

Consumer Survey

2017, February

Consumer confidence good - purchasing intentions are moderate, however

Consumers' confidence in the economy remained unchanged and strong. The consumer confidence indicator stood at 20.8 in February, having been 21.0 in January and 19.5 in December. In last year's February, the consumer confidence indicator received the value 7.7. The long-term average for the confidence indicator is 11.8. The data are based on Statistics Finland's Consumer Survey, for which 1,270 people resident in Finland were interviewed between 1 and 16 February.

Consumer confidence indicator (CCI)



1) average 10/1995 - 02/2017

All the four components of the consumer confidence indicator, that is, expectations of one's own and Finland's economy, general unemployment and the household's saving possibilities, remained roughly unchanged in February compared with January. Compared with the corresponding period last year, all the components of the indicator apart from saving possibilities improved clearly.

In February, consumers' views were very positive about Finland's economy and the assessment of unemployment development was also optimistic. Likewise, expectations concerning consumers' own economy were positive. Consumers considered their household's saving possibilities good over the next 12 months.

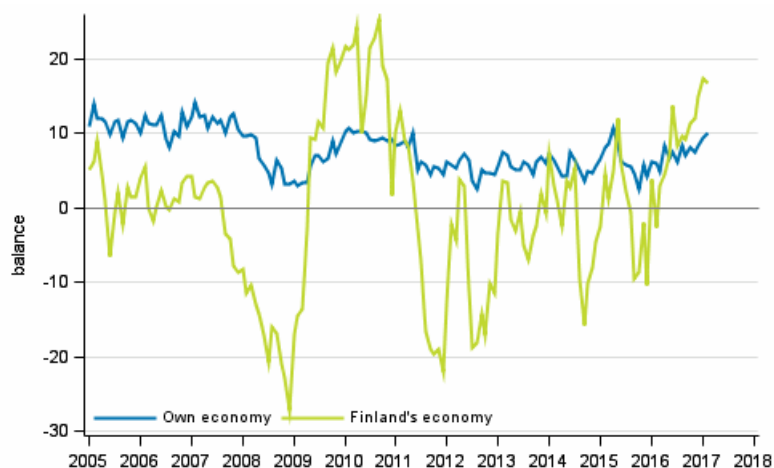
In February, consumers regarded the time favourable for taking out a loan, but not so much for saving or buying durable goods. In February, employed consumers felt personally less threatened by unemployment than usual.

Consumers' own and Finland's economy

In February, 47 per cent of consumers believed that Finland's economic situation would improve in the coming twelve months, while 14 per cent of them thought that the country's economy would deteriorate. Twelve months previously, the corresponding proportions were 29 and 29 per cent in February.

In all, 29 per cent of consumers believed in February that their own economy would improve while 13 per cent of them feared it would worsen over the year. One year ago the respective proportions were 25 and 15 per cent.

Consumers' expectations concerning their own and Finland's economy in 12 months' time



Unemployment and inflation

Altogether 39 per cent of consumers thought in February that unemployment would decrease over the year, while 21 per cent of them believed it would increase. Twelve months previously, these proportions were still gloomy at 13 and 54 per cent.

Fifteen per cent of employed persons reckoned in February that their personal threat of unemployment had lessened over the past few months, while 17 per cent thought it had grown. Twenty-seven per cent of employed persons felt that they were not threatened by unemployment at all.

Consumers predicted in February that consumer prices would go up by 1.6 per cent over the next 12 months. The predicted long-term average inflation rate is 2.2 per cent. Consumers estimated that inflation is currently 1.0 per cent. In February 2016, the estimate was clearly lower, 0.3 per cent.

Buying of durable goods

In February, 42 per cent of consumers thought the time was favourable for buying durable goods. In January, the respective proportion was still 49 per cent and the long-term average is 45 per cent. General intentions to spend money were moderate in February. Fewer households than usual, or fifteen per cent were fairly or very certain to buy a car and seven per cent a dwelling during the next 12 months. In February, 18 per cent of households were planning to spend money on renovating their dwelling within a year.

