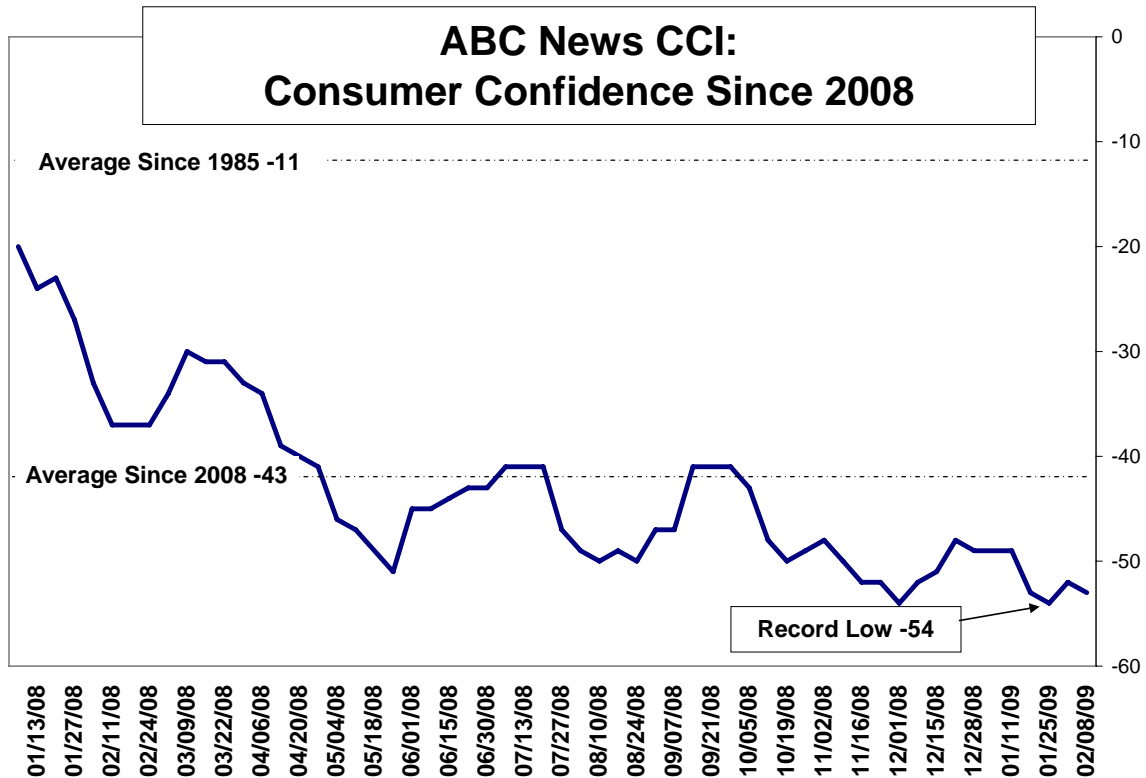


## Ratings of Economy at 23-Year Low

Consumer confidence suffered another blow this week as positive ratings of the national economy all but disappeared amid news of more job losses.

The ABC News Consumer Comfort Index stands at -53 on its scale of +100 to -100, 1 point from its record low set two weeks ago. This past month has been the worst stretch ever for the index, averaging -53 over four weeks.

While all three components of the index – the economy, buying climate and personal finances – are terrible, ratings of the economy are rock bottom. Only 4 percent rate it positively and 96 percent negatively, levels that can't get much worse. The other measures are near their worst: Seventy-eight percent say it is a bad time to buy things and 56 percent negatively rate their own finances.



