

SURVEY#: 507 DATE: 2/06/96 TO 9/09/99 #INT: 1 GEN USA
ABC NEWS/MONEY CONSUMER INDEX - 4/20/97
EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE AFTER 6:30 p.m. Wednesday , April 23, 1997

ROBUST PLANS FOR
VACATION SPENDING

Fewer Americans plan to trim their spending on summer vacations than at any time since 1989, portending a strong season for the holiday travel industry, an ABC News/Money magazine poll has found.

While 39 percent say they'll try to spend less on holidays this summer, that's the fewest in seven years, down from a high of 47 percent in 1994. Fewer also say they won't take a summer break at all, now 13 percent.

Plan to spend less on summer vacation	
1997	39%
1996	43
1995	44
1994	47

CONFIDENCE - The results coincide with strong consumer confidence. The ABC/Money Consumer Comfort Index, based on views of personal finances, the economy and the buying climate, is marking its best year in any of the last 12.

The index stands at -2 on its scale of +100 to -100, down a bit from +1 last week, which tied a more than 10-year high. Its current level compares to an average -9 in the second half of the 1980s and a dismal -30 from 1990-95.

ABC/Money Index	
Today	-2
1997 average	-3
1996 average	-11
1990-95	-30
1986-90	-9
Full average	-20

GAUGES - Last week 63 percent of Americans rated their own finances positively, the most ever in weekly ABC/Money polls since December 1985. This week that slipped to 60 percent, still a healthy majority.

Public views of the buying climate and the economy are less robust, but are strong nonetheless, compared to their usual standing.

This week 41 percent call it a good time to spend money on things they want and need - unchanged since last week and well above the index's lifetime average of 34 percent. Similarly, 46 percent rate the national economy as "excellent or "good" - compared to a lifetime average of just 32 percent.

All three measures are far above their average from 1990-93, when faith in the

economy was at its recession-inspired low point.

Positive ratings for...	Today	1990-93	1986-90
National economy	46	15	41
Buying climate	41	26	39
Personal finances	60	49	57

GROUPS - Confidence customarily lags in economically vulnerable groups, including women, blacks, the poor and the less-educated. The index is +15 among men but -17 among women; +1 among whites but -19 among blacks; +25 in higher-income households but -46 in the lowest; and +10 among people who have attended college but -23 among high school dropouts.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY- Fifty-four percent rate the economy negatively, up a point this week. It's averaged 52 percent this year, compared to 85 percent from 1990-93 and 59 percent from 1986-90. The best, 52 percent positive, was Dec. 1, 1996. The worst, 93 percent negative, was in late 1991 and early 1992. The average for the life of the index is 68 percent negative.

PERSONAL FINANCES - Sixty percent rate their finances positively, down three points. It's averaged 59 percent this 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 full average is 54 percent positive.

BUYING CLIMATE - Fifty-nine percent call this a bad time to buy things, unchanged this week. It's averaged 62 percent this 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	54% neg	60% pos	59% neg
1997 Average	52% neg	59% pos	62% 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-now)	68% neg	54% pos	66% neg
Worst	93% neg	58% neg	80% neg
Best	52% pos	63% pos	52% pos

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 by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa. This week's results are based on 1,032 interviews in the month ending April

20 and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points. The question on vacation spending was conducted among 509 respondents April 2-13; that result has a 4.5-point error margin.

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.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

For details contact the ABC News Polling Unit, (212) 456-2621. ABC polls are available in the ABC News area of America Online.

Here are the full results:

162. Just your best guess, do you think you will spend more money or less money on your summer vacation this year compared to last year?

	More	Less	Same (vol.)	No vkn (vol.)	No opin.
4/13/97	32	39	16	13	1
4/28/96	30	43	10	17	1
5/28/95	28	44	11	16	1
5/15/94	28	47	10	15	0
5/30/93	27	45	13	14	1
5/17/92	27	45	10	17	1
5/19/91	28	43	9	18	1
5/20/90	32	42	10	15	NA
5/21/89	36	39	9	14	NA
5/29/88	36	34	14	16	NA
6/14/87	32	43	8	16	NA
2/2/86	35	38	5	12	NA

04/20/97	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	-2	1	-4	-3	-12	1	-14	-7
State of Economy	-8	-6	-8	-4	-26	4	-28	-13
Personal Finances	20	26	16	20	14	26	10	16
Buying Climate	-18	-18	-20	-26	-24	-18	-30	-24

