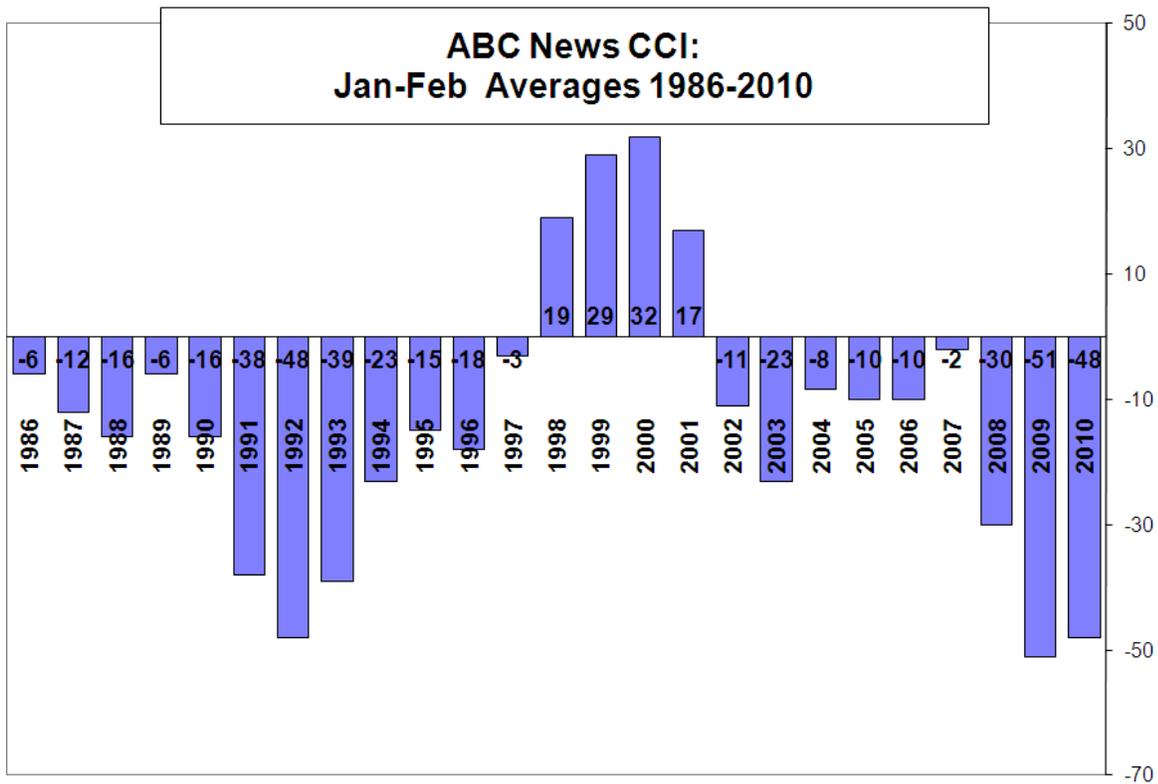


Consumer Confidence 2010: Two Months of Trouble

2010 is not shaping up to be much of a party: Two months in, consumer confidence has had one of its worst starts to a new year in a generation of ongoing polling.

The ABC News Consumer Comfort Index has averaged -48 on its scale of +100 to -100 so far this year. Its previous worst starts, in weekly polling since late 1985, were -51 in the first two months of last year, and another -48 in January and February 1992.

Comparing these to its long-term average, -13, underscores the trouble. So does the fact that the index has been below -40 for 97 weeks, smashing the previous record at this level, 37 weeks in 1991-92. This week it's -49; last week it hit -50, a level it's seen just 25 times, 23 of them in the last 16 months.