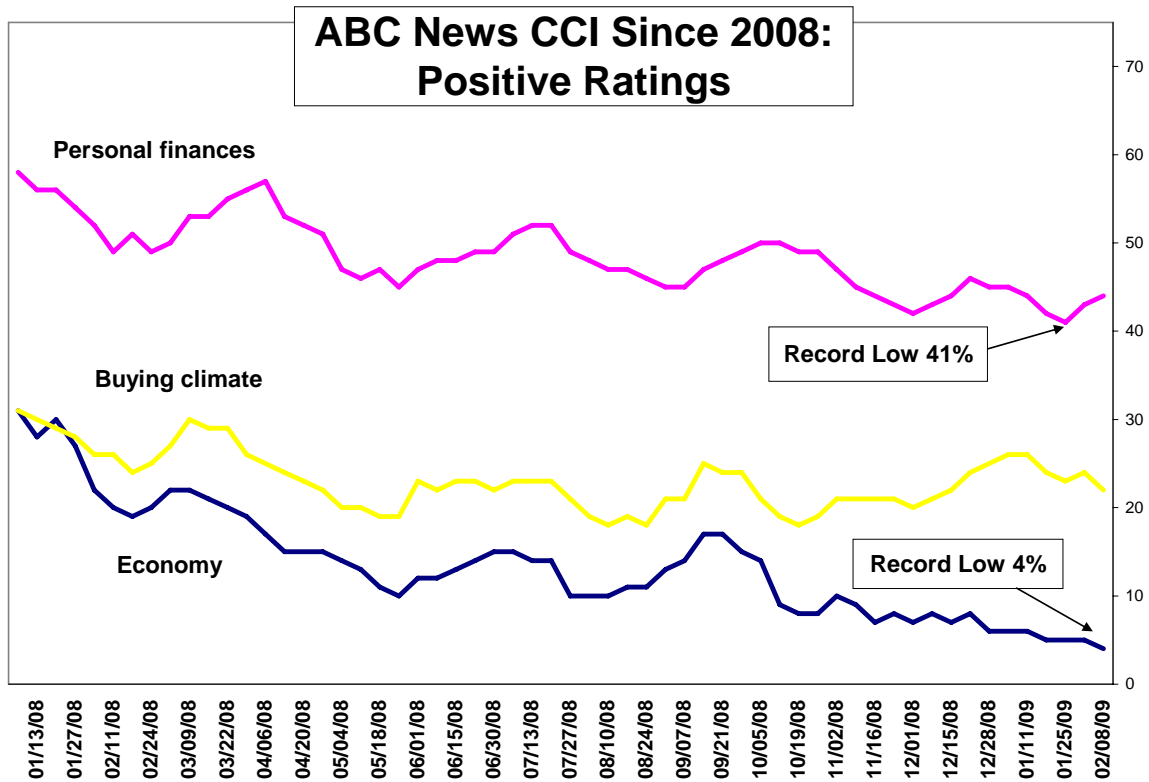
The economy shed nearly 600,000 jobs in January, the 13<sup>th</sup> month of losses, with an unemployment rate of 7.6 percent, the highest in 16 years. Job creation is the cornerstone to Barack Obama's economic stimulus package. In last night's address to the nation he said, "We've lost now 3.6 million jobs, but what's perhaps even more disturbing is that

almost half of that job loss has taken place over the last three months, which means that the problems are accelerating instead of getting better.” Consumer confidence since November has averaged -51 and have not been higher than -48.

INDEX – As noted, just 4 percent rate the economy positively, 35 points below the long-term average and 11 points off last year’s average – the second lowest annual mark on record. Fewer than one in 10 have rated the economy positively for 14 weeks, an unprecedented slump.

Twenty-two percent rate the buying climate positively, back to where it was in mid-December after edging up recently. It’s 16 points from the long-term average and just 4 points off the low set in October and August. Fewer than a third of Americans have said it’s a good time to buy things for 65 weeks straight now – only a stretch from 1990-93 was longer at this level.

In the third rating – and traditionally the strongest – 44 percent rate their own finances positively, 13 points off the long-term average and only 3 points off the record low set two week ago. Its 29 weeks below a majority is surpassed by a 40-week run in 1992-93.