Saving and taking out a loan

Saving was considered worthwhile by 59 per cent of consumers in February. In all, 65 per cent of households had been able to lay aside some money and 79 per cent believed they would be able to do so during the next 12 months. In the long term, the average share of households that have saved or think they will be able to save is 60 and 74 per cent, respectively.

In February, 71 per cent of consumers regarded the time good for raising a loan. The long-term average proportion is 62 per cent. However, fewer households than normal, or 12 per cent of them, were planning to raise a loan within one year.

Consumer confidence by major region and population group

In February, consumers' confidence in the economy was strongest in Northern Finland and Greater Helsinki and weakest in Eastern Finland. Among population groups, upper-level salaried employees were most optimistic. The unemployed had the gloomiest expectations concerning economic development.

Consumers' views of the economy

	Average 10/1995-	Max. 10/1995-	Min. 10/1995-	02/2016	01/2017	02/2017	Outlook
A1 Consumer confidence indicator, CCI = (B2+B4+B7+D2)/4	11.8	22.9	-6.5	7.7	21.0	20.8	++
B2 Own economy in 12 months' time (balance)	8.3	14.1	2.3	6.0	9.4	10.2	+
B4 Finland's economy in 12 months' time (balance)	3.4	25.3	-27.1	-2.6	17.3	16.8	++
B6 Inflation in 12 months' time (per cent)	2.2	4.6	0.6	1.4	1.7	1.6	
B7 Unemployment in Finland in 12 months' time (balance)	-3.9	27.6	-51.1	-23.3	9.7	9.2	+
B8 Own threat of unemployment now (balance)	-1.4	7.6	-18.8	-6.2	2.1	1.3	+
C1 Favourability of time for purchasing durables (balance)	18.4	41.8	-14.2	19.5	25.2	16.2	=
C2 Favourability of time for saving (balance)	10.4	36.8	-19.6	4.5	10.4	11.3	=
C3 Favourability of time for raising a loan (balance)	17.5	42.0	-47.1	20.6	31.2	29.1	+
D2 Household's saving possibilities in the next 12 months (balance)	39.5	52.2	10.9	50.9	47.7	46.9	+

The **balance figures** are obtained by deducting the weighted proportion of negative answers from that of positive answers. The **consumer confidence indicator** (CCI) is the average of the balance figures for the CCI components. The balance figures and the confidence indicator can range between -100 and +100 – the higher (positive) balance figure, the brighter the view on the economy.

Explanations for **Outlook** column: ++ Outlook is very good, + Outlook is good, = Outlook is neutral, - Outlook is poor, -- Outlook is very poor. Deviation of balance from average has been compared to standard deviation.

EU results

The (seasonally adjusted) Consumer Survey results for all EU countries are released on the European Commission website: European Commission, DG ECFIN, [Business and Consumer Survey Results](#).

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1. Method of the Consumer Survey

The Consumer Survey is a telephone interview survey by means of which it is possible to measure Finns' images - assessments and expectations - of the general economic development and the financial situation of one's own household, and intentions to make major purchases, save money or take out a loan. In addition, the survey is a tool for finding out how common modern equipment are in households. For the Consumer Survey, answers are given by means of answer options (qualitative survey).

The first Consumer Survey interviews were conducted in November 1987. Until 1991, the survey was carried out twice a year, in May and November. In 1992, the survey times increased to four: the survey months were February, May, August and November. Since October 1995, the Consumer Survey data have been collected monthly on assignment and partial financing of the European Commission.

The population of the Consumer Survey comprises 4.5 million persons aged 15 to 84 and their 2.6 million households in Finland. A sample of 2,350 persons is drawn for the survey for every month. The same sample is also used for the data collection of the Finnish Travel Survey. The target area is the whole country and the respondents of the survey represent the population in Finland, according to age, gender, region of domicile and native language.

The interviews of the Consumer Survey are conducted from Statistics Finland's Telephone Interview Centre (CATI) during the first two or three weeks of the month. In February 2017, in all, 1,270 responses were gained, so the non-response rate of the survey was 46.0 per cent (incl. over-coverage). The non-response rate includes those who refused from the survey or were otherwise prevented from participating, as well as those who could not be contacted.

