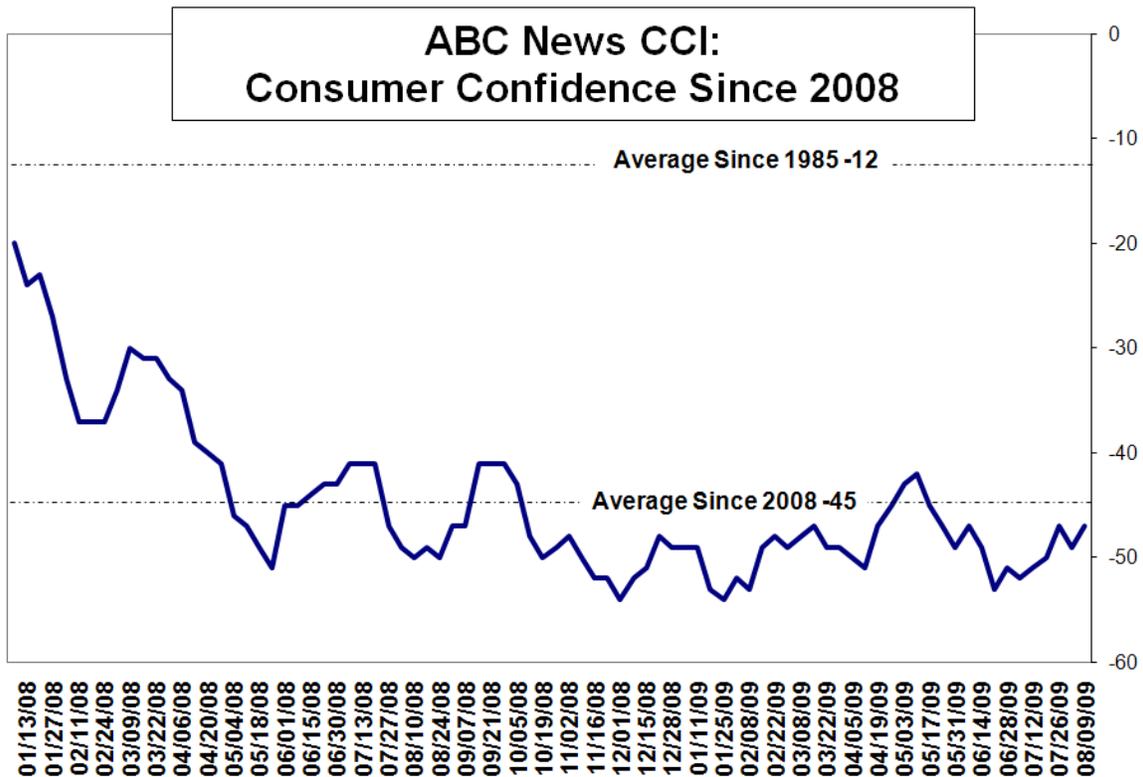


Ratings of Finances Up, But Confidence Lays Low

Americans are feeling a little better about their finances, but consumer confidence is stuck in the doldrums.

Forty-seven percent rate their personal finances positively, the best in three months. But the ABC News Consumer Comfort Index sits at -47 on its scale of +100 to -100, a dismal rating compared with the long-term average of -12 in 23 years of weekly polls.

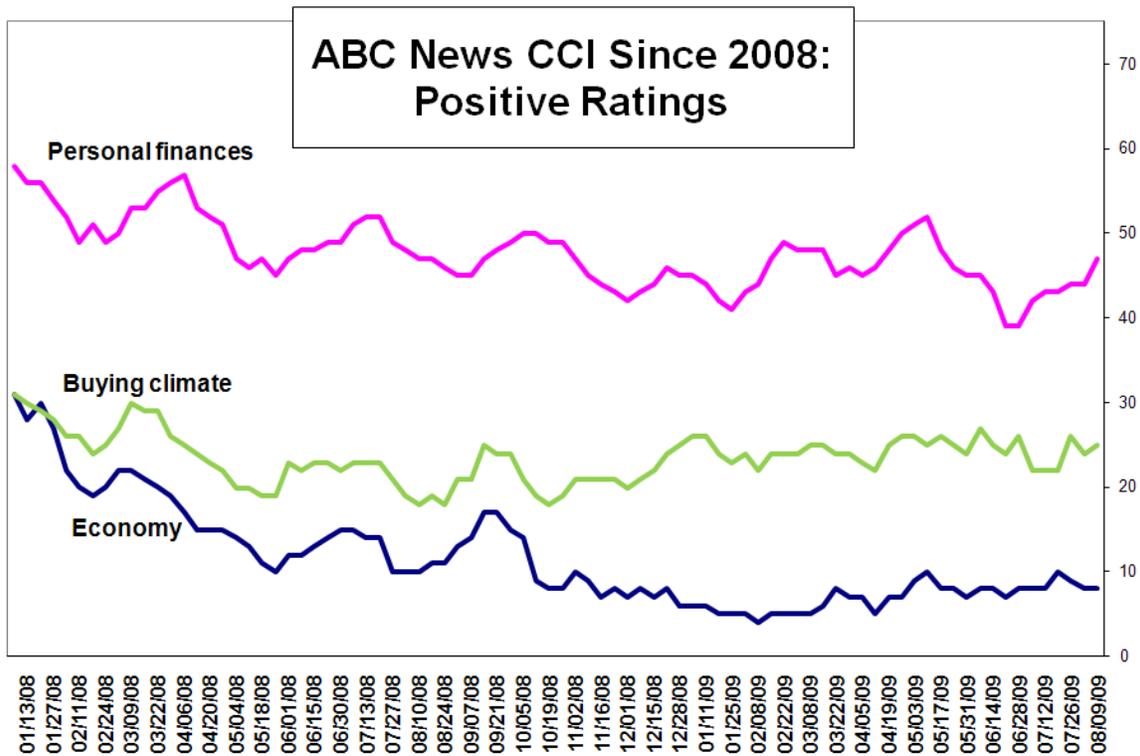
The Obama administration has recently tried to paint a picture of an economy on the mend, highlighting the slowing pace of job losses and a piece of legislation – the “cash-for-clunkers” program – that’s responsible for increased auto sales. But most retailers reported paltry sales in July, and statistics released last week by the Fed suggest Americans are concentrating on eliminating debt rather than buying new things.



