orders prevailed
- Some differences emerged also at the regional level. Confidence bettered in the North East (to 8 from -12), the Centre (to -15 from -22) and the South. In the North West, instead, sharply negative evaluations of orders caused a decline in the indicator (to -18 from -12)
- Among the variables excluded from the calculation of the confidence indicator, opinions and expectations for employment sent favourable signals



Data on June shall be released on June 25, 2009

The next ISAE surveys are scheduled as follows:

June 24, 2009: ISAE Monthly Consumer Survey (reference period: June)

The full text of ISAE Surveys (either hardcopy or electronic format) is available for sale (for further information see the web site www.isae.it)

General results

The ISAE Survey, carried out on a panel of about 2,000 firms between May 2 and May 23, showed that in May confidence among market services firms confirmed the improvement posted in the previous months.

The confidence climate rose to -7 (from -19 in April), thanks to clearly better prospects for orders and to the recovery in expectations for the overall economy. The raw balance for current orders posted instead a moderate decline.

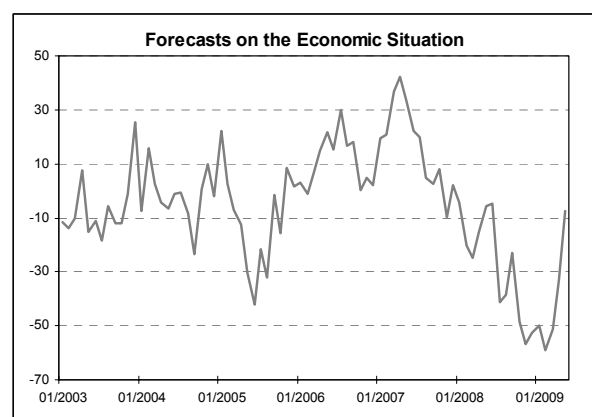
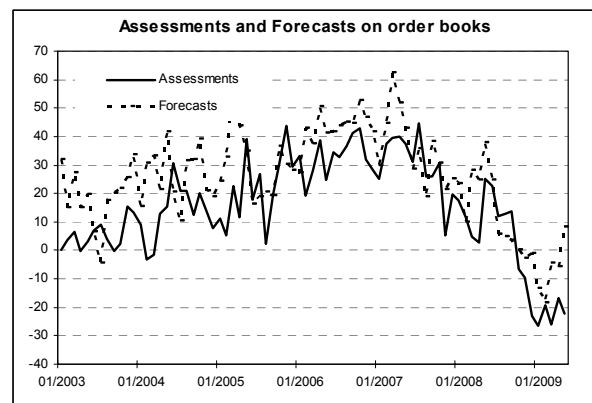
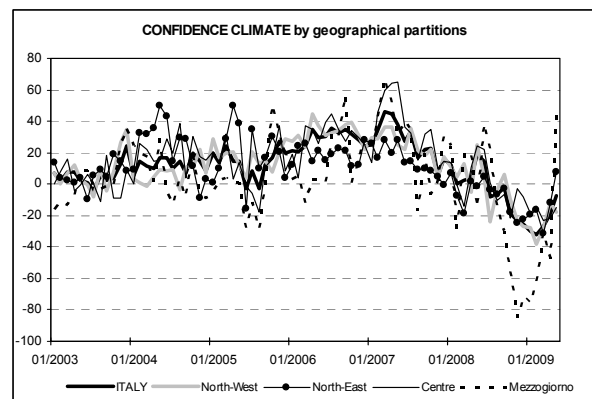
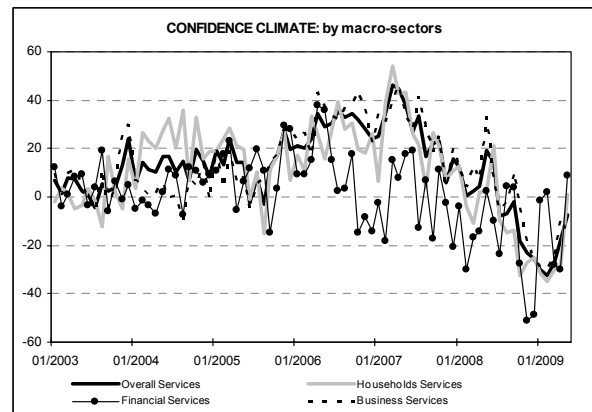
The improvement in confidence was particularly marked in household and financial services (to 1 from -29 and to 9 from -29, respectively). The indicator worsened, on the contrary, in business services (to -15 from -9), where negative assessments on the trend in orders prevailed.

Some differences emerged also at the regional level. Confidence bettered in the North East (to 8 from -12), the Centre (to -15 from -22) and the South. In the North West, instead, sharply negative assessments on orders caused a decline in the indicator (to -18 from -12).

Situation in the reference period

According to surveyed firms, in May the opinions on orders deteriorated. The balance fell to -22 from -17 in the previous month. Current employment gave instead more favourable indications. The raw balance rose to -1 (from -8).

The sectoral breakdown showed some important differences. In particular, the balance for orders worsened only for business services, where it declined to -35 (from -10 in April). In contrast, assessments on demand improved in household and financial services (to -9 from -25 and to 5 from -32). The opinions on employment instead bettered in all main macro-sectors.



At the regional level, in the North West, following the recovery recorded in April, the balance for orders diminished; the one for employment recuperated instead. Operators in the North East gave more favourable assessments on both surveyed variables. In the Centre, instead, the balance for both orders and employment decreased. Lastly, in the South, the balance for orders clearly picked up, while the one for employment remained positive.

Outlook for the next three months

The analysis of expectations for the following quarter also gave positive indications. Firms were indeed clearly more optimistic than in April about orders and the economic trend (the balance improved to 9 from -6 and to -7 from -33, respectively). Also the balance for employment recovered (to -11 from -17). As for prices, firms which planned to increase selling prices prevailed. The related balance rose to -1 (from -15).

At sector and regional levels predictions were heterogeneous as well. In household services, operators made more optimistic forecasts, with respect to April, for all surveyed variables; in particular the balance for orders increased 27 percentage points. In financial services, the balances for orders and the economic trend improved and the one for employment worsened. Lastly, in business services, the balance for orders remained stable (in negative territory); operators were instead more optimistic than in the previous month about employment and the Italian economy.

At the regional level, the balance for orders and the general economic trend improved all over the country. Expectations for employment instead bettered in all areas except the Centre, where the balance went back to its February 2009 low.