The response data of the Consumer Survey are expanded to the whole population with weighting coefficients. Weighting corrects the effects of non-response and improves the statistical accuracy of the data. The weights are established by using a calibration method and the probability of each observation to be included in the sample. The figures and series presented are not seasonally adjusted.

Appendix tables

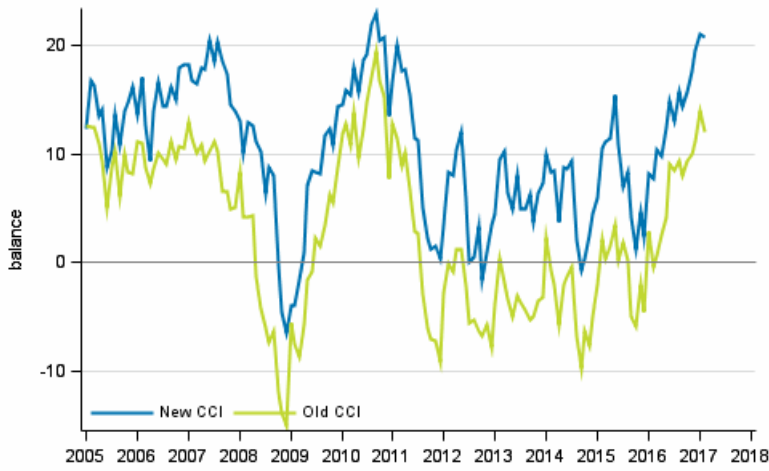
Appendix table 1. Consumers' views and intentions

	Average 10/1995-	Max. 10/1995-	Min. 10/1995-	02/2016	01/2017	02/2017	Outlook
A1 Consumer confidence indicator, CCI = (B2+B4+B7+D2)/4	11.8	22.9	-6.5	7.7	21.0	20.8	++
A2 Old CCI = (B1+B2+B3+B4+C1)/5	6.1	19.4	-15.0	-0.4	13.9	12.0	+
A3 Micro indicator = (B2+D1+D2)/3	25.4	33.4	9.5	29.9	30.6	29.4	+
A4 Macro indicator = (B4+B7)/2	-0.3	22.8	-39.1	-13.0	13.5	13.0	++
B1 Own economy now (balance)	3.8	9.8	-4.0	1.1	5.7	3.2	=
- Better (%)	23.3	30.6	16.4	19.4	24.9	23.6	
- Worse (%)	16.4	22.7	11.4	17.3	15.5	17.6	
B2 Own economy in 12 months' time (balance)	8.3	14.1	2.3	6.0	9.4	10.2	+
- Better (%)	25.7	33.4	18.2	24.7	28.9	29.1	
- Worse (%)	11.4	17.7	6.6	15.4	11.8	12.5	
B3 Finland's economy now (balance)	-3.2	29.5	-60.9	-26.1	12.1	13.4	+
- Better (%)	25.9	62.1	2.0	9.1	42.1	45.2	
- Worse (%)	28.8	88.5	4.2	51.3	17.1	16.9	
B4 Finland's economy in 12 months' time (balance)	3.4	25.3	-27.1	-2.6	17.3	16.8	++
- Better (%)	31.3	57.3	11.6	29.4	48.8	47.4	
- Worse (%)	22.9	57.3	6.0	29.0	14.0	13.6	
B5 Inflation now (per cent)	2.2	5.8	-2.0	0.3	1.3	1.0	
B6 Inflation in 12 months' time (per cent)	2.2	4.6	0.6	1.4	1.7	1.6	
B7 Unemployment in Finland in 12 months' time (balance)	-3.9	27.6	-51.1	-23.3	9.7	9.2	+
- Less (%)	29.8	60.8	6.4	13.1	41.4	39.5	
- More (%)	34.8	83.3	6.9	54.1	21.6	20.8	
B8 Own threat of unemployment now (balance)	-1.4	7.6	-18.8	-6.2	2.1	1.3	+
- Decreased (%)	12.9	20.0	5.3	10.2	14.4	15.1	
- Increased (%)	17.3	31.9	7.9	20.7	13.3	17.0	
C1 Favourability of time for purchasing durables (balance)	18.4	41.8	-14.2	19.5	25.2	16.2	=
- Favourable time (%)	44.6	62.4	29.6	46.1	49.4	42.1	
- Unfavourable time (%)	26.3	45.7	17.7	26.6	24.2	25.9	
C2 Favourability of time for saving (balance)	10.4	36.8	-19.6	4.5	10.4	11.3	=
- Good time (%)	57.8	80.7	33.4	52.8	57.2	58.9	
- Bad time (%)	36.7	58.5	15.5	43.0	38.7	36.4	
C3 Favourability of time for raising a loan (balance)	17.5	42.0	-47.1	20.6	31.2	29.1	+
- Good time (%)	62.1	78.2	13.3	62.5	72.7	70.9	
- Bad time (%)	30.9	83.4	12.1	30.7	21.5	21.9	
D1 Household's financial situation now (balance)	28.5	35.1	14.7	32.6	34.6	31.3	+
- Can save (%)	59.8	70.0	38.6	67.4	68.1	64.9	
- Uses savings or gets into debt (%)	6.8	10.1	4.5	6.4	6.0	8.2	

