Maine Economic Indicators

May 2023

Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services

Office of the State Economist

Amanda Rector, State Economist

Denise St. Peter, Economic Analyst

Contents

1 Snapshot

Indicators in this section provide a summary of Maine's current economic status. Figures for Maine are compared to New England and the United States. Sources are given in the appendix.

Reference Period		Maine	New England	United States
2022	Total population	1,385,340	15,129,548	333,287,557
2021-2022	Annual population percent change	0.6%	0.05%	0.4%
2020-2022	Cumulative population percent change	1.6%	0.4%	0.5%
2021	Average earnings per job	$59,084	$80,834	$71,017
2020-2021	Average earnings per job percent change	4.6%	4.3%	5.0%
April 2023	Unemployment rate	2.4%	3.3%	3.4%
April 2023	Total private nonfarm employment	546,300	6,599,000	133,103,000
April 2023	Labor Force	675,400	8,005,700	166,688,000
April 2023	Labor Force Participation Rate	58.1%	N/A	62.6%

Annualized Percent Change from the previous quarter and Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR)

Real GDP	2022:Q1	2022:Q2	2022:Q3	2022:Q4	2022:Q1-2022:Q4
Maine	-0.5	-1.2	2.8	2.3	1.3
New England	-0.6	-2.8	2.7	2.0	0.6
United States	-1.6	-0.6	3.2	2.6	1.7
Total Personal Income	2022:Q1	2022:Q2	2022:Q3	2022:Q4	2022:Q1-2022:Q4
Maine	4.0	6.7	9.6	0.8	5.6
New England	3.3	2.9	4.4	9.8	5.6
United States	3.1	4.9	7.4	7.4	6.6
Per Capita Personal Income	2022:Q1	2022:Q2	2022:Q3	2022:Q4	2022:Q1-2022:Q4
Maine	3.6	6.0	8.7	-0.1	4.8
New England	3.4	2.8	4.1	9.5	5.4
United States	2.8	4.5	6.8	6.8	6.0
Wages & Salaries	2022:Q1	2022:Q2	2022:Q3	2022:Q4	2022:Q1-2022:Q4
Maine	7.4	10.6	-0.9	7.0	5.4
New England	6.0	3.3	5.1	6.5	4.9
United States	6.9	5.0	11.4	6.8	7.7

2 Annual Indicators

Indicators summarized below are updated annually on various release dates and provide a general summary of Maine's demographic and economic status.

| Reference Period		Maine	New England	United States
2022	Total population	1,385,340	15,129,548	333,287,557
2021-2022	Annual population percent change	0.6%	0.05%	0.4%
2020-2022	Cumulative population percent change	1.6%	0.4%	0.5%
2022	Births	12,030	146,423	3,688,179
2022	Deaths	17,973	149,549	3,443,099
2022	Net migration	14,125	13,421	1,010,923
2021-2022	Annual rate of total net migration, per thousand (Maine ranks 11th in the U.S.)	10.2	0.9	3.0
2021	Median age, years (American Community Survey)	44.7	41.0	38.8
2021	Associate degree: percent of population age 25 and above	10.6%	8.1%	8.8%
2021	Bachelor's degree: percent of population age 25 and above	22.2%	24.2%	21.2%
2021	Graduate or professional degree: percent of population age 25 and above	13.8%	19.0%	13.8%
2021	Percent of population below poverty level	11.5%	10.2%	12.8%
2021	Median family income	$82,842	$104,939	$85,806
2021	Median household income	$64,767	$82,987	$69,717
2021	Per capita personal consumption expenditures	$45,272	$50,154	$42,635
2021	Per capita disposable personal income	$50,559	$55,813	$47,915

3 Quarterly and Monthly Indicators

3.1 Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Maine's real GDP grew 2.3% at an annualized rate in the fourth quarter of 2022, ranking 25th in the U.S. (growth of 2.6%) and third in New England (growth of 2.0%). The industry sectors that contributed the most to Maine's fourth quarter growth were retail trade (+1.07 percentage points); professional, scientific, and technical services (+0.47 percentage points); and health care and social assistance (+0.44 percentage points). These gains were partially offset by declines in other industries including accommodation and food services (-0.63 percentage points); real estate and rental and leasing (-0.38 percentage points); and state and local government (-0.23 percentage points).

2022:Q4	Maine	United States
Nominal GDP (Current dollars)	$86.9 billion	$26.1 trillion
Real GDP (Chained 2012 Dollars)	$65.2 billion	$20.2 trillion

Real GDP (billions of chained 2012 dollars) - Maine
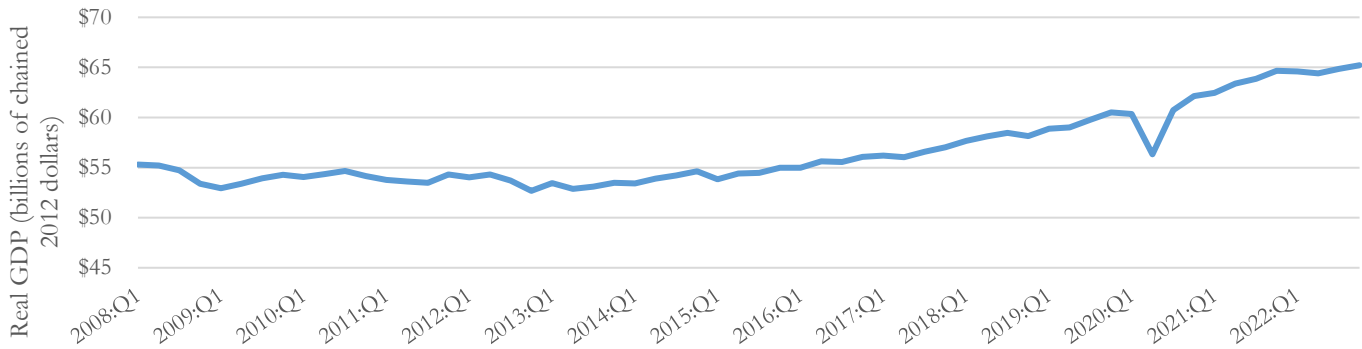
3.1.1 GDP Now from the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

GDPNow, which is reported by the Atlanta Fed, is "a running estimate of real GDP growth based on available data for the current quarter." This model uses a similar methodology to the one used by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis in their official GDP estimates and is revised each time the monthly source data is updated. The nowcast estimate for 2023:Q2 as of May 26, 2023, is that U.S. real GDP will **increase by 1.9 percent** at an annual rate. The sharp dip on May 26 is largely due to a decrease in net exports (-1.42 percentage points). This decrease was partially offset by an increase in consumer spending (+0.48 percentage points).