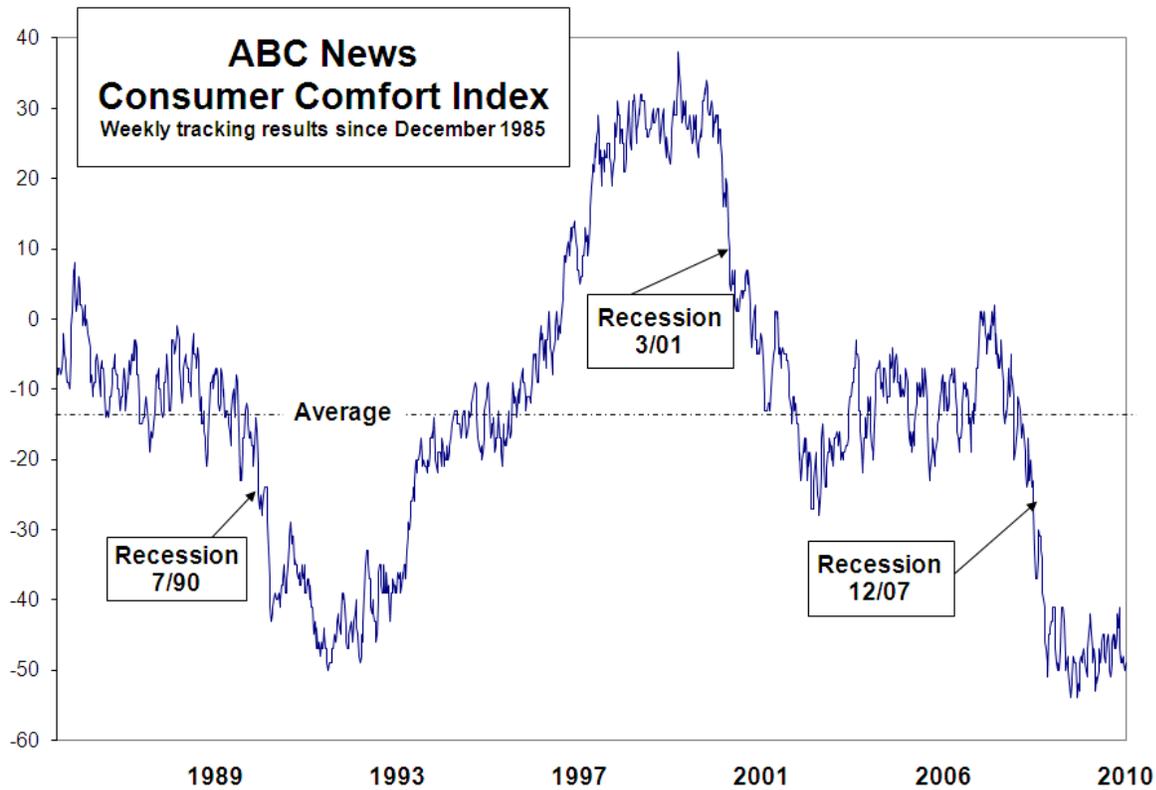


None of the three components of the index has shown much of a pulse this year. For eight weeks straight, more than half of Americans have rated their own finances negatively and fewer than a

quarter have called it a good time to spend money. And positive ratings of the national economy have languished in the single digits steadily since November.

INDEX – A meager 8 percent of Americans view the economy positively, the fourth straight week at this level, the 14th straight week of single-digit ratings and a whopping 29 points below its long-term average.

ABC News CCI				
Positive ratings of:	This week	Last week	Averages	
			2010	'85-'10
National economy	8%	8	8	37
Buying climate	24	24	24	37
Personal finances	44	43	46	56
Consumer Comfort Index	-49	-50	-48	-13