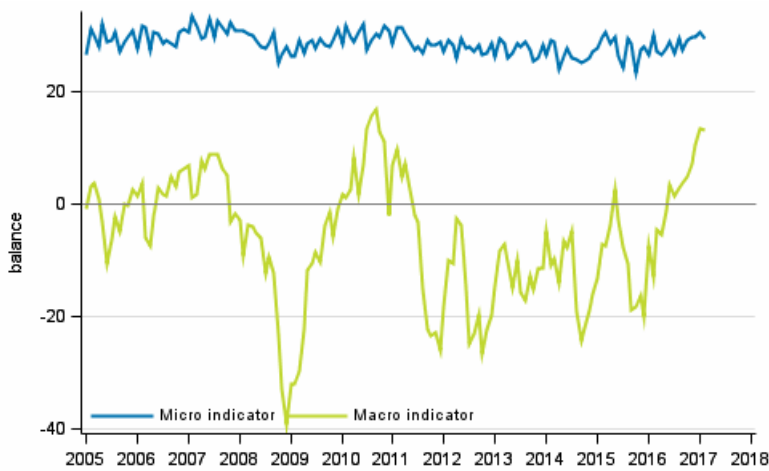
	Average 10/1995-	Max. 10/1995-	Min. 10/1995-	02/2016	01/2017	02/2017	Outlook
D2 Household's saving possibilities in the next 12 months (balance)	39.5	52.2	10.9	50.9	47.7	46.9	+
- Can save (%)	74.1	82.3	56.6	82.3	78.8	79.2	
- Cannot save (%)	24.1	40.3	16.5	16.5	20.0	19.6	
D5 Household's intentions to raise a loan in the next 12 months (% of households)	13.1	17.8	9.1	11.7	12.0	12.3	-
- Yes, certainly (%)	5.6	8.5	3.1	5.2	5.7	5.0	
- Possibly (%)	7.6	11.4	5.0	6.6	6.3	7.3	
E1 Spending on durables, next 12 months vs last 12 months (balance)	-8.9	-2.4	-18.2	-10.7	-11.8	-13.0	--
- More (%)	21.4	30.8	13.9	18.9	18.6	18.4	
- Less (%)	32.8	40.4	26.5	32.9	33.8	33.3	
E2 Intentions to buy a car in the next 12 months (% of households)	16.7	21.7	12.7	18.7	16.9	14.9	-
- Very likely (%)	8.5	12.1	5.1	10.1	7.1	7.2	
- Fairly likely (%)	8.2	10.4	5.3	8.6	9.7	7.7	
E4 Intentions to buy a dwelling in the next 12 months (% of households)	7.0	11.3	4.1	6.3	6.7	6.6	-
- Yes, certainly (%)	3.0	5.2	1.3	2.8	2.9	2.8	
- Possibly (%)	4.0	6.2	2.2	3.5	3.8	3.8	
E5 Intentions to spend money on basic repairs of dwelling in the next 12 months (% of households)	18.8	27.0	9.8	20.7	18.2	18.0	=
- Very likely (%)	12.5	19.0	5.0	12.7	11.6	13.3	
- Fairly likely (%)	6.4	9.1	3.2	8.0	6.6	4.7	