Evolution of Atlanta Fed GDPNow real GDP estimate for 2023: Q2
Quarterly percent change (SAAR)
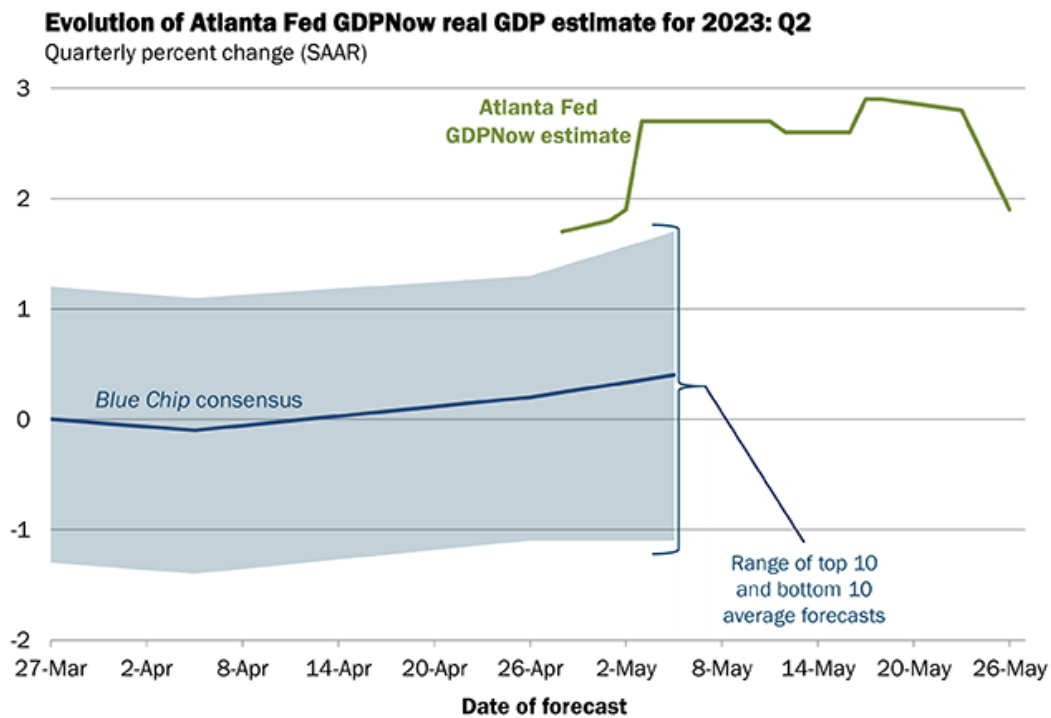
Sources: *Blue Chip Economic Indicators* and *Blue Chip Financial Forecasts*
Note: The top (bottom) 10 average forecast is an average of the highest (lowest) 10 forecasts in the *Blue Chip* survey.

3.2 Recession Indicators

NBER is the primary source in the United States that declares when recessions begin and end and defines a recession as a significant decline in economic activity that is spread across the economy and lasts more than a few months. Other recession indicators are used to estimate business cycles in real time but are not official sources for when recessions begin and end.

3.2.1 Real-time Sahm Rule Recession Indicator

The Real-time Sahm Rule Recession Indicator[1] signals a recession when the 3-month moving average of the national unemployment rate (U3) rises by at least 0.5 percentage points relative to its low in the previous 12 months. In April 2023, this indicator showed that the three-month average of national U3 was 0.00, equal to its 12-month low.

Shaded areas indicate U.S. recessions. Source: Sahm, Claudia fred.stlouisfed.org
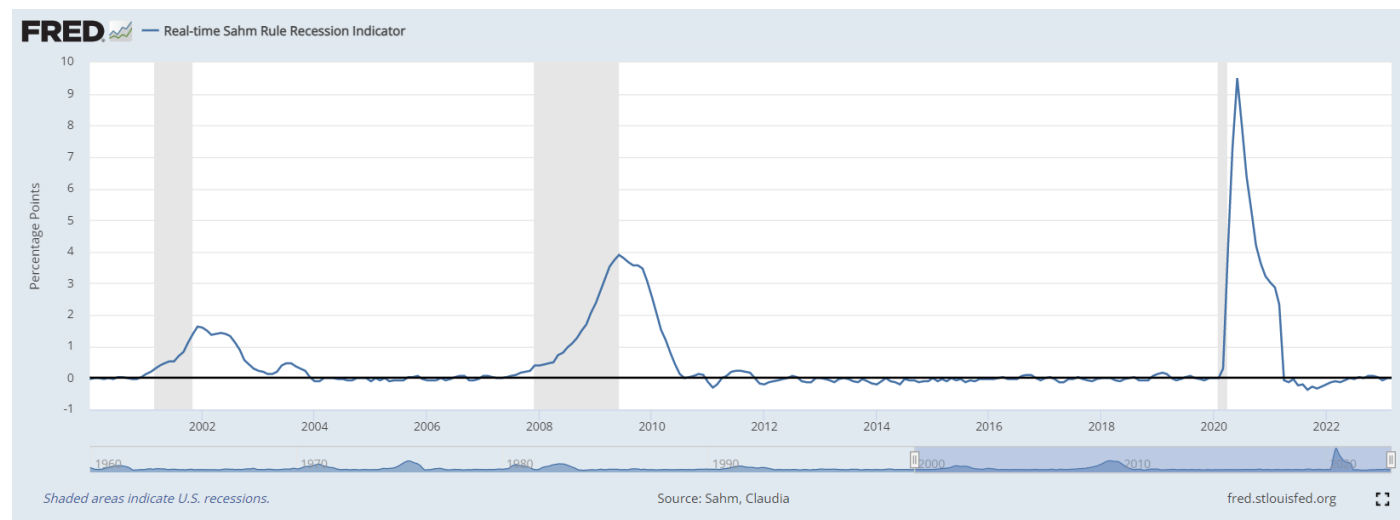
3.2.2 GDP-Based Recession Indicator Index

The GDP-Based Recession Indicator Index[2] is 7.6 percentage points (2022:Q4), down from 8.3 in the third quarter. The index ranges from 0 to 100, and values above 67 provide a historically reliable indicator that the economy is in recession. This index is calculated with a one quarter lag, which allows for extra insight and accounts for data revisions to make dependable inference. Therefore, the index does not get revised once it is published.


Source: Hamilton, James fred.stlouisfed.org

---
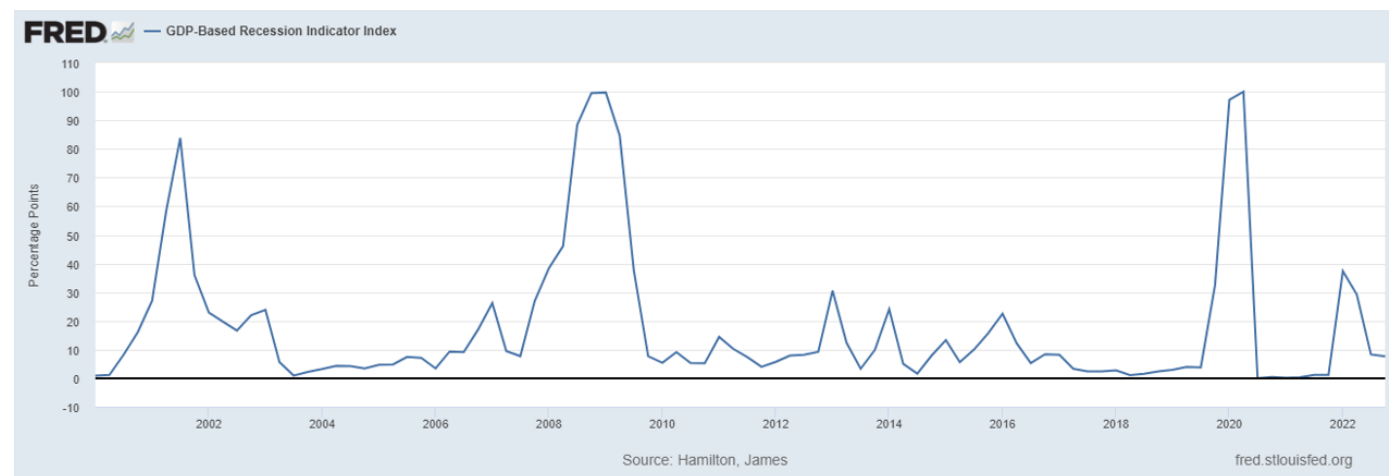
[1] Created by Dr. Claudia Sahm, Federal Reserve Board of Governors
[2] Created by Dr. James Hamilton, University of California San Diego

3.3   Labor Markets[3]

3.3.1   Unemployment Rate April 2023: 2.4%

The unemployment rate was 2.4% in April, the lowest rate since the Bureau of Labor Statistics began calculating unemployment rates for states in 1976, and down from 2.6% in March. The 3-month average unemployment rate from February to April was 2.6%, down from 3.0% for the three months ending in January. Maine's unemployment rate has been trending below the U.S. unemployment rate since early 2022.

