

## Composite Leading Indicators signal continued slowdown in OECD area

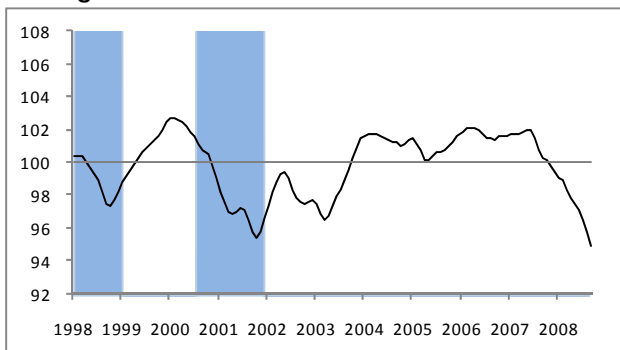
OECD composite leading indicators (CLIs) for August 2008 indicate a continued weakening outlook for all the major seven economies. The latest data for major non-OECD member economies tentatively point to expansion in Brazil, a downturn in China and Russia and a slowdown in India.

The CLI for the **OECD area** decreased by 0.7 point in August 2008 and was 4.9 points lower than in August 2007. The CLI for the **United States** fell by 0.5 point in August and was 5.3 points lower than a year ago. The **Euro area's** CLI decreased by 1.0 point in August and stood 6.4 points lower than a year ago. In August, the CLI for **Japan** decreased by 0.9 point, and was 2.8 points lower than a year ago.

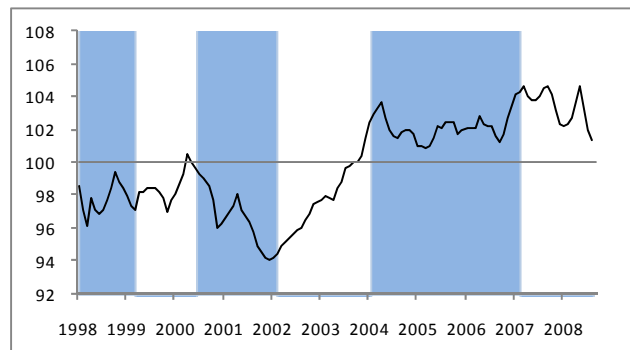
The CLI for the **United Kingdom** fell by 1.1 point in August 2008 and was 6.1 points lower than a year ago. The CLI for **Canada** decreased by 1.5 point in August and was 4.7 points lower than a year ago. For **France**, the CLI decreased by 0.8 point in August and was 5.6 points lower than a year ago. The CLI for **Germany** fell by 2.0 points in August and was 7.6 points lower than a year ago. For **Italy**, the CLI fell by 0.8 point in August and stood 5.9 points lower than a year ago.

The CLI for **China** decreased 0.7 point in August 2008 and was 3.1 points lower than a year ago. The CLI for **India** fell by 1.2 point in July 2008 and was 7.1 points lower than in July 2007. The CLI for **Russia** decreased by 2.3 points in August and was 0.4 point lower than a year ago. In August 2008 the CLI for **Brazil** increased by 1.0 point and was 3.4 points higher than a year ago.