Appendix figures

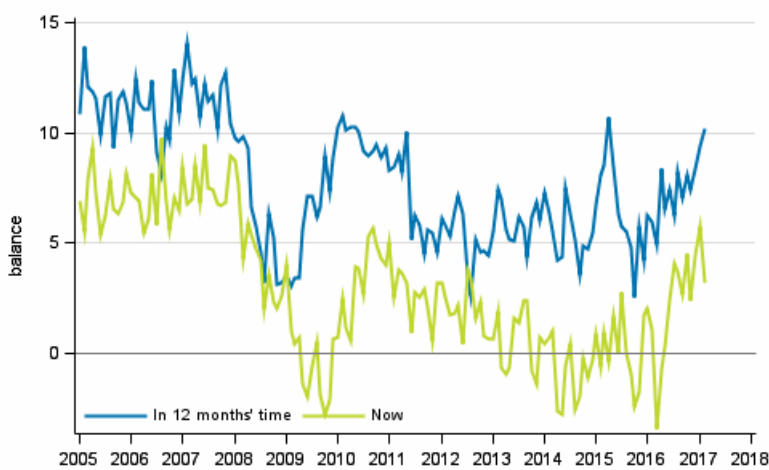
Appendix figure 1. Consumer confidence indicator (CCI)



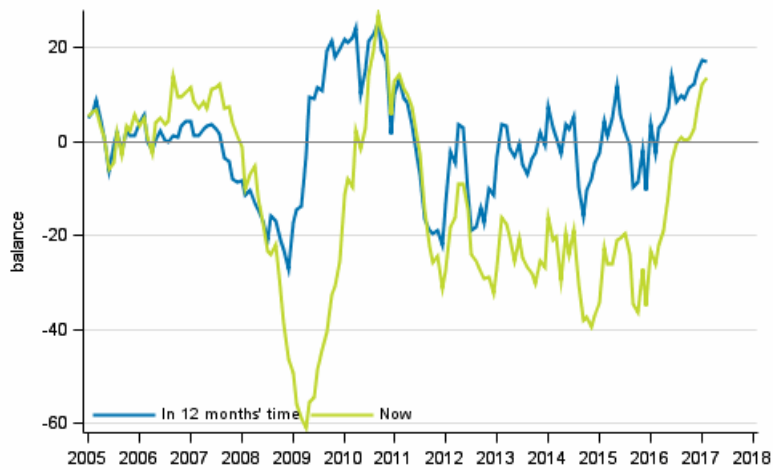
Appendix figure 2. Micro and macro indicators