Unemployment Rate (Seasonally Adjusted)
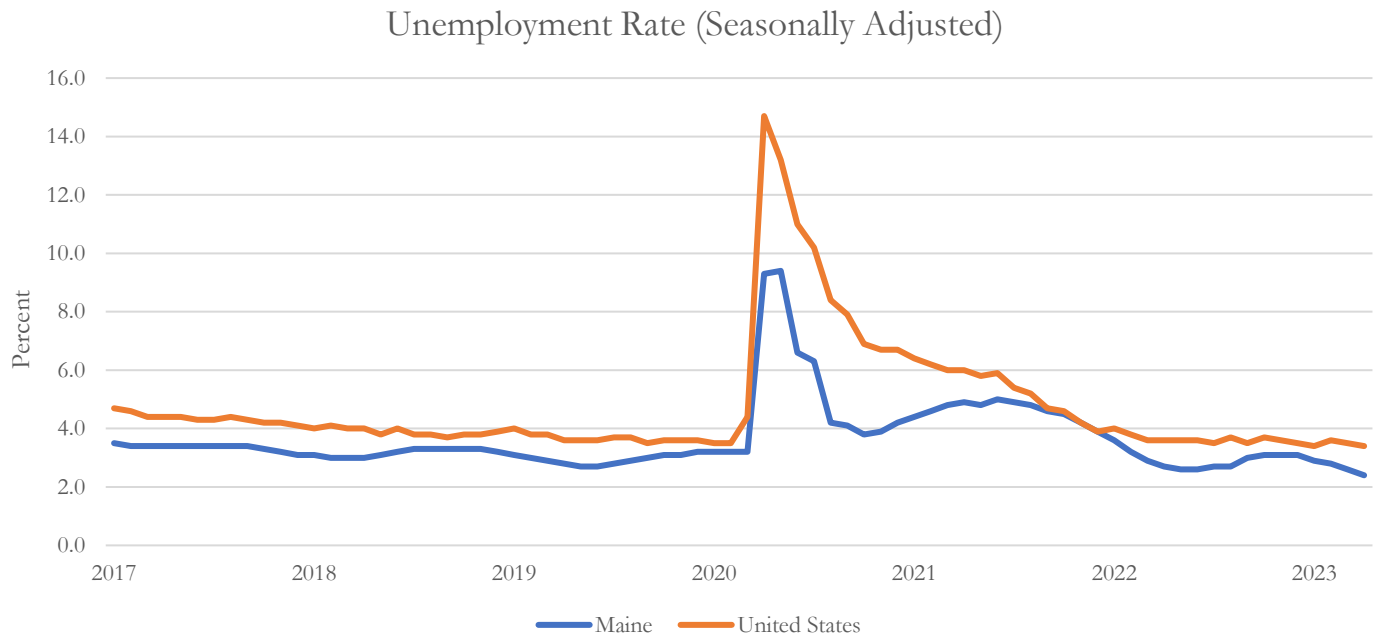
3.3.2   Labor Force Participation Rate April 2023: 58.1%

Labor force participation (LFP) was 58.1% in April, up 0.1% from March. Maine Department of Labor is continuing to track the divergence between payroll survey data and household survey data. Household survey data, the source of the labor force participation figures, may be underestimating the labor force.

The employment to population ratio (EPOP), an alternative measure of labor market activity which measures the total number of employed working-age adults divided by the total working-age population, was 56.7% in April, up from 56.5% in March but down from 57.4% in April 2022.

---

[3] The data for unemployment rates and labor force are derived from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program and data for nonfarm payroll jobs are derived from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program. The numbers presented below are estimates which vary month to month in either direction and are subject to substantial revision. The Maine Department of Labor cautions users to analyze general trends over several months as opposed to making conclusions based on changes month to month.

Labor Force Participation & Employment-Population Ratio (Maine)
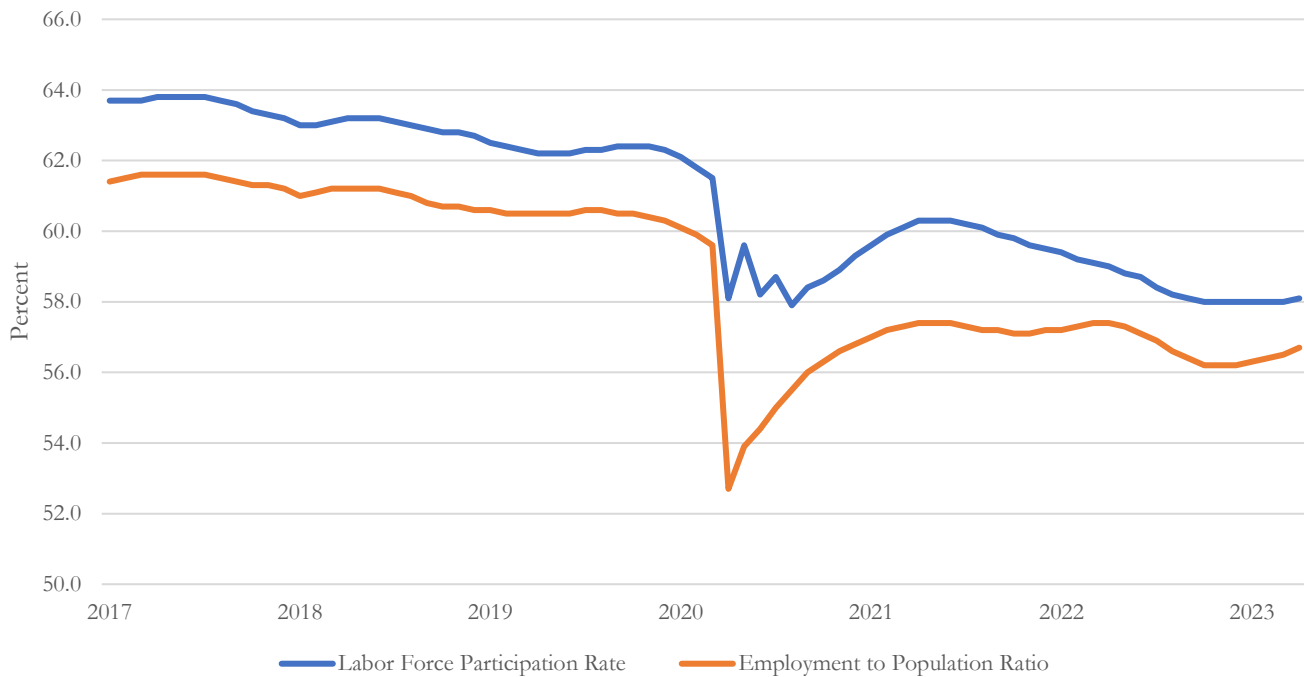
3.3.3   Total Nonfarm Payroll Job Estimates April 2023: 646,000

Seasonally adjusted nonfarm jobs increased by 800 from March. 600 of these jobs were added in the labor and hospitality industry. Overall job numbers have been relatively flat for the past six months. On an annual basis, nonfarm jobs are up 7,600 since April 2022 and up 8,900 from the prep-pandemic 2019 average.

