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U.S. small business confidence edges lower, still near six-year high

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WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. small business sentiment weakened in June, pulling back from a six-year high because firms felt less confident the economy would improve in the coming months.

The National Federation of Independent Business said on Tuesday its Small Business Optimism Index fell 1.6 points to 95 last month.

Six of the NFIB's 10 indicators decreased, with about half of the decline in the overall index due to less confidence in future business conditions, the report said.

U.S. economic data have given conflicting signs of health this year, with output falling sharply across the economy in the first quarter while hiring has looked much more robust.

The NFIB index, often seen as a leading indicator for the economy, had risen for three straight months through May to its highest level since September 2007.

Only two of the index's 10 components improved last month, with gains in job creation plans and unfilled job openings. That squares with official data that last week showed the economy created 288,000 jobs in June, well above economists' expectations.

(Reporting by Moriah Costa; Editing by [Chizu Nomiya](#))



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