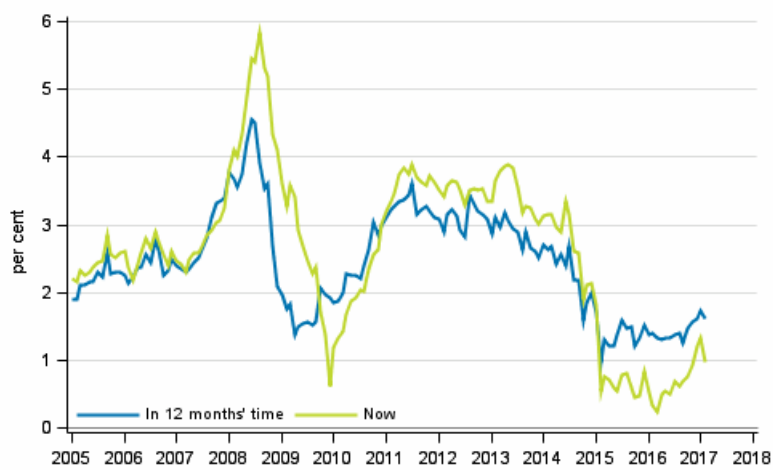
Appendix figure 3. Own economy



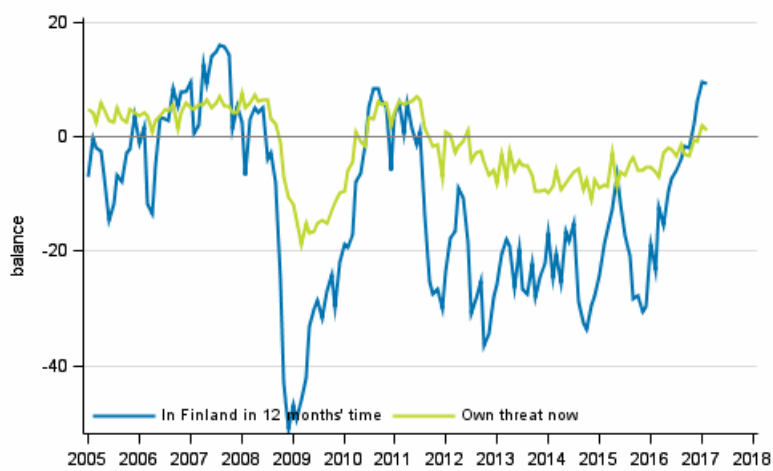
Appendix figure 4. Finland's economy



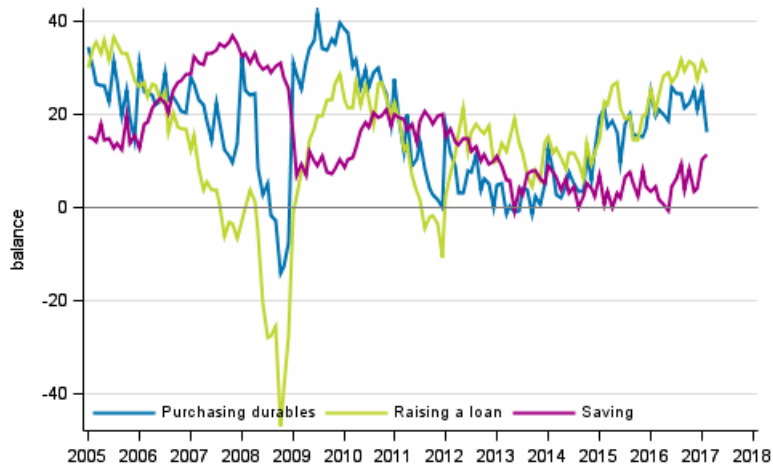
Appendix figure 5. Inflation



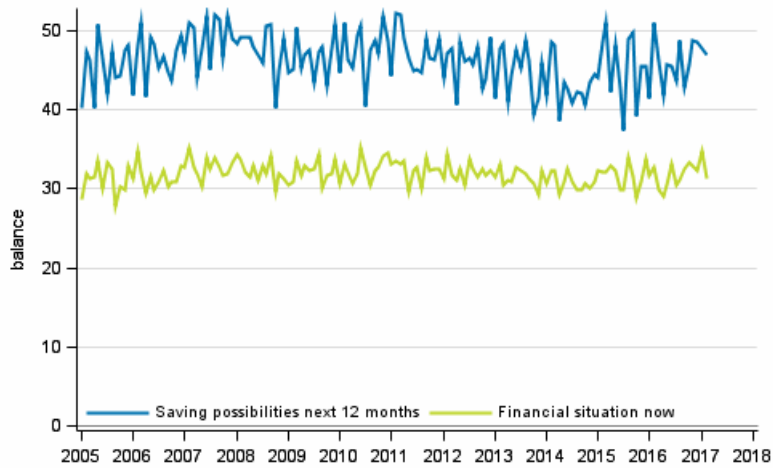
Appendix figure 6. Unemployment



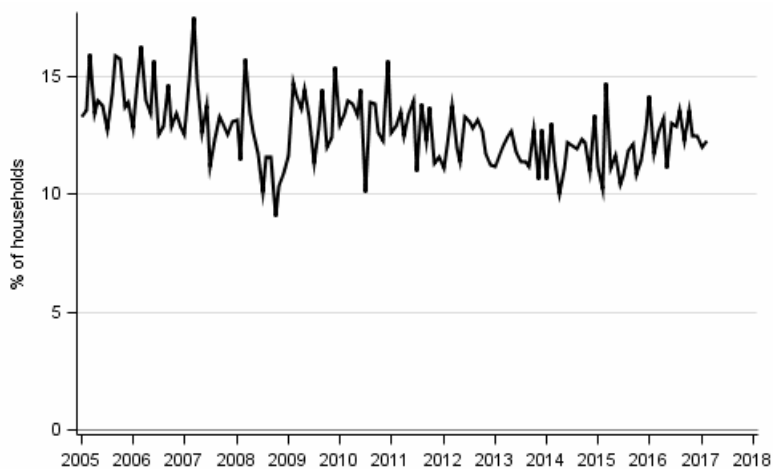
Appendix figure 7. Favourability of time for



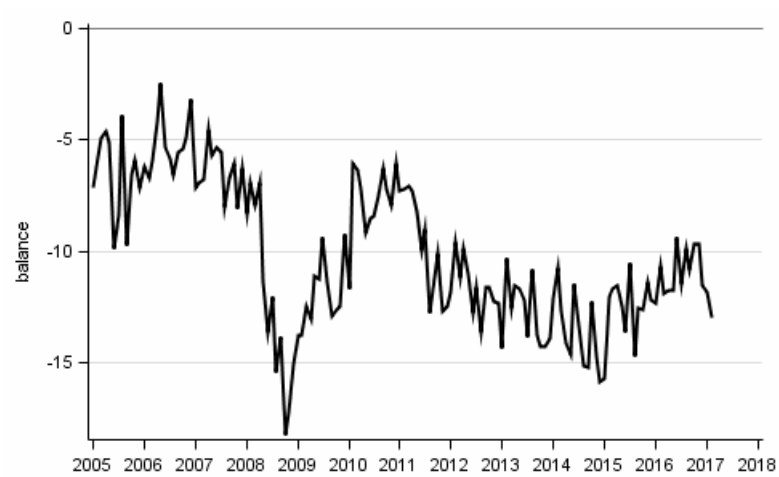