Total Nonfarm Employment Maine (seasonally adjusted)
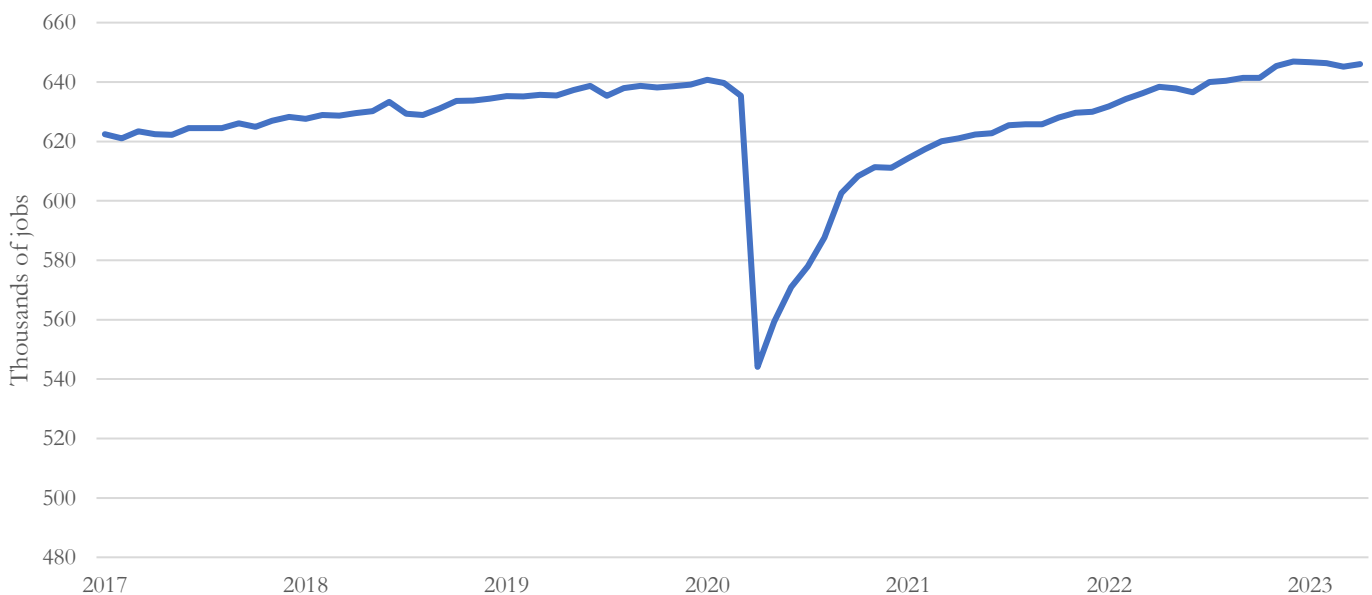
3.4   National inflation measures

3.4.1   Consumer Price Index vs. Personal Consumption Expenditures

There are two measures of inflation in the United States. The Consumer Price Index is released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and is based on surveys of urban consumers, while Personal Consumption Expenditures price index is calculated by the Bureau of Economic Analysis and based on surveys of what businesses are selling. Both are used officially for various federal purposes, although the Federal Reserve focuses on PCE in monetary policy decisions.

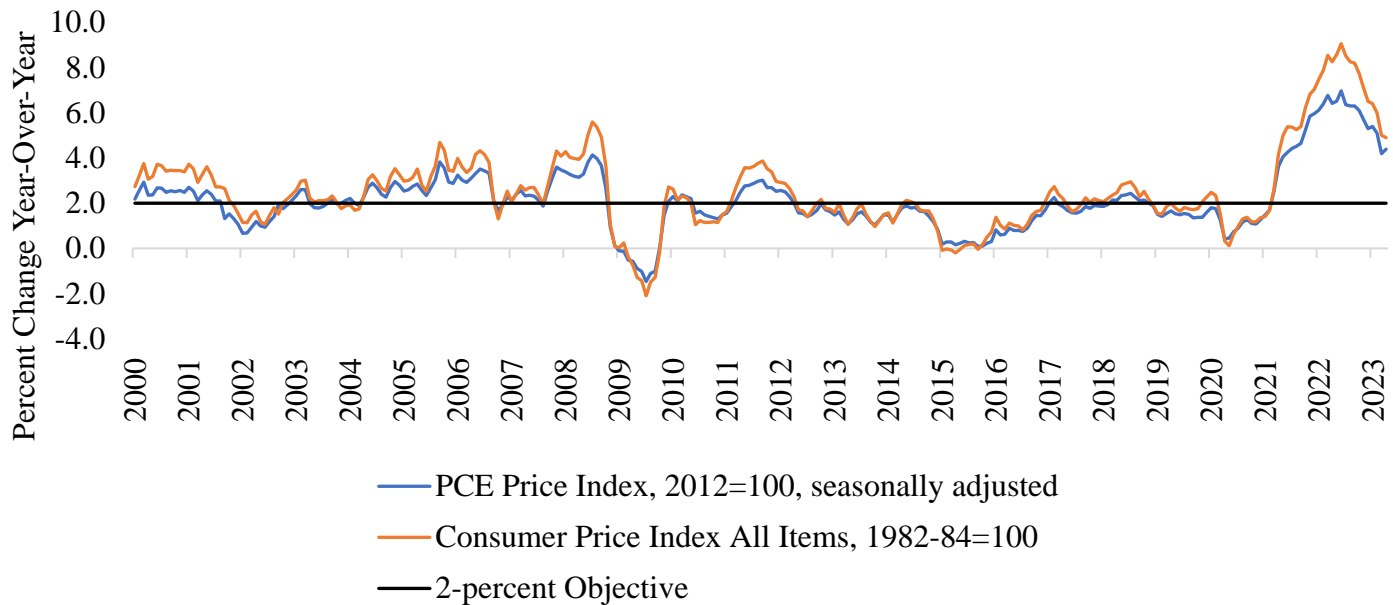In April, the PCE price index grew by 4.4% year-over-year, up from 4.2% in March. The CPI all-items index grew by 4.9% in April before seasonal adjustment, down from 5.0% in March. Growth in both indexes has decelerated considerably since June 2022, however both measures of inflation remain above the 2% Federal Reserve target.

Measures of inflation, Year-Over-Year Percent Change

PCE Price Index, 2012=100, seasonally adjusted

Consumer Price Index All Items, 1982-84=100

2-percent Objective

3.4.2   Expenditure categories of the CPI

The CPI for all urban consumers increased 4.9% year-over-year in April and 0.4% from a month prior. Shelter (+0.4%) was again the largest contributor to the monthly all-items increase, followed by used cars and trucks (+4.4%) and gasoline (+3.0%).

The energy index was up 0.6% month-to-month in April, after declining 3.5% between February and March. This index remains down 5.1% from April 2022. The food index (0.0%) was unchanged for the second month in a row and is at 7.7% year-over year.

The core index, which excludes food and energy, increased 5.5% year-over-year and 0.4% since March.

Table 1. Percent Change in Consumer Price Index by Expenditure Category	Year-Over-Year (Not seasonally adjusted)		Month-Over-Month (Seasonally adjusted)	
	Mar-23	**Apr-23**	**Mar-23**	**Apr-23**
All items	5.0	4.9	0.1	0.4
Food	8.5	7.7	0.0	0.0
Energy	-6.4	-5.1	-3.5	0.6
All items less food and energy	5.6	5.5	0.4	0.4
Commodities (less food and energy)	1.5	1.5	0.2	0.6
Household furnishings and supplies	5.8	5.8	0.4	-0.4
Apparel	3.3	3.3	0.3	0.3
Transportation commodities (less motor fuel)	-1.8	-1.8	0.0	1.5
Medical care commodities	3.6	3.6	0.6	0.5
Recreation commodities	3.2	3.2	0.2	0.3
Education and communication commodities	-10.2	-10.2	-0.5	-0.2
Alcoholic beverages	4.5	4.5	0.1	0.5
Other goods	6.9	6.9	0.5	0.2
Services (less energy)	7.1	7.1	0.4	0.4
Shelter	8.2	8.2	0.6	0.4
Water and sewer and trash collection	5.4	5.4	0.3	0.3
Medical care services	1.0	1.0	-0.5	-0.1
Transportation services	13.9	13.9	1.4	-0.2
Recreation services	5.9	5.9	0.0	0.7
Education and communication services	3.3	3.3	0.3	0.1
Other personal services	5.3	5.3	0.5	1.5

3.5   Energy

3.5.1   Gasoline

The average price of a gallon of gasoline in New England was $3.643 on May 29, $0.03 higher than a month prior and $1.16 lower than the same week of 2022. For all weeks in May, the average price of gasoline was about $0.08 higher than the April average.

