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Equifax Market Pulse Index Indicates Improved Financial Progress Among Consumers within Lower Credit Tiers

Third Quarter 2025 Market Pulse Index Shows Improvement Among Gen Z, With Wide Variability

ATLANTA, Jan. 16, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- [Equifax](#)[®] (NYSE: EFX) today released its third quarter 2025 [Market Pulse Index](#), which by the end of September 2025 rose slightly to 61.6, reflecting a quarter-over-quarter increase of 0.35% and a year-over-year increase of 0.14%. The data indicates that while the long-standing "K-shaped" economy is widening, the financial divide between high and low credit score tiers is no longer expanding at the rate observed in the last several years. The report also indicates growing financial momentum for Gen Z but with wide variability across low and high Market Pulse Index values.



The Market Pulse Index provides a comprehensive view of U.S. consumer financial health by synthesizing anonymized data on credit, debt, income, and assets with VantageScore 4.0 insights by capturing the combined effects of multiple economic forces rather than focusing on a single variable. Measured on a scale of 1 to 100—where 100 represents the greatest financial strength—the Index delivers a holistic picture of consumer economic well-being, allowing for precise comparisons across diverse demographics and generations.

"K-Shaped" economy is widening, but credit shows signs of stabilizing

Since the pandemic ended, higher-income and higher-asset U.S. households have strengthened their financial positions, while those with fewer resources faced deeper financial pressure. However, in the third quarter of 2025, consumers with VantageScore 4.0 credit scores below 580 saw their Market Pulse Index value rise by over 0.40%, nearly double the rate for consumers with the highest credit scores. The result marks the first quarterly increase to the Market Pulse Index value for populations in the lower credit score tier since March 2024.

"The increase to the Market Pulse Index value has been driven, in part, by gains in debt-to-income and household affluence metrics combined with a 60-plus day delinquency rate that continues to be high but stabilizing," said Emmaline Aliff, Advisory Leader at Equifax. "This suggests early signs of credit scores stabilizing among the most vulnerable consumers, though there's still room for caution and improvement in additional components to individual financial status with respect to wealth disparity."

Gen Z average Market Pulse Index improves, but with wide variability

The Market Pulse Index indicates growing financial progress among Gen Z. In the third quarter of 2025, Gen Z surpassed Millennials in average Market Pulse Index value but with a greater degree of variability across low and high values than the other age groups. This suggests that even in the face of rising inflation, some portions of Gen Z are able to adapt to their economic environment more quickly as they enter the workforce and get established in their financial lives.

Generational Market Pulse Index data reveals that:

- **Gen Z** has a Market Pulse Index of 59.04, up 0.71% quarter-over-quarter and 0.34% year-over-year but with wide variability, reflecting some improving financial stability on average as more of this cohort enters the workforce and builds credit, but also may be benefitting from generational wealth that offers near-term stability.
- **Millennials** have a Market Pulse Index of 58.82, rising just 0.17% quarter-over-quarter and fell 0.04% year-over-year, indicating less change amid financial pressures such as housing and childcare costs.
- **Gen X** has a Market Pulse Index of 60.9, a 0.31% quarter-over-quarter and 0.12% year-over-year increase, reflecting steady but moderate improvement.
- **Baby Boomers** have a Market Pulse Index of 64.5, up 0.45% quarter-over-quarter and 0.35% year-over-year, supported by accumulated assets.
- **Traditionalists** (Silent Generation) have a Market Pulse Index of 65.7 and the largest quarter-over-quarter and year-over-year increases of 1.30% and +0.99%, respectively, underscoring the stabilizing effect of long-term savings.

"Even with the current variability, the financial momentum illustrated in the Market Pulse Index among the Gen Z population presents lenders and retailers with a timely opportunity to build long-term relationships with a rapidly expanding economic force," said Aliff.

The Equifax Market Pulse Index was built using AI/ML methods leveraging proprietary Equifax wealth and asset data along with data from the Equifax credit file and VantageScore 4.0 to provide a comprehensive view of consumer financial health. It distills the credit, debt, income, capacity, and assets of U.S. consumers into one benchmark number to reflect the cumulative index of both positive and negative financial factors. To learn more, read the full Market Pulse Index report [here](#).


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