Appendix figure 8. Household's financial situation and saving possibilities



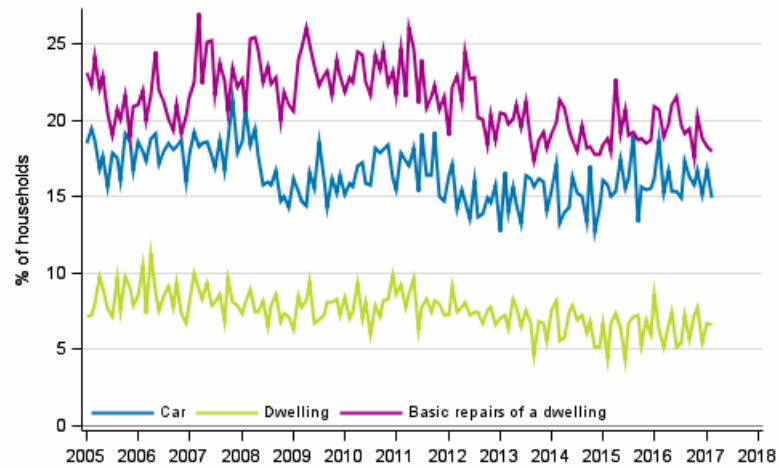
Appendix figure 9. Household's intentions to raise a loan, next 12 months



Appendix figure10. Spending on durables, next 12 months vs last 12 months



Appendix figure 11. Household's intentions to buy, next 12 months



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Source: Consumer Survey 2017, February. Statistics Finland