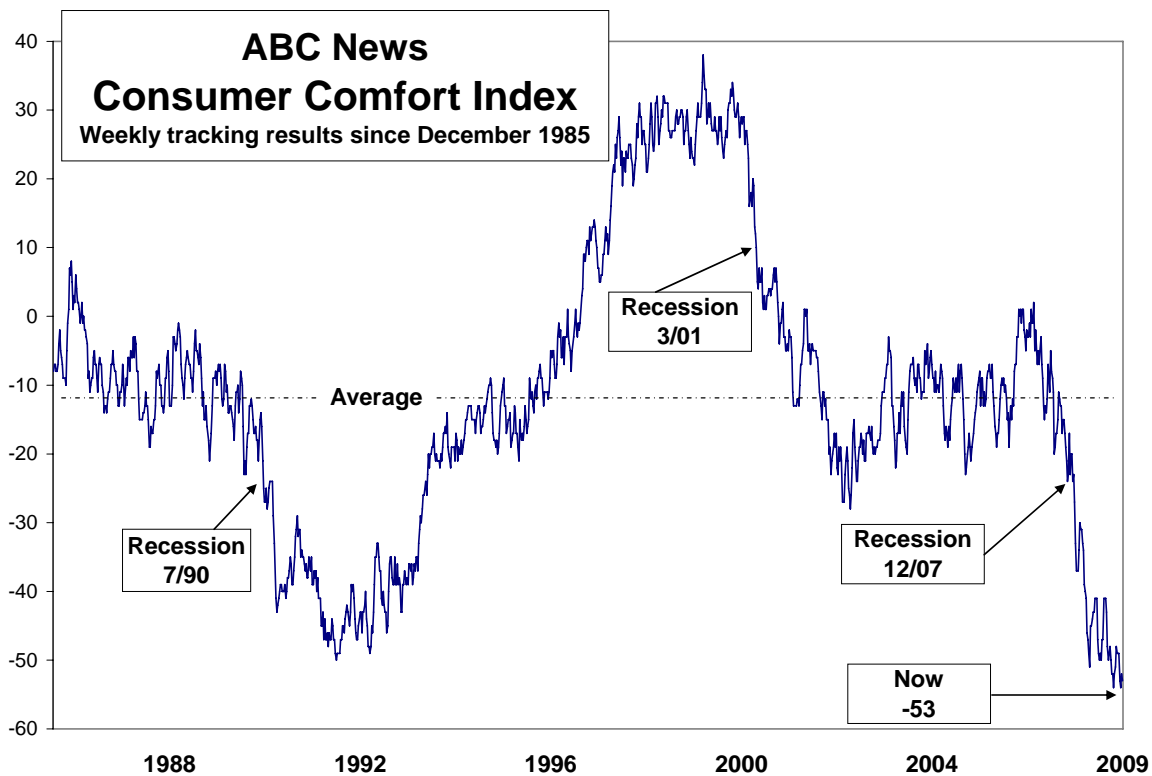


		ABC News CCI		Averages	
Positive ratings of:		This week	Last week	2009	'85-'09
National economy		4%	5	5	39
Buying climate		22	24	24	38

Personal finances	44	43	43	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-53	-52	-52	-11

TREND – Six weeks into 2009, the index's average for the year so far is -52, 10 points below its 2008 average, -42, and 41 points below its long-term, 23-year average of -11. The CCI is far below its record high, +38 in January 2000, while just 1 point off its worst.

The index's been at or below -50 for four straight weeks – nearing the record of six consecutive weeks set at the end of last year – and is in territory that is fast becoming familiar: Just once from late 1985 through 2007 did the index sink so low, but then did so 10 times last year, and already four times this year. It's been below -40 for 42 consecutive weeks, a record streak (the previous was 37 weeks in 1992).



	ABC News	CCI
This week	-53	
Last week	-52	
2009 high	-49	Jan. 4 and 11
2009 low	-54	Jan. 25, record low
2009 average	-52	
2000 average	+29	Best full year
1992 average	-44	Worst full year
Jan. 16, 2000	+38	Record high
Average since 12/85	-11	

GROUPS – The CCI is higher as usual among better-off groups, but negative across the board for the 33<sup>rd</sup> straight week – matching the previous record in 18 years of data, set twice during 1991-92.

It's -2 among those with the highest incomes (their best since November) compared with -84 among those with the lowest (3 points from their low and their worst since June), -44 among those who've attended college vs. -66 among high school dropouts, -46 among men while -59 among women (matching their low set in December), -49 among homeowners (tying their low set two weeks ago) vs. -65 among renters and -49 among whites (a point from the low set three weeks ago) vs. -68 among blacks.

Partisan differences remain: The index is -33 among Republicans vs. -63 among Democrats and -53 among independents.