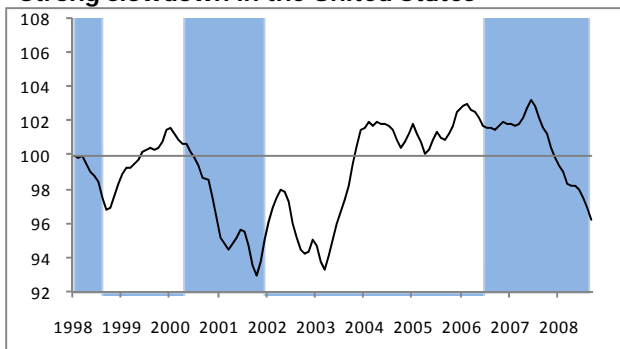
**Strong slowdown in the OECD area**



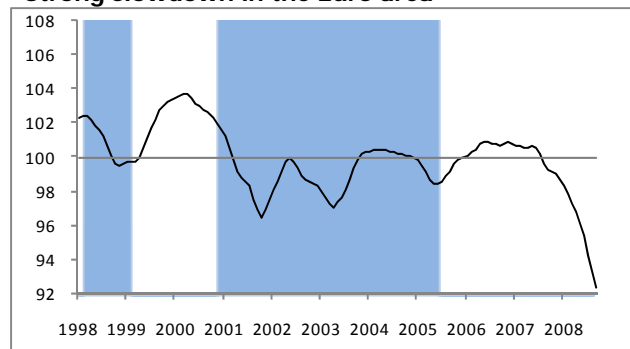
**Downturn in China**



**Strong slowdown in the United States**

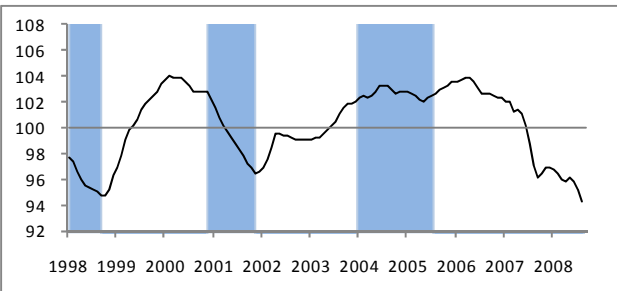


**Strong slowdown in the Euro area**

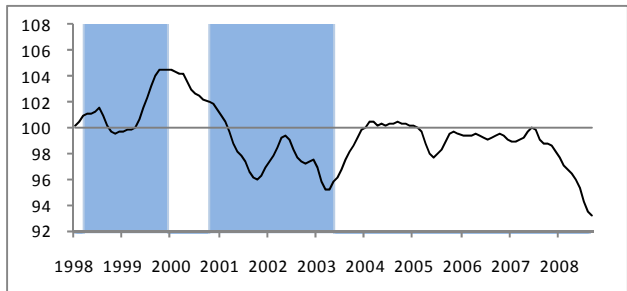


The above graphs show each country's growth cycle outlook based on the CLI which attempts to indicate turning points in economic activity approximately six months in advance. Shaded areas represent observed growth cycle downturns (measured from peak to trough) in the reference series (economic activity).

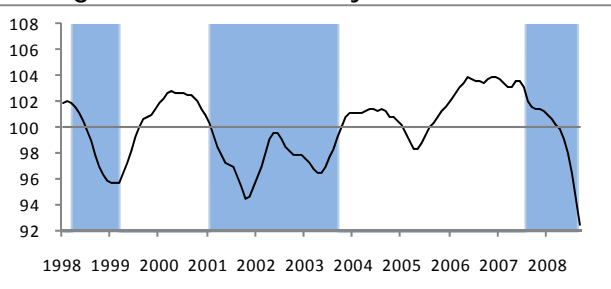
**Strong slowdown in Japan**



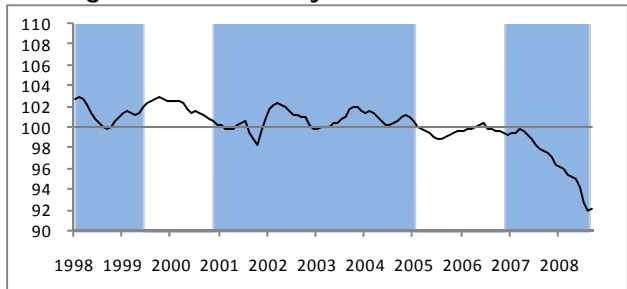
**Strong slowdown in France**



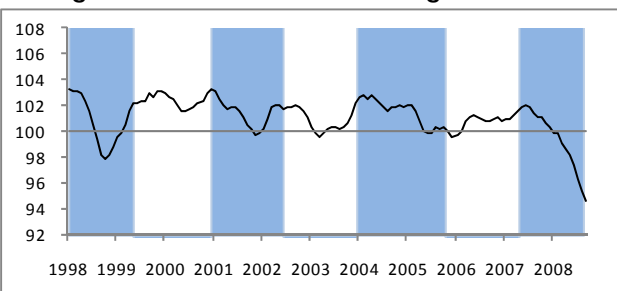
**Strong slowdown in Germany**



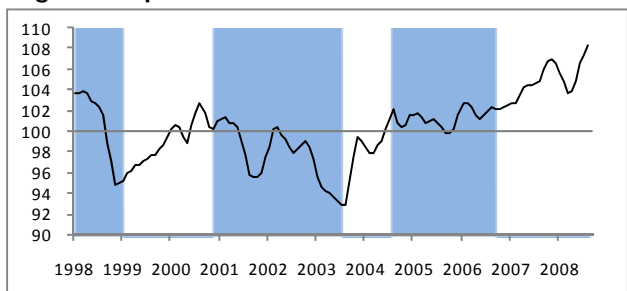
**Strong slowdown in Italy**



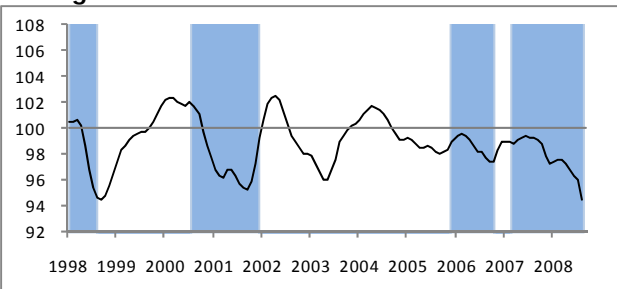
**Strong slowdown in the United Kingdom**