INDEX – It looks as if those trends may continue, with just 25 percent saying it’s an excellent or good time to buy things. Positive ratings of the buying climate have been stuck in a 5-point range this year and this week are 12 points below average.

Of the index’s three components – ratings of the national economy, the buying climate and personal finances – ratings of the economy have shown the least movement this year. They’ve also been the most negative. Only 8 percent say the economy is in excellent or good shape, in single digits for a record 41 of the past 44 weeks. Positive ratings of the economy are 30 points below average.

At 47 percent positive, ratings of personal finances are the best of the three components as usual but are 10 points below average.

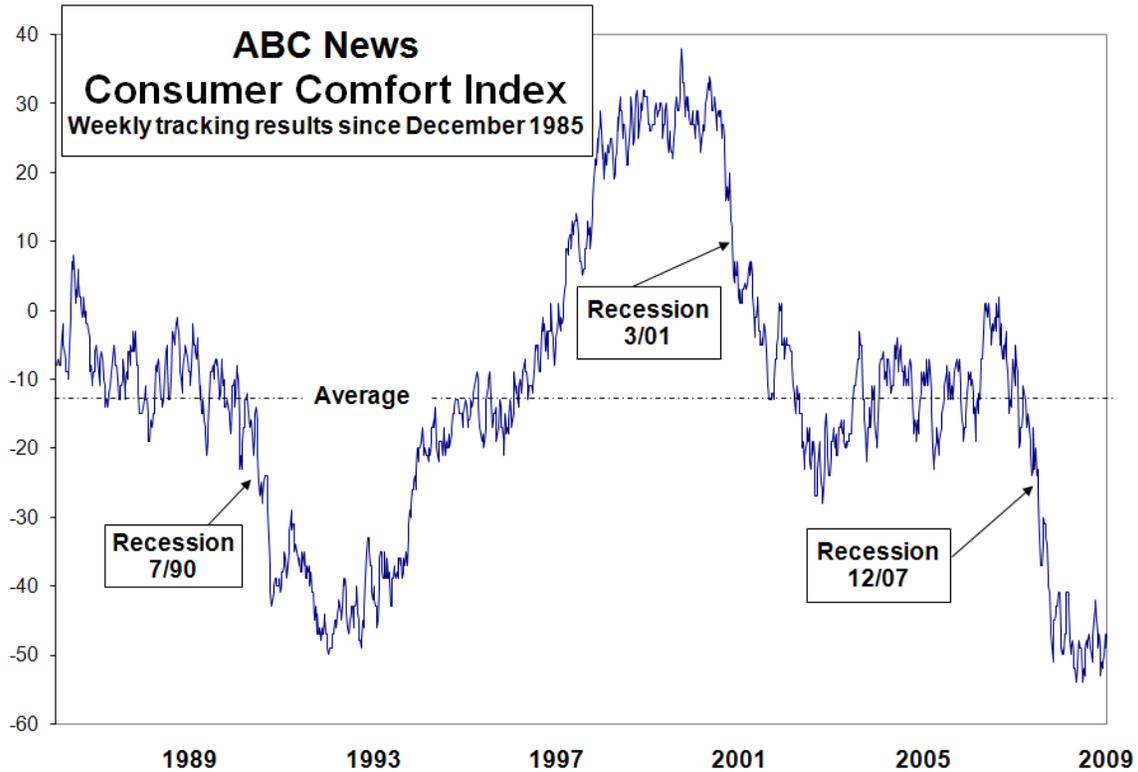


Positive ratings of:	ABC News CCI		Averages	
	This week	Last week	2009	'85-'09
National economy	8%	8	7	38
Buying climate	25	24	24	37
Personal finances	47	44	45	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-47	-49	-49	-12

TREND – Consumer confidence has zigged and zagged recently but is on an upward trajectory overall this summer; it’s risen 6 points since June 21, when it fell to -53 – a point from the all-time low. The advancement may be a relief, but the CCI remains in

record-low territory: Never before has confidence been below -40 for 68 weeks straight. It hasn't seen positive territory since March 2007.

