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ABC NEWS/MONEY CONSUMER INDEX - 3/3/96
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Consumer Confidence Improves a Tad

Consumer confidence moved in the positive direction this week, posting its second best showing of the year.

Confidence moved two points more positive to -16, two points above its -18 average for the year. This week's mark is just a point below the best showing of the year, -15 at the end of January. The ABC/Money Consumer Comfort Index, figured on a scale of +100 to -100, remains worse than its average in the late 1980s, -9, but much better than its average from 1990-93, a dismal -39.

ABC/Money Index

Today	-16
Last wk	-18
4 weeks ago	-17
5 weeks ago	-15 best of year
1996 (avg)	-18
1995	-15
1994	-19
1990-93	-39
1986-90	-9

INDICES - The index is based on views of the economy, buying climate and personal finances. All three improved a point this week.

Sixty-seven percent of Americans rate the economy negatively, and 64 percent call this a bad time to buy things. The poll's findings on the national economy and the buying climate may seem gloomy, but they are far from the lows they hit during the last recession and its hangover.

The rating for personal finances went a point more positive to 57 percent, the same as its pre-recession average.

	Today	1990-93	1986-90
Negative on national economy	67	85	59
Negative on buying climate	64	74	61
Positive on personal finances	57	49	57

GROUPS - Confidence lags in economically vulnerable groups, including women, blacks, the poor and the less-educated. The index is -3 among men but -27 among women; +18 in higher-income households but -46 in the lowest; -12 among whites but -37 among blacks; and 0 among people who have attended college but -39 among high school dropouts.

Here's a closer look at the three components of the ABC/Money index:

NATIONAL ECONOMY- Sixty-seven percent rate the economy negatively, down a point this week. It's averaged 68 percent this year and 65 percent last year, compared to 85 percent from 1990-93 and 59 percent from 1986-1990. The worst, 93 percent, was in late 1991 and early 1992; the best, 50-50, was April 27, 1986. The

average for the life of the index is 70 percent negative.

PERSONAL FINANCES - Fifty-seven percent rate their finances positively, up a point this week. It's averaged 57 percent this year and 56 percent last year, compared to 49 percent in the 1990-93 slump and 57 percent before the recession. The worst was 58 percent negative March 14, 1993; the best, 62 percent positive Dec. 20, 1987. The full average is 54 percent positive.

BUYING CLIMATE - Sixty-four percent call this a bad time to buy things, a point more positive this week. It's averaged 65 percent this year and 63 percent last year, compared to 74 percent during the 1990-93 slump and 61 percent before the recession. The worst is 80 percent negative Nov. 2 and Oct. 28, 1990; the best, 52 percent positive May 11, 1986. The full average is 66 percent negative.

	National Economy	Personal Finances	Buying Climate
This week	67% neg.	57% Pos	64% neg
1995 Average	65% neg	56% pos	63% neg
Recession Average (mid-1990 to 1993)	85% neg	51% neg	74% neg
Pre-Recession Avg. (1986 to mid-1990)	59% neg	57% pos	61% neg
Full Average (1986-1995)	70% neg	54% pos	66% neg
Worst	93% neg	58% neg	80% neg
Best	50% pos	62% pos	52% pos

CAMPAIGN - For the political season, ABC and Money asked consumers which one of the current candidates would be best for their own personal finances if elected.

Bill Clinton was picked most often - 39 percent - but GOP candidates Buchanan, Dole, Alexander and Forbes together were picked by 40 percent of Americans. A table:

Who would be best
president for
your finances?

Clinton	39 percent
Dole	13
Buchanan	11
Forbes	11
Alexander	5
Other	1
None	9
Unsure	12

METHODOLOGY - The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index represents a rolling average based on telephone interviews with about 1,000 adults nationwide

each month. Interviewing is done by ICR/AUS Consultants of Media, Pa. This week's results are based on 1,050 interviews in the month ending March 3. and have an error margin of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. The campaign question was asked of 527 people in the two weeks ending March 3, 1996.

The ABC/Money index is derived as follows: The negative response to each index question is subtracted from the positive response to that question. The three resulting numbers are then 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.

ABC polls are available in the ABC News area of America Online.

Analysis by Jeff Alderman. For details contact the ABC News Polling Unit, (212) 456-2621.

03/03/96	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	-16	-18	-17	-17	-13	-9	-21	-15
State of Economy	-34	-36	-36	-32	-28	-26	-38	-32
Personal Finances	14	12	16	8	12	22	4	13
Buying Climate	-28	-30	-30	-28	-24	-20	-36	-27

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-3	-2	-4	-9	-4	4	-13	-3
Women	-27	-31	-27	-24	-21	-19	-33	-26
Age:								
18 - 34	-10	-12	-12	-11	-11	-4	-19	-12
35 - 44	-18	-22	-23	-16	-13	4	-26	-15
45 - 54	-13	-13	-9	-19	-20	-3	-36	-17
55 - 64	-20	-28	-29	-14	0	0	-40	-17
65 +	-22	-18	-13	-27	-21	2	-34	-19
Income:								
Under \$15K	-46	-45	-53	-47	-54	-41	-61	-52
\$15K To \$24.9K	-29	-35	-28	-44	-27	-15	-48	-33
\$25K To \$39.9K	-22	-26	-20	-15	-8	-2	-29	-15
\$40K To \$49.9K	-4	-3	-4	-2	3	11	-31	-3
Over \$50K	18	19	20	17	21	32	12	21
Region:								
Northeast	-21	-28	-31	-26	-25	-13	-34	-23
Midwest	-5	-12	-11	-14	2	11	-21	-6
South	-24	-20	-14	-15	-17	-9	-25	-17
West	-7	-7	-10	-15	-13	0	-23	-14
Race:								
White	-12	-14	-11	-12	-6	-5	-15	-10
Black	-37	-39	-44	-53	-60	-24	-61	-43
Politics:								
Republican	-3	-5	-1	5	-1	6	-10	-2
Democrat	-23	-25	-26	-21	-18	-11	-28	-20
Independent	-15	-17	-18	-25	-15	-11	-26	-18
Education:								
< High School	-39	-45	-42	-47	-51	-30	-53	-43

High Sch. Grad.	-24	-26	-20	-22	-15	-15	-30	-23
College +	0	-1	-4	-1	4	7	-6	2
Home:								
Own	-9	-9	-8	-9	-8	-2	-15	-9
Rent	-28	-37	-34	-37	-28	-19	-38	-30
Marital Status:								
Single	-10	-14	-12	-5	-12	3	-20	-10
Married	-11	-10	-10	-13	-6	-4	-18	-10
Sep/Wid/Div	-35	-41	-41	-45	-41	-21	-45	-37
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-8	-9	-6	-12	-3	3	-14	-6
Part-Time	-12	-17	-35	-18	-24	-4	-35	-21
Not Employed	-26	-27	-31	-25	-25	-18	-35	-27