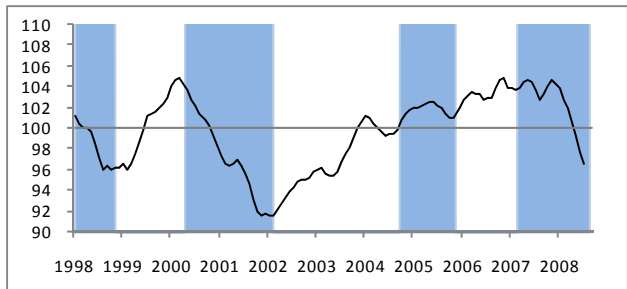
**Signs of expansion in Brazil**



**Strong slowdown in Canada**



**Slowdown in India**



**Downturn in Russia**



The above graphs show each country's growth cycle outlook based on the CLI, which attempts to indicate turning points in economic activity approximately six months in advance. Shaded areas represent observed growth cycle downturns (measured from peak to trough) in the reference series (economic activity).

Table 1: Composite Leading Indicators

	Ratio to trend, amplitude adjusted (long term average =100)					Change from previous month (points)					Year on Year change (points)	Growth cycle outlook**
	2008					2008						
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug		
<b>OECD Area</b>	97.9	97.5	97.1	96.5	95.8	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.6	-0.7	-4.9	strong slowdown
<b>Euro Area</b>	96.7	96.1	95.3	94.2	93.2	-0.5	-0.6	-0.7	-1.1	-1.0	-6.4	strong slowdown
<b>Major Five Asia*</b>	101.9	102.0	100.9	99.9	99.2	0.1	0.1	-1.0	-1.0	-0.7	-3.3	downturn
<b>Major Seven</b>	97.8	97.7	97.2	96.5	95.6	-0.2	-0.2	-0.4	-0.8	-0.9	-5.2	strong slowdown
<b>Canada</b>	97.2	96.7	96.3	96.0	94.5	-0.4	-0.4	-0.5	-0.3	-1.5	-4.7	strong slowdown
<b>France</b>	96.5	96.0	95.4	94.4	93.6	-0.3	-0.4	-0.7	-1.0	-0.8	-5.6	strong slowdown
<b>Japan</b>	95.8	96.1	95.9	95.2	94.3	-0.2	0.3	-0.2	-0.6	-0.9	-2.8	strong slowdown
<b>Germany</b>	99.9	99.1	98.1	96.5	94.5	-0.4	-0.7	-1.0	-1.6	-2.0	-7.6	strong slowdown
<b>Italy</b>	95.2	95.0	94.3	92.7	92.0	-0.2	-0.2	-0.7	-1.6	-0.8	-5.9	strong slowdown
<b>United Kingdom</b>	98.7	98.2	97.4	96.4	95.4	-0.4	-0.5	-0.8	-0.9	-1.1	-6.1	strong slowdown
<b>United States</b>	98.3	98.3	98.0	97.5	97.0	-0.1	0.0	-0.2	-0.5	-0.5	-5.3	strong slowdown
<b>Brazil</b>	103.9	104.8	106.5	107.3	108.3	0.2	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.0	3.4	signs of expansion
<b>China</b>	103.7	104.7	103.4	102.1	101.4	1.0	1.0	-1.3	-1.3	-0.7	-3.1	downturn
<b>India</b>	100.7	99.3	97.7	96.5		-1.2	-1.4	-1.5	-1.2		-7.1	slowdown
<b>Russia</b>	101.4	102.0	101.9	101.6	99.3	0.5	0.6	-0.1	-0.3	-2.3	-0.4	downturn

\* China, India, Indonesia, Japan and Korea.