New England - All Grades and Formulations Gasoline Price Per Gallon
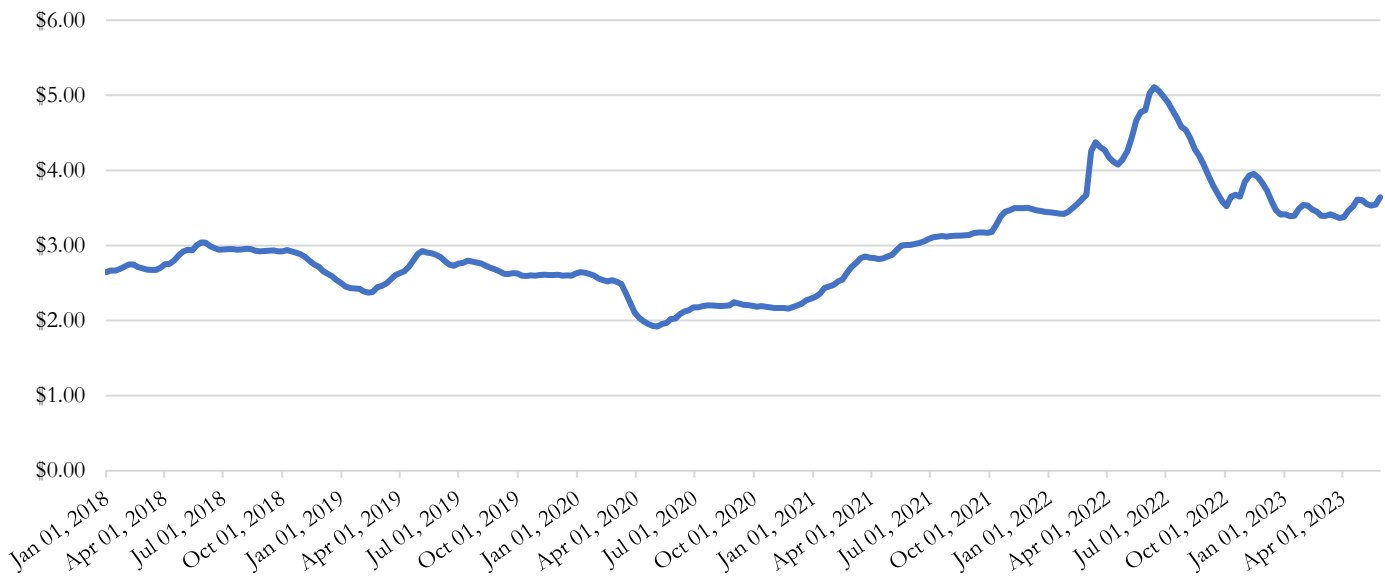
3.5.2   Brent Spot Prices

The weekly Brent spot price averaged $75.73 for the month of May and was at $76.48 for the week ending May 26, 2023. The Brent spot price decreased by $4.92 since the week ending April 28.

Weekly Brent Spot Price - Dollars per Barrel

3.6   Housing

3.6.1   Sales

Home sales decreased by 30.5% in April 2023 compared to April 2022. All counties except for Androscoggin had decreased sales during the month compared to last year, and Androscoggin's increase in the number of sales was due to just one home sale. The three-month rolling average of February to April continues to show a negative change in the number of sales in all counties when compared to the same three months of 2022.

The median sales price in Maine was $367,500 in April, an increase of 8.9% from March and an increase of 6.2% year-over-year. While the state median price continues to rise, there is considerable variation by county. Six counties (Aroostook, Hancock, Lincoln, Piscataquis, Sagadahoc, and Washington) are showing declines in median prices compared to 2022. These declines hold for both the month of April as well as for the three-quarter rolling average.

| April 2023 Sales				
Geography	No. of Units Sold	One Year Change (Units)	Median Sale Price	One Year Change (Price)
Androscoggin	61	1.7%	$311,500	10.8%
Aroostook	37	-46.4%	$150,000	-6.3%
Cumberland	174	-30.4%	$563,350	3.8%
Franklin	20	-13.0%	$335,000	73.1%
Hancock	36	-21.7%	$337,000	-11.9%
Kennebec	65	-40.4%	$301,000	1.3%
Knox	23	-30.3%	$515,000	22.6%
Lincoln	18	-48.6%	$315,000	-16.0%
Oxford	51	-16.4%	$330,500	18.0%
Penobscot	83	-29.1%	$244,900	11.3%
Piscataquis	17	-22.7%	$155,000	-12.7%
Sagadahoc	18	-30.8%	$347,500	-8.5%
Somerset	24	-35.1%	$219,500	41.6%
Waldo	17	-57.5%	$330,000	7.3%
Washington	23	-43.9%	$175,000	-10.3%
York	127	-27.0%	$490,000	8.1%
Maine	**794**	**-30.5%**	**$367,500**	**6.2%**

3.6.2   House Price Index

In the first quarter of 2023, Maine's year-over-year growth in the house price index (HPI)[4] was 8.8%, slower than previous quarters, but more than double the U.S. growth (4.3%) and considerably higher than the New England growth (6.2%). On a seasonally-adjusted basis, Maine's growth was the third highest in the nation, below only South Carolina (9.5%) and North Carolina (9.4%). On a seasonally adjusted quarterly basis, Maine's house price index increased 1.4% from the fourth quarter of 2022, compared to 2.1% in New England and 0.5% in the U.S.

---

[4] According to the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), the HPI "measures average price changes in repeat sales or refinancing on the same properties."

Among Maine's metropolitan statistical areas, Lewiston-Auburn grew more slowly than the state, at 4.9% year-over-year, compared to 11.8% in Portland-South Portland and 15.1% in Bangor. Maine's nonmetropolitan areas collectively grew 11.3% year-over-year.

Reference Period		Maine	New England	United States
2022:Q1-2023:Q1	HPI percent change from previous year	8.8%	6.2%	4.3%

Percent Changes, Year-over-year in FHFA House Price Index (not seasonally adjusted)
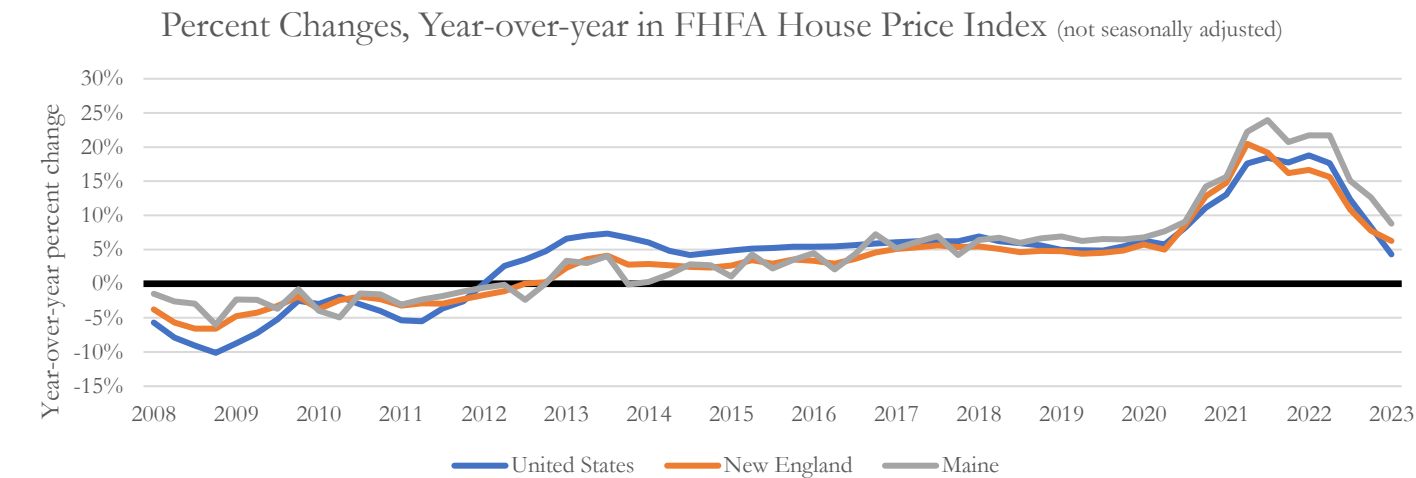
3.6.3   Inventory

There were 1,921 active listings of single-family and condo homes in Maine in April. Since inventory levels have a defined seasonal pattern, it is most useful to look at changes year-over-year. While inventory remains at historically low levels, the number of active listings in April 2023 was up about 14% over the same month in 2022.