Here's a closer look at the three components of the ABC News CCI:

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Four percent of Americans rate the economy as excellent or good, a new low; it was 5 percent last week. The highest was 80 percent Jan. 16, 2000.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	4	1	3	96	33	63
Avg. since 12/85	39	3	35	61	40	21

PERSONAL FINANCES – Forty-four percent say their own finances are excellent or good; it was 43 percent last week. The best was 70 percent, last reached in January 2000. The worst was 41 percent Jan. 25.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	44	5	39	56	39	17
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	52	43	30	13

BUYING CLIMATE – Twenty-two percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things; it was 24 percent last week. The best was 57 percent on Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was 18 percent Oct. 19, Aug. 10 and Aug. 24, 2008.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	22	2	20	78	46	32
Avg. since 12/85	38	3	35	62	41	21

METHODOLOGY – Interviews for the ABC News Consumer Comfort Index are reported in a four-week rolling average. This week's results are based on telephone interviews among a random national sample of 1,000 adults in the four weeks ending Feb. 8, 2009. The results have a 3-point error margin. Field work by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

The index is derived by subtracting the negative response to each index question from the positive response to that question. The three resulting numbers are added and divided by three. The index can range from +100 (everyone positive on all three measures) to -100 (all negative on all three measures). The survey began in December 1985.

Analysis by Patrick Moynihan.

ABC News polls can be found online at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934.

02/8/2009	This Week	Last Week	4 Wks Ago	3 Mo. Ago	1 Yr. Ago	12 Mo High	12 Mo Low	12 Mo Avg
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Group								
-----								
GENERAL POPULATION:								
Overall Index	-53	-52	-49	-50	-37	-30	-54	-45
State of Economy	-92	-90	-88	-82	-60	-56	-92	-75
Personal Finances	-12	-14	-12	-10	-2	14	-18	-4
Buying Climate	-56	-52	-48	-58	-48	-40	-64	-55
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OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-46	-46	-44	-46	-30	-20	-49	-39
Women	-59	-57	-53	-52	-43	-35	-59	-49
Age:								
18 - 34	-58	-60	-47	-45	-34	-12	-60	-42
35 - 44	-39	-40	-52	-50	-32	-27	-58	-43
45 - 54	-52	-49	-51	-49	-39	-27	-61	-46
55 - 64	-63	-58	-54	-58	-39	-32	-64	-48
65+	-51	-49	-45	-47	-43	-31	-55	-44
Income:								
Under \$15K	-84	-76	-77	-68	-59	-51	-87	-73
\$15K To \$24.9K	-72	-70	-66	-83	-47	-39	-83	-65
\$25K To \$39.9K	-66	-69	-63	-48	-62	-41	-71	-56
\$40K To \$49.9K	-59	-61	-55	-52	-35	-16	-62	-46
Over \$50K	-31	-30	-32	-29	-18	-8	-41	-26
\$50K To \$74.9K	-48	-33	-31	-30	-36	-25	-57	-40
\$75K To \$99.9K	-44	-52	-36	-36	-9	0	-52	-28
Over \$100K	-2	-7	-31	-22	-5	18	-34	-10
Region:								
Northeast	-53	-47	-42	-58	-39	-29	-62	-49
Midwest	-53	-57	-57	-46	-36	-21	-58	-44
South	-57	-58	-52	-42	-36	-28	-59	-45
West	-44	-41	-42	-55	-36	-14	-56	-40
Race:								
White	-49	-49	-46	-47	-35	-28	-50	-42
Black	-68	-63	-62	-68	-46	-46	-81	-63
Politics:								
Republican	-33	-34	-33	-21	-8	-1	-40	-20
Democrat	-63	-61	-60	-64	-50	-42	-70	-59
Independent	-53	-52	-51	-54	-41	-34	-55	-46
Education:								

< High School	-66	-64	-71	-76	-46	-37	-77	-61
High Sch. Grad.	-62	-58	-50	-54	-47	-26	-62	-49
College +	-44	-45	-43	-39	-25	-16	-50	-36
Home:								
Own	-49	-47	-43	-41	-32	-26	-49	-39
Rent	-65	-68	-67	-73	-49	-32	-80	-59
Marital Status:								
Single	-59	-56	-51	-57	-36	-22	-69	-48
Married	-43	-43	-41	-42	-26	-22	-46	-36
Sep/Wid/Div	-67	-67	-64	-61	-61	-49	-69	-61
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-41	-41	-40	-33	-34	-18	-47	-36
Part-Time	-56	-57	-53	-48	-29	-19	-66	-46
Not Employed	-64	-61	-58	-65	-42	-42	-66	-54

\*\*\*END\*\*\*