\*\* Growth cycle phases of the CLI are defined as follows: expansion (increase above 100), downturn (decrease above 100), slowdown (decrease below 100), recovery (increase below 100). CLI data for 29 OECD member countries and 6 OECD non-member economies available at: [http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/default.aspx?datasetcode=MEI\\_CLI](http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/default.aspx?datasetcode=MEI_CLI)

Table 2: Historical Performance of CLI and Recent Cyclical Turning Points in the Reference Series

	CLI Historical Performance				Recent confirmed Turning Point dates in the reference series					
	Lead (+) / Lag (-) at all turning points				Dates marked with (P) are provisional turning points					
	start year	median	mean	st. dev.	peak	trough	peak	trough	peak	trough
<b>OECD Area</b>	1965	5	5	3.8	Aug 2000	Dec 2001				
<b>Euro Area</b>	1965	6	7	8.4	Dec 2000			May 2005 P		
<b>Major Five Asia*</b>	1995	4	6	6.3	Aug 2000	Feb 2002			Jun 2007 P	
<b>Major Seven</b>	1965	5	5	4.5	Dec 2000	Nov 2001				
<b>Canada</b>	1966	6	6	8.0	Aug 2000	Dec 2001	Dec 2005	Sep 2006 P	Mar 2007 P	
<b>France</b>	1967	7	7	5.7	Nov 2000	May 2003				
<b>Japan</b>	1959	8	7	5.4	Dec 2000	Nov 2001	Jan 2004	Jul 2005 P		
<b>Germany</b>	1961	3	4	4.3	Feb 2001	Sep 2003 P			Aug 2007 P	
<b>Italy</b>	1965	8	8	10.7	Dec 2000			Jan 2005 P	Dec 2006 P	
<b>United Kingdom</b>	1972	7	7	5.0	Jan 2001	Jun 2002	Jan 2004 P	Oct 2005 P	May 2007 P	
<b>United States</b>	1955	6	7	3.6	May 2000	Dec 2001			Jul 2006 P	
<b>Brazil</b>	1979	4	5	4.5	Dec 2000	Jul 2003	Aug 2004	Sep 2006 P		
<b>China</b>	1983	4	6	6.5	Jul 2000	Feb 2002	Feb 2004 P	Feb 2007 P		
<b>India</b>	1995	1	1	0.8	May 2000	Feb 2002	Oct 2004 P	Nov 2005 P	Mar 2007 P	
<b>Russia</b>	1994	10	7	9.3	Aug 2001	Aug 2003	Jan 2004 P	May 2005 P	Jul 2007 P	

\* China, India, Indonesia, Japan and Korea

P= provisional (see Methodological Notes on next page)

## Methodological Notes

The OECD CLI is designed to provide early signals of turning points (peaks and troughs) between upswings and downswings in the growth cycle of economic activity. The CLI is an instrument of analysis that has to be used carefully. Whilst it has a long-term average = 100, the CLI provides qualitative information on short-term economic movements rather than quantitative measures. Therefore, the main message of CLI movements over time is the direction up or down in the growth cycle where the cyclical phases are defined as follows: expansion – CLI increasing and above 100; downturn – CLI decreasing but above 100; slowdown – CLI decreasing and below 100; recovery – CLI increasing but below 100.

The CLIs are aggregated time series which summarise information contained in a number of key short-term economic indicators known to be linked to GDP. They have been compiled using a modified version of the method developed by the US National Bureau of Economic Research. The CLI system comprises a set of component series selected from a wide range of economic indicators all sharing the common property of indicating swings in future economic activity (224 series are used in total, about 5-10 for each country).

Cyclical turning points are directly captured in the (amplitude adjusted) de-trended or ratio to trend form of the CLI as compiled from its de-trended component series. The monthly change (point) of the CLI provides information on short-term movements while the change (point) from the same month previous year supplies short-term trend information (Table 1). In practice, turning points in industrial production or GDP have been found about six months (on average) after the signals of turning points had been detected in the CLI. The historical performance (lead/lag at turning points) of the CLIs for individual countries and areas are set out in Table 2.

In general, the monthly index of industrial production covering all industry sectors (IIP) is used for the reference series as a proxy measure for quarterly GDP, because historical turning points of IIP have coincided with those of GDP for most OECD countries. Recent confirmed turning points in the reference series are set out in Table 2, where the most recent ones are noted provisional until they have been verified against those of the quarterly GDP. This is done in order to ensure consistency between the final reference chronology and GDP.

Access to time series data and methodological information for *OECD Composite Leading Indicators (CLI)*, *standardised consumer* and *business confidence indicators*, *business tendency survey indicators* by sector and *consumer opinion survey indicators* is provided by the OECD Business Cycle Analysis Database available at the OECD web site at <http://stats.oecd.org/mei/default.asp?rev=2>

The **OECD-Total** covers the following 29 countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, and United States.

The **G7 area** covers Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom and United States.

The **Euro area** (only Euro area countries that are members of OECD) covers the following 12 countries: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain.

The **Major Five Asia area** covers China, India, Indonesia, Japan and Korea.

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**Next release: 7 November 2008**