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

Sex:

Men	15	14	8	10	0	15	-5	4
Women	-17	-11	-14	-15	-22	-5	-25	-17

Age:

18 - 34	3	5	-4	-6	-16	5	-23	-7
35 - 44	-2	-1	2	0	-6	3	-21	-8
45 - 54	-6	-7	-9	1	-10	12	-22	-7
55 - 64	-6	-2	0	-10	-9	17	-36	-6
65 +	-2	12	-2	-2	-10	15	-18	-4

Income:

Under \$15K	-46	-50	-49	-42	-46	-32	-58	-46
-------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

\$15K To \$24.9K	-17	-8	-23	-26	-35	-8	-40	-26
\$25K To \$39.9K	-1	3	2	-1	-12	5	-19	-7
\$40K To \$49.9K	1	2	3	8	19	26	-10	7
Over \$50K	25	29	36	29	24	37	12	27
Region:								
Northeast	-5	-3	-8	-3	-18	2	-26	-12
Midwest	2	5	4	-3	4	10	-8	1
South	-4	-6	-13	-5	-14	2	-15	-8
West	0	11	8	-1	-18	11	-23	-7
Race:								
White	1	5	1	1	-4	7	-10	-2
Black	-19	-24	-28	-35	-51	-10	-51	-31
Politics:								
Republican	13	13	3	7	5	17	-12	4
Democrat	-4	2	-4	-8	-13	10	-19	-6
Independent	-6	-3	-6	-4	-20	-3	-25	-13
Education:								
< High School	-23	-13	-33	-30	-37	-13	-47	-34
High Sch. Grad.	-7	-7	-16	-17	-18	-4	-22	-14
College +	10	12	17	16	4	17	1	8
Home:								
Own	4	8	4	4	-4	10	-7	0
Rent	-19	-18	-21	-21	-30	-11	-36	-24
Marital Status:								
Single	-4	-2	1	-7	-12	1	-26	-10
Married	4	7	2	4	-4	10	-9	-1
Sep/Wid/Div	-25	-19	-25	-24	-38	-9	-38	-23
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	6	7	7	5	0	11	-5	2
Part-Time	-5	-2	-15	3	-15	5	-29	-15
Not Employed	-12	-7	-14	-15	-24	-5	-29	-16

SURVEY#: 507 DATE: 2/06/96 TO 9/09/99 #INT: 1 GEN USA
ABC NEWS/MONEY MAGAZINE POLL: SUMMER VACATION
FOR RELEASE AFTER 12:01 A.M. SUNDAY, APRIL 20, 1997

POLL POINTS TO A SUNNY SUMMER
FOR THE VACATION INDUSTRY

Fewer Americans plan to trim their spending on summer vacations than at any time since 1989, portending a strong season for the travel industry, an ABC News/Money magazine poll has found.

While 39 percent say they'll try to spend less on holidays this summer, that's the fewest in seven years, down from a high of 47 percent in 1994. Fewer also say they won't take a summer break at all, now 13 percent.

The results coincide with booming consumer confidence. Sixty-three percent of Americans now rate their finances positively, the most in more than 10 years of weekly polls. The ABC/Money Consumer Comfort Index, based on views of personal finances, the economy and the buying climate, has tied its best level since August 1986.

YOUTH - Younger adults are the most likely to plan to raise their vacation spending. Thirty-nine percent of 18- to 30-year-olds say they'll spend more this

summer, compared to just 25 percent of people age 45 and older.

METHODOLOGY - This poll was conducted by telephone April 2-13 among a random national sample of 509 adults. The results have a 4.5-point error margin. Interviewing by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

For details contact the ABC News Polling Unit, (212) 456-2621. ABC polls are available in the ABC News area of America Online.

Here are the full results:

162. Just your best guess, do you think you will spend more money or less money on your summer vacation this year compared to last year?

	More	Less	Same (vol.)	No vkn (vol.)	No opin.
4/13/97	32	39	16	13	1
4/28/95	30	43	10	17	1
5/28/95	28	44	11	16	1
5/15/94	28	47	10	15	0
5/30/93	27	45	13	14	1
5/17/92	27	45	10	17	1
5/19/91	28	43	9	18	1
5/20/90	32	42	10	15	NA
5/21/89	36	39	9	14	NA
5/29/88	36	34	14	16	NA
6/14/87	32	43	8	16	NA
2/2/86	35	38	5	12	NA