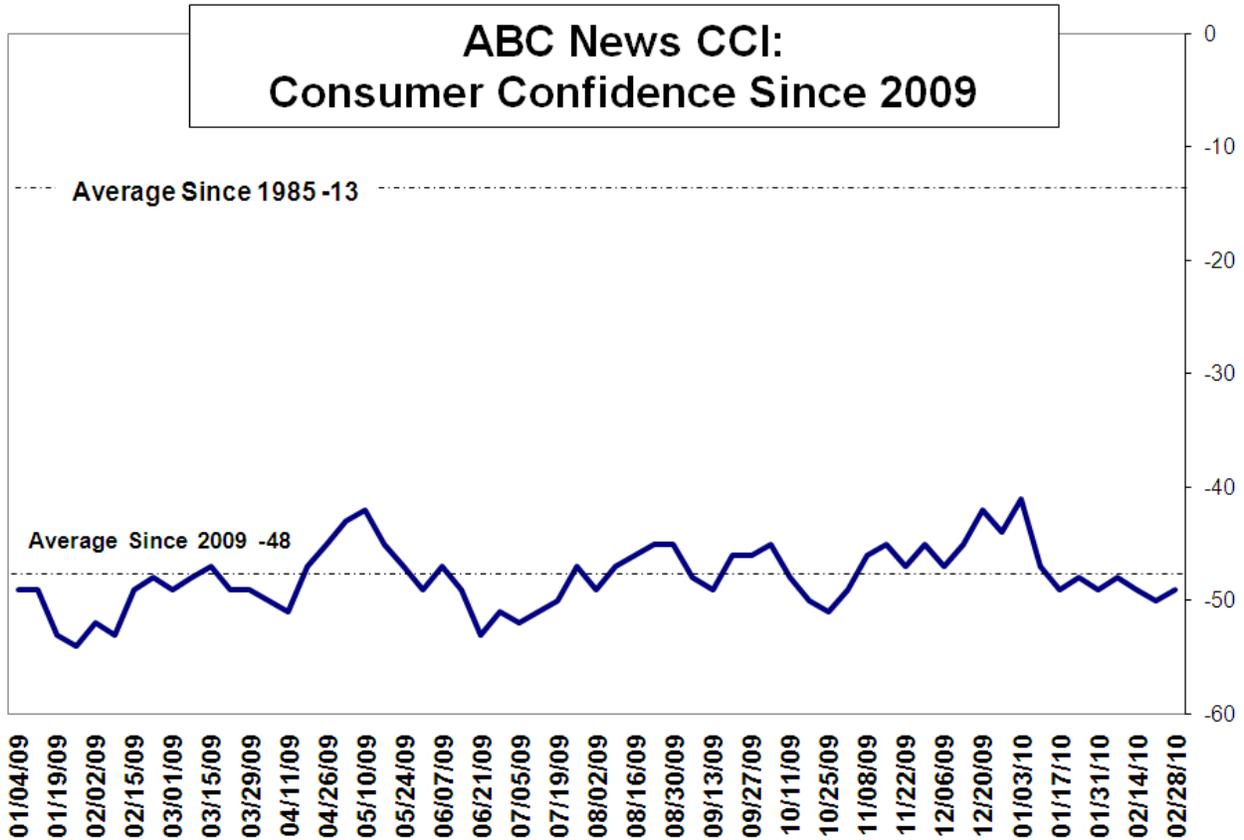
Put it together and the CCI's lingered just 4 to 7 points above its all-time low, -54 in January 2009, in each of the last eight weeks.

Confidence is unlikely to be boosted by the latest housing market reports, with drops in new and existing home sales alike. And despite an upward revision of GDP growth in Q4 2009 from 5.7 to 5.9 percent, some economists say continuing that trend relies on consumer confidence.

Positive ratings of the buying climate had risen 9 points from late October to the end of last year, hitting their best since March 2008 (albeit just 30 percent positive). It didn't hold; at 24 percent

positive today, buying climate ratings are 13 points below average. In the third gauge, 44 percent rate their own finances positively, 12 points below average.

The CCI's hovered in a 3-point range since a highly unusual 6-point, one-week drop in January.



	ABC News CCI	
This week	-49	
Last week	-50	
2010 high	-41	Jan. 3
2010 low	-50	Feb. 21
2010 average	-48	
2009 average	-48	Worst full year
2000 average	+29	Best full year
Jan. 25, 2009	-54	Record low
Jan. 16, 2000	+38	Record high
Average since 12/85	-13	

GROUPS – As usual, the index is higher among better-off Americans, but it's been negative across all groups for 53 weeks straight, the longest such run in available data since 1990.

It's -2 among those with the highest incomes, -66 among those with the lowest; -39 among people who've attended college vs. -70 among those who never finished high school; -44 among homeowners but -66 among renters; and -43 among men vs. -55 among women.