Housing Inventory: Active Listing Count in Maine
(not seasonally adjusted)
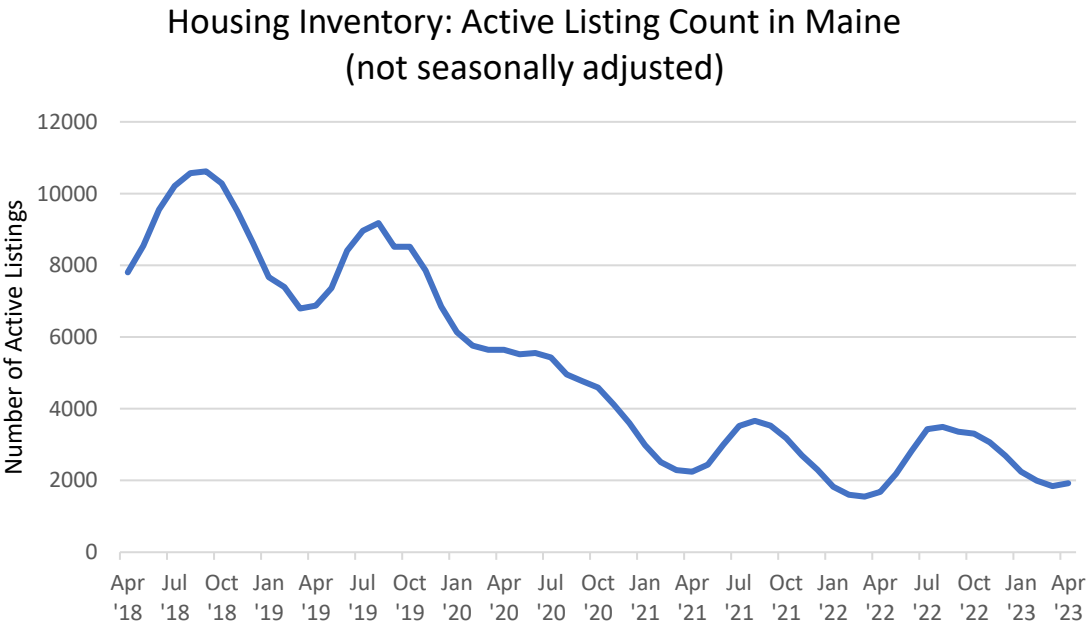
3.7   Sentiment

The Index of Consumer Sentiment from the University of Michigan was down 6.8% in May from the prior month but up 1.4% year-over-year. The Small Business Optimism Index, as measured by the National Federation of Independent Businesses, was down 1.2% in April and down 4.5% over the past 12 months.
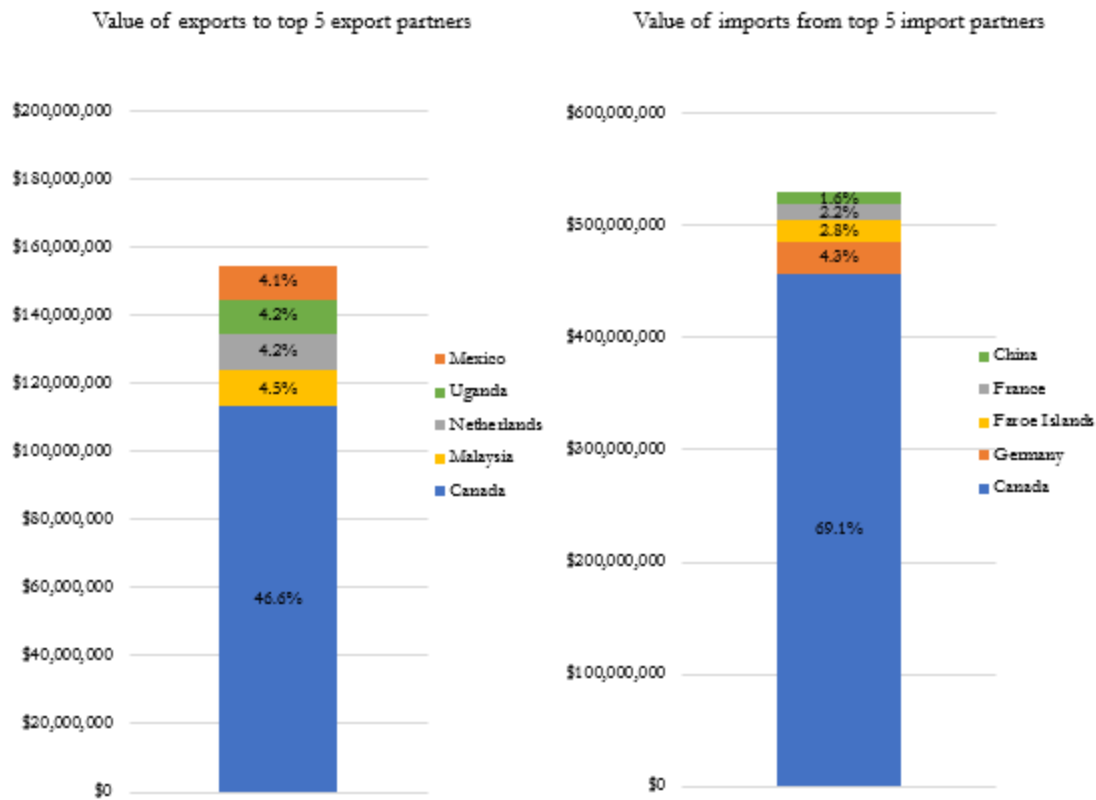
Consumer sentiment had been trending up since its all-time low in June 2022, but has now lost about half of those gains. Inflation outlook improved slightly and perception of personal finances was unchanged. However, there were significant declines in short- and long-term economic outlook, mirroring the 2011 debt ceiling crisis. Labor quality was the top issue facing small businesses, closely followed by inflation.

