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ABC NEWS/MONEY CONSUMER INDEX - 7/6/97
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CONSUMER CONFIDENCE:
LES BONS TEMPS ROULER

Consumer confidence rolled up a new record this week in the 11-year-old ABC News/Money magazine poll, with more Americans than ever giving combined approval to the economy, their finances and the buying climate.

Fifty-seven percent say the economy's in good shape, tying the record. Sixty-two percent say their finances are O.K., a point short of the record. And 46 percent call this a good time to buy things, the most since September 1986.

Those three questions form the ABC/Money Consumer Comfort Index, which advanced this week to +10 on its scale of +100 to -100, its first foray ever into the positive double digits. The index reached +9 in mid-June; it hasn't even been near these levels since it hit +8 in May 1986.

BANNER - It's been a banner year for consumer confidence, with the index averaging -1 in 1997, compared to -30 from 1990-95 (bottoming out at -50 in 1992). Its lifetime average is -19; even in the second half of the 1980s it managed only -9.

At various points in the early '90s, as many as 93 percent rated the economy negatively, compared to 43 percent today; 58 percent said their finances were in bad shape, compared to 38 percent today; and 80 percent called it a bad time to spend money, compared to today's 54 percent.

ABC/Money Index		
Today	+10	Record High
1997 average	-1	
1996 average	-11	
1990-95	-30	
1986-90	-9	
Full average	-19	

The ABC/Money index has gained 11 points just since May 18, its run-up following sharp first-quarter advances in economic growth. Investors seem to share the wider public's confidence, pushing the Dow to new records.

GAUGES - Positive ratings of the economy are leading the index; they're 25 points above their 11-year average. Ratings of personal finances and the buying climate are eight and 11 points better than average, respectively.

But while views of the economy and personal finances are within a point of their best ever, ratings of the buying climate are six points below that record, set in May 1986.

Positive Ratings		
	Today	11-yr avg.
National Economy	57%	32%
Personal Finances	62	54
Buying Climate	46	35

GROUPS - Confidence lags in economically vulnerable groups, including women, blacks, the poor and the less-educated. But the gap between men and women has been narrowing; today it's eight points (+14 among men and +6 among women) compared to a 12-month average of 20 points.

The index is +16 among whites but -19 among blacks; +47 in higher-income households but -28 in the lowest; and +29 among people who've attended college but -17 among high school dropouts.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY- Fifty-seven percent rate the economy positively, up a point this week to tie the record set June 22. It's averaged 50 percent this year; the average for the life of the index is 32 percent. The worst, 93 percent negative, was in late 1991 and early 1992.

PERSONAL FINANCES - Sixty-two percent rate their finances positively, unchanged this week and a point below the record set April 13 and matched June 15 and 22. It's averaged 59 percent this year; the average for the life of the index is 54 percent. The worst was 58 percent negative March 14, 1993.

BUYING CLIMATE - Fifty-four percent call this a bad time to buy things, down two points this week. It's averaged 60 percent this year; the average for the life of the index is 65 percent. The worst was 80 percent negative Nov. 2 and Oct. 28, 1990; the best, 52 percent positive May 11, 1986.

	National Economy	Personal Finances	Buying Climate
This week	57% pos	62% pos	54% neg
1997 Average	50% pos	59% pos	60% neg
Full Average	68% neg	54% pos	65% neg
Worst	93% neg	58% neg	80% neg
Best	57% 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 1,017 interviews in the month ending July 6 and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points.

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 (keyword "ABC Polls") and on

ABC News' internet site, ABCNEWS.COM.

07/06/97	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	10	8	4	-1	-9	10	-13	-4
State of Economy	14	12	8	-6	-24	14	-24	-7
Personal Finances	24	24	20	22	16	26	10	17
Buying Climate	-8	-12	-16	-20	-18	-8	-30	-22

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	14	15	16	11	4	21	-5	7
Women	6	2	-6	-13	-20	6	-25	-13
Age:								
18 - 34	6	3	-2	0	-9	6	-23	-6
35 - 44	3	1	3	-1	-4	9	-21	-5
45 - 54	5	8	13	-10	-20	18	-20	-2
55 - 64	3	15	13	1	-17	21	-36	-3
65 +	35	24	8	6	1	35	-12	0
Income:								
Under \$15K	-28	-37	-44	-41	-49	-28	-56	-44
\$15K To \$24.9K	-8	-8	-19	-20	-40	-8	-40	-23
\$25K To \$39.9K	-6	-1	12	-2	-2	12	-19	-5
\$40K To \$49.9K	10	10	-4	1	11	26	-4	7
Over \$50K	47	45	44	32	28	48	12	31
Region:								
Northeast	5	-1	2	-6	-11	5	-26	-8
Midwest	7	10	17	3	-7	18	-8	3
South	10	8	-1	-9	-13	10	-15	-5
West	18	15	1	10	-1	18	-23	-5
Race:								
White	16	13	9	1	-6	16	-10	0
Black	-19	-19	-36	-18	-34	-10	-48	-28
Politics:								
Republican	23	24	24	10	6	26	-12	6
Democrat	6	7	4	-4	-13	12	-19	-3
Independent	6	2	-9	-4	-16	6	-18	-10
Education:								
< High School	-17	-22	-21	-25	-36	-13	-47	-31
High Sch. Grad.	-5	-6	-8	-11	-22	-3	-22	-11
College +	29	28	22	14	10	29	2	11
Home:								
Own	18	18	15	5	-4	20	-7	3
Rent	-11	-18	-20	-19	-23	-11	-33	-21
Marital Status:								
Single	9	5	-6	-3	-16	9	-26	-7
Married	13	13	16	5	-3	18	-9	2
Sep/Wid/Div	-1	-8	-24	-22	-19	-1	-32	-21
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	16	14	15	6	2	17	-5	4
Part-Time	-4	-4	-6	-8	-21	5	-29	-12
Not Employed	6	4	-7	-10	-18	7	-21	-12