The index is -42 among Republicans vs. -56 among Democrats and -43 among independents. The 14-point gap is far less than its long-term average, 32 points.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Eight percent of Americans rate the economy as excellent or good for the fourth straight week. The highest was 80 percent Jan. 16, 2000; the worst, 4 percent Feb. 8, 2009.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	8	1	7	92	45	47
Avg. since 12/85	37	3	34	63	40	23

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 39 percent June 28 and 21, 2009.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	44	4	40	56	38	18
Avg. since 12/85	56	5	51	44	30	13

BUYING CLIMATE – Twenty-four percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things for the third straight week. The best was 57 percent on Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was 18 percent, last reached Oct. 19, 2008.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	24	2	22	76	45	31
Avg. since 12/85	37	3	34	63	42	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. 28, 2010. 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 Amanda Rohaly.

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

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

02/28/10	This Week	Last Week	4 Wks Ago	3 Mo. Ago	1 Yr. Ago	12 Mo High	12 Mo Low	12 Mo Avg

Group								

GENERAL POPULATION:								
Overall Index	-49	-50	-49	-45	-49	-41	-53	-47
State of Economy	-84	-84	-82	-82	-90	-78	-90	-83
Personal Finances	-12	-14	-10	-10	-4	4	-22	-9
Buying Climate	-52	-52	-56	-44	-52	-40	-58	-50

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-43	-43	-47	-43	-45	-28	-47	-41
Women	-55	-55	-52	-46	-51	-45	-60	-52
Age:								
18 - 34	-47	-52	-50	-45	-45	-31	-61	-43
35 - 44	-50	-45	-47	-50	-46	-39	-62	-50
45 - 54	-42	-40	-52	-36	-49	-36	-65	-47
55 - 64	-59	-59	-51	-48	-54	-39	-65	-51
65+	-50	-53	-47	-45	-52	-40	-56	-48
Income:								
Under \$15K	-66	-65	-75	-73	-72	-57	-80	-72
\$15K To \$24.9K	-73	-75	-70	-70	-74	-40	-81	-65
\$25K To \$39.9K	-67	-74	-61	-54	-57	-49	-74	-60
\$40K To \$49.9K	-45	-44	-49	-41	-58	-27	-68	-46
Over \$50K	-27	-30	-29	-25	-30	-19	-35	-28
\$50K To \$74.9K	-45	-53	-55	-37	-46	-24	-57	-39
\$75K To \$99.9K	-32	-25	-11	-33	-33	-11	-43	-27
Over \$100K	-2	-4	-6	-4	-7	-1	-31	-14
Region:								
Northeast	-51	-52	-48	-38	-62	-38	-62	-49
Midwest	-51	-45	-52	-47	-45	-41	-57	-48
South	-51	-51	-47	-47	-44	-39	-56	-48
West	-42	-49	-52	-44	-47	-19	-58	-43
Race:								
White	-47	-49	-51	-44	-48	-38	-52	-46
Black	-60	-48	-47	-46	-57	-41	-68	-54
Politics:								
Republican	-42	-39	-46	-38	-34	-30	-54	-38
Democrat	-56	-56	-51	-40	-57	-40	-62	-52
Independent	-43	-50	-49	-53	-48	-37	-59	-48
Education:								
< High School	-70	-66	-70	-58	-59	-49	-82	-65
High Sch. Grad.	-56	-58	-61	-51	-49	-46	-65	-55
College +	-39	-40	-39	-37	-46	-30	-46	-38
Home:								
Own	-44	-44	-46	-40	-45	-35	-47	-42
Rent	-66	-67	-61	-56	-56	-47	-71	-59
Marital Status:								
Single	-63	-59	-53	-49	-48	-34	-66	-50
Married	-41	-41	-40	-36	-44	-33	-47	-40
Sep/Wid/Div	-58	-62	-68	-59	-61	-50	-70	-60
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-33	-33	-37	-33	-39	-28	-45	-37
Part-Time	-62	-55	-57	-44	-40	-33	-67	-51
Not Employed	-61	-62	-58	-55	-60	-48	-64	-56

END