## Consumer Sentiment and Small Business Optimism Indexes
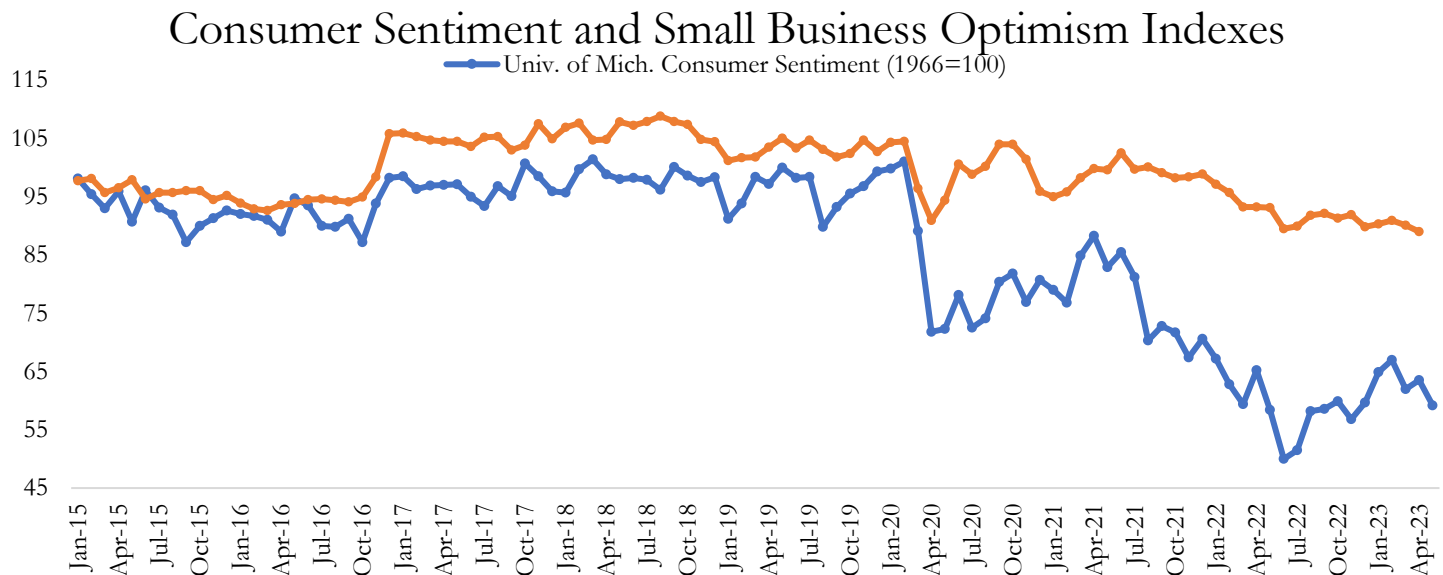
3.8   Trade Outlook

3.8.1   Exports and trade partners

In March 2023, total exports were down 6.7% in Maine, up 14.7% in New England, and up 2.8% nationwide compared to March 2022. Year-over-year exports have been volatile since early 2021. Maine's top trade partner was Canada, which accounted for 69% of imports and 47% of exports.

Value of exports to top 5 export partners

Legend:
- Mexico
- Uganda
- Netherlands
- Malaysia
- Canada

Labeled percentages: 4.1%, 4.2%, 4.2%, 4.5%, 46.6%

Value of imports from top 5 import partners

Legend:
- China
- France
- Faroe Islands
- Germany
- Canada

Labeled percentages: 1.6%, 2.2%, 2.8%, 4.3%, 69.1%

Similar to the nation, Maine's trade deficit has grown in recent months as the U.S. dollar has strengthened relative to foreign currencies, which makes imports from other countries cheaper and more attractive. Conversely, a strong U.S. dollar can lead to decreasing exports, as goods and services from the U.S. are more expensive for international consumers. These dynamics contribute to a large trade deficit, both in Maine and the U.S. After peaking in August 2022 at -$471 million, the six month average trade deficit was -$375 million as of March 2023.

Maine exports vs. imports, 6-month moving average

Legend: Exports, Imports

15
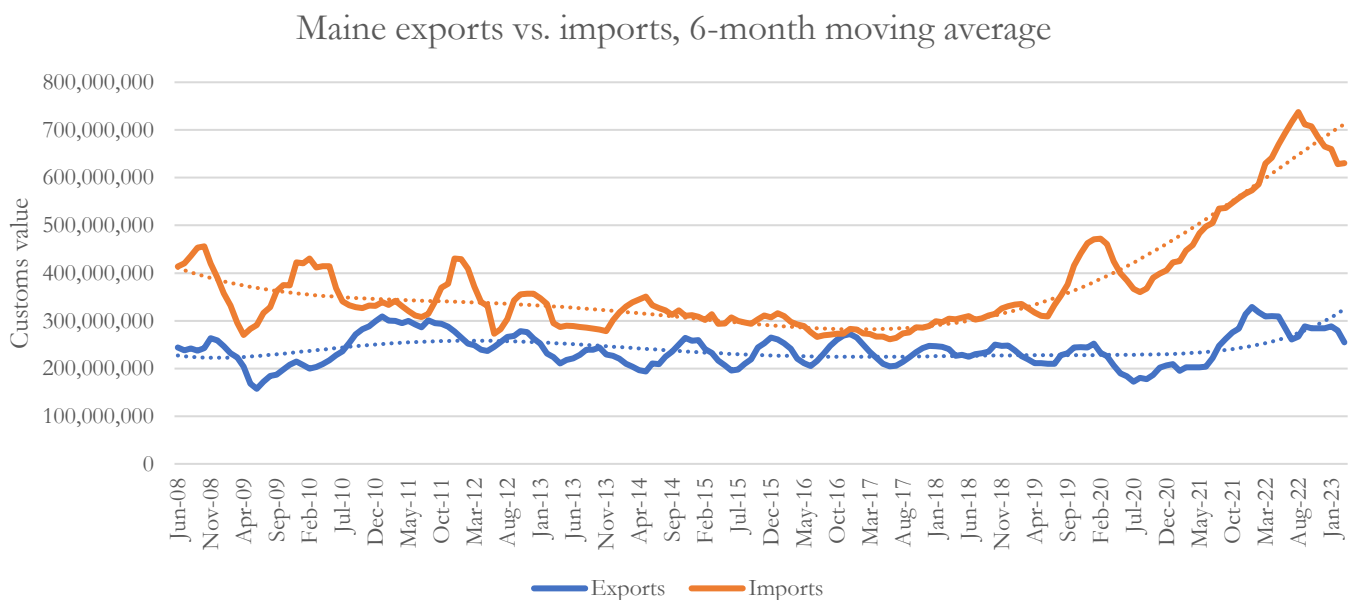
3.8.2   Real Trade-Weighted Value of the Dollar

The Real Trade-Weighted Value of the Dollar index calculates the inflation-adjusted value of the US Dollar against the currencies of countries with which the state trades, which allows for a more precise analysis of how movements in exchange rates affect demand for states' imports. In March 2023, Maine's RTWVD 6-month change was -0.5%, the first time it has been negative since June 2021.

