

Estimate of the effects of the innovations introduced in the consumer confidence survey in June 2013

As announced last month, Istat carried out some analyses to evaluate the effects of the innovations introduced in the consumer confidence survey; in particular, in the data reported in June 2013, published in the press release issued on 24 June last. Thus, users are provided with useful instruments for better evaluating the evolution of the indexes compared to the previous months.

Methodological and process innovations were introduced in the survey with evident effects on the socio-demographic structure of the sample of respondents; different from the previous one, now it better represents the reference population. A new survey network was also implemented for administrative reasons. All these innovations contributed to improve the capacity to measure phenomena, but negatively affected the comparison between the data of June 2013 and those of May 2013.

In order to measure the effects on the index level in June of the change in the sample structure, estimates were made aimed at representing opinions expressed in June by consumers in line with the structural characteristics of the sample used in May.

The effect of the methodological innovation (sample structure) on the confidence index level is shown in the following table:

Estimated effect of the innovations on the confidence climate in June 2013 and breakdowns^(a)

MONTH	Confidence Climate	Economic Climate	Personal Climate ^(b)	Current Climate	Future Climate
June 2013	+2.9	+6.5	+1.6	+0.3	+6.4

(a) Differences between published indexes and those simulated using the previous methodology (seasonal adjusted data).

(b) Seasonal effects are not present.

The table shows the differences between the indexes published in June 2013 (new sample) and the estimated ones on the basis of the old sample. These differences show how changes in survey methodology have led to higher levels in June consumer confidence index, estimated at 2.9 points. This result derives from effects that particularly influenced the economic (+6.5 points) and future (+6.4 points) climate indexes. On the other hand, the personal climate and the current one reported minor positive effects (+1.6 and +0.3 points, respectively).