Real Trade-Weighted Value of the Dollar: Maine, 6-month change
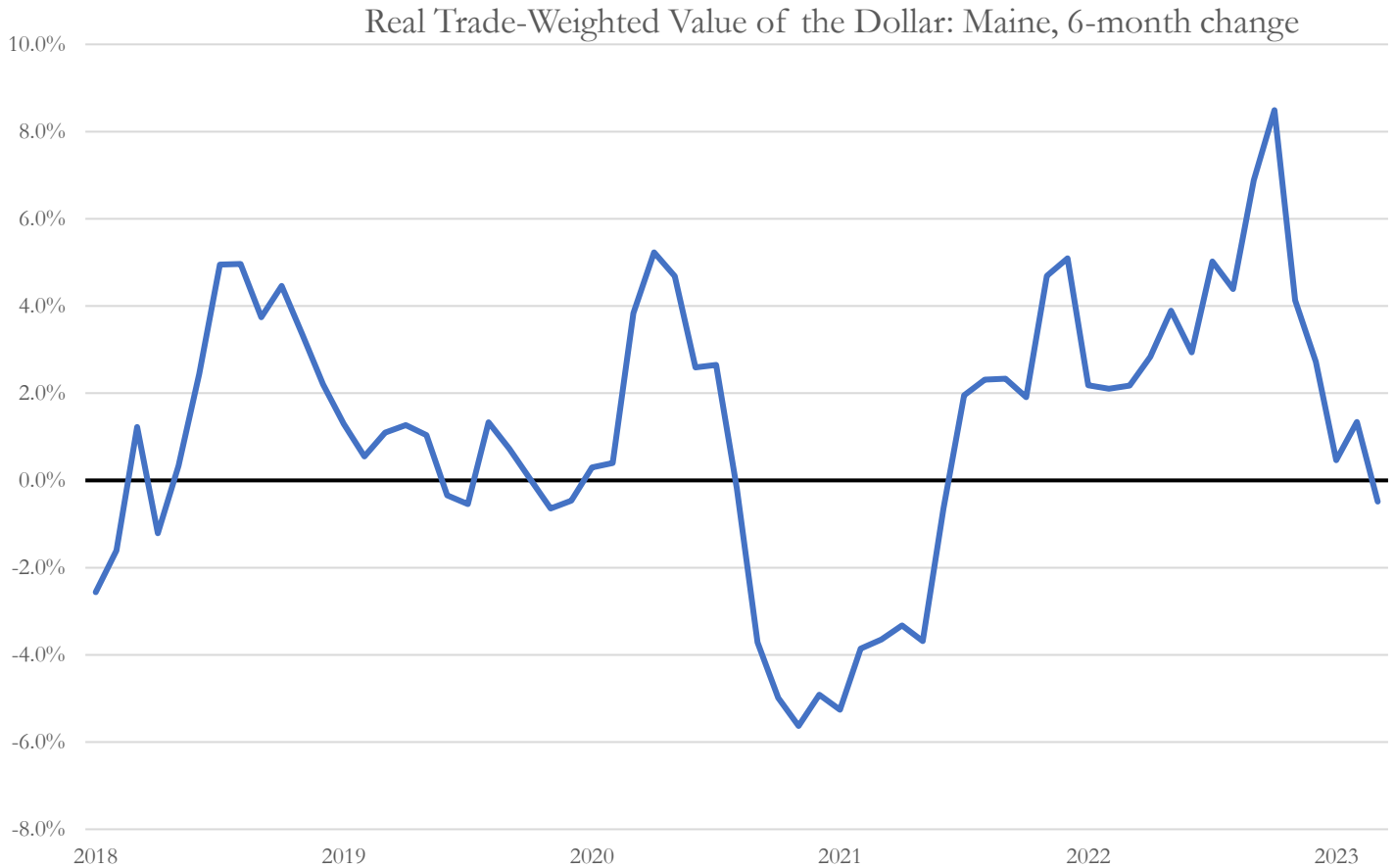
4 Appendix

4.1.1 Data Sources

Indicator	Source	Reference Period	Release Date
Population: estimates and percent change	Census Bureau – Pop. Ests.	2022	December 22, 2022
Net migration: total and percent change	Census Bureau – Pop. Ests.	2022	December 22, 2022
Median age	Census Bureau – ACS 1-year	2021	September 15, 2022
Educational attainment	Census Bureau – ACS 1-year	2021	September 15, 2022
Poverty level	Census Bureau – ACS 1-year	2021	September 15, 2022
Income	Census Bureau – ACS 1-year	2021	September 15, 2022
Per capita personal consumption expenditure	U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis	2021	October 6, 2022
Per capita personal income	U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis	2021	September 30, 2022
Average earnings per job	U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis	2021	September 30, 2022
Gross domestic product	U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis	2022:Q4	March 31, 2023
GDPNow	Atlanta Fed	2023:Q2	May 26, 2023
Real-time Sahm Rule Recession Indicator	Sahm, Claudia/FRED	Apr. 2023	May 9, 2023
GDP-Based Recession Indicator Index	Hamilton, James/FRED	2022:Q4	April 27, 2023
Personal income: total, per capita, and wages and salaries	U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis	2022:Q4	March 31, 2023
Unemployment rate	U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics	Apr. 2023	May 19, 2023
Labor force participation	U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics	Apr. 2023	May 19, 2023
Nonfarm payroll job estimates	U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics	Apr. 2023	May 19, 2023
Consumer Price Index	U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics	Apr. 2023	May 10, 2023
PCE Price Index	U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis/FRED	Apr. 2023	May 26, 2023
Brent Spot Prices	Energy Information Administration	May 19, 2023	May 25, 2023
Gasoline	Energy Information Administration	May 29, 2023	May 30, 2023
House price index	Federal Housing Finance Agency	2023:Q1	May 30, 2023
Housing: Units and Median Sale Price	Maine Association of REALTORS®	Apr. 2023	May 18, 2023
Housing Inventory – Active Listing Count in Maine	Realtor.com via FRED	Apr. 2023	May 4, 2023
Index of Consumer Sentiment	University of Michigan Survey of Consumers	May 2023	May 30, 2023
Small Business Optimism Index	National Federation of Independent Businesses	Apr. 2023	May 30, 2023
Imports & Exports	USA Trade Online	Mar. 2023	May 4, 2023
Real Trade-Weighted Value of the Dollar	Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas	Mar. 2023	May 31, 2023

5 Glossary

Average earnings per job: Total earnings, which is the sum of wages and salaries, supplements to wages and salaries, and proprietors' income, divided by total full-time and part-time employment.

Compound Annual Growth Rate: $= \left(\frac{Final\ Value}{Initial\ Value}\right)^{\frac{1}{No.\ of\ Periods}} - 1$

Gross Domestic Product: The measure of the market value of all final goods and services produced within a state in a particular period of time. GDP by state differs from national GDP for the following reasons: GDP by state excludes and national GDP includes the compensation of federal civilian and military personnel stationed abroad and government consumption of fixed capital for military structures located abroad and for military equipment, except office equipment. **Real GDP**: Real GDP by state is an inflation-adjusted measure of each state's gross product that is based on national prices for the goods and services produced within the state. The real estimates of gross domestic product (GDP) by state are measured in chained (2012) dollars.

Housing Price Index: A weighted, repeat-sales index, meaning that it measures average price changes in repeat sales or refinancing on the same properties.

Labor Force Participation Rate: The labor force as a percent of the civilian noninstitutional population ages 16 years and older.

Net Migration Rate: The U.S. Census Bureau defines the net migration rate as the difference between the number of migrants entering and those leaving an area in a year, per 1,000 midyear population. May also be expressed in percent. A positive figure is known as a net immigration rate and a negative figure as a net emigration rate.

Personal Consumption Expenditures by State: A measure of spending on goods and services purchased by, and on behalf of, households based on households' state of residence divided by the resident population of the area.

Personal Income: Income that persons residing in the area receive in return for their provision of labor, land, and capital used in current production as well as other income, such as personal current transfer receipts. *Per capita personal income:* The personal income of a given area divided by the resident population of the area. *Per capita disposable personal income:* The income available to persons for spending or saving (personal income less personal current taxes) of a given area divided by the resident population of the area.

Poverty Level: The U.S. Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty.

Real Trade Weighted Value of the Dollar: An index that calculates the inflation-adjusted value of the U.S. dollar against the currencies of countries with which the state trades.

Total merchandise exports: Total exports are calculated by adding domestic exports (goods that are grown, produced, or manufactured in the United States) to foreign exports (foreign-origin goods that have previously entered the United States, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Virgin Islands for consumption, entry into a CBP bonded warehouse, or a U.S. Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ), and at the time of exportation, have undergone no change in form or condition or enhancement in value by further manufacturing).

Total Private nonfarm employment: Each month Current Employment Statistics (CES) surveys a sample of about 2,700 nonfarm private employers (plus federal, state, and local government employers) in Maine asking them to report the number of jobs, hours, and earnings of workers on their payroll during the week including the 12th day

of each month. The sample accounts for just 7% of employers, but 34% of nonfarm jobs in the state because a high share of large employers are surveyed.

Unemployment Rate: Number of unemployed as a percent of the labor force. To be classified as unemployed, persons must be aged 16 years and older with no employment during the reference week, were available for work, except for temporary illness, and had made specific efforts to find employment sometime during the 4-week period ending with the reference week.

Wages and Salaries: Remuneration receivable by employees (including corporate officers) from employers for the provision of labor services, measured before deductions such as social security contributions, union dues, and voluntary employee contributions to defined contribution pension plans.