The index is averaging -49 this year, compared with its long-term average of -12. Its record high was +38 in January 2000. The index is on pace for its worst year, 5 points under its lowest full-year average, -44 in 1992.



	ABC News CCI	
This week	-47	
Last week	-49	
2009 high	-42	May 10
2009 low	-54	Jan. 25, record low
2009 average	-49	
2000 average	+29	Best full year
1992 average	-44	Worst full year
Jan. 16, 2000	+38	Record high
Average since 12/85	-12	

GROUPS – The index is higher as usual among better-off Americans, but negative across the board for the 24th week straight, and all but two weeks this year.

It's -21 among those with the highest incomes but -67 among those with the lowest, -37 among those who've attended college vs. -66 among high school dropouts, -43 among men while -49 among women (matching the best since June), -41 among homeowners

(the best since May) compared with -59 among renters, and -46 among whites (also the best since May) vs. -52 among blacks. The last is far different from the usual 28-point racial gap.

Partisan differences remain, with the CCI at -36 among Republicans, compared with -42 among independents (also the best since May) and -54 among Democrats. But the Republican-Democratic gap has been narrower than usual this year, averaging 20 points compared with 41 points last year and 32 points long-term.

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, the same as last week. The highest was 80 percent Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was 4 percent Feb. 8, 2009.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	8	1	7	92	43	49
Avg. since 12/85	38	3	35	62	40	22

PERSONAL FINANCES – Forty-seven percent say their own finances are excellent or good; it was 44 percent last week. The best was 70 percent, last reached in January 2000. The worst was 39 percent June 28 and 21.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	47	6	41	53	33	20
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	52	43	30	13

BUYING CLIMATE – Twenty-five 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, last reached Oct. 19, 2008.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	25	3	22	75	43	32
Avg. since 12/85	37	3	35	63	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 Aug. 9, 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 Giovanni Russonello.

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

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

08/09/09	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	-47	-49	-51	-42	-50	-41	-54	-49
State of Economy	-84	-84	-84	-80	-80	-66	-92	-83
Personal Finances	-6	-12	-14	4	-6	4	-22	-9
Buying Climate	-50	-52	-56	-50	-64	-46	-64	-54

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-43	-41	-40	-28	-48	-28	-49	-42
Women	-49	-56	-60	-54	-52	-46	-60	-54
Age:								
18 - 34	-42	-48	-51	-32	-58	-32	-61	-47
35 - 44	-45	-52	-50	-45	-48	-35	-62	-49
45 - 54	-47	-48	-50	-50	-48	-31	-61	-48
55 - 64	-50	-48	-54	-43	-46	-40	-65	-51
65+	-50	-48	-48	-46	-46	-34	-56	-47
Income:								
Under \$15K	-67	-66	-63	-75	-80	-51	-84	-72
\$15K To \$24.9K	-77	-75	-74	-41	-79	-41	-83	-69
\$25K To \$39.9K	-57	-62	-69	-56	-58	-47	-73	-61
\$40K To \$49.9K	-51	-55	-41	-52	-41	-27	-68	-51
Over \$50K	-23	-26	-30	-22	-30	-21	-41	-29
\$50K To \$74.9K	-32	-36	-35	-24	-43	-24	-54	-39
\$75K To \$99.9K	-16	-24	-32	-35	-34	-14	-52	-32
Over \$100K	-21	-17	-22	-8	-16	5	-34	-15
Region:								
Northeast	-54	-57	-47	-54	-52	-40	-62	-52
Midwest	-42	-43	-54	-48	-45	-31	-58	-48
South	-45	-47	-48	-45	-52	-39	-59	-49
West	-44	-50	-54	-19	-49	-19	-58	-44
Race:								
White	-46	-50	-50	-39	-47	-35	-52	-46
Black	-52	-41	-47	-57	-74	-41	-81	-60
Politics:								
Republican	-36	-39	-34	-32	-26	-10	-42	-31
Democrat	-54	-54	-55	-49	-65	-43	-70	-58
Independent	-42	-49	-56	-39	-49	-39	-56	-49
Education:								
< High School	-66	-69	-64	-61	-63	-51	-76	-65
High Sch. Grad.	-52	-56	-64	-52	-58	-38	-65	-54
College +	-37	-39	-40	-31	-43	-30	-50	-40
Home:								
Own	-41	-45	-45	-39	-45	-36	-49	-43
Rent	-59	-56	-64	-48	-67	-48	-80	-62
Marital Status:								

Single	-46	-53	-66	-38	-64	-34	-69	-53
Married	-42	-45	-39	-34	-39	-32	-47	-41
Sep/Wid/Div	-57	-53	-57	-64	-64	-52	-70	-62
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-40	-41	-38	-33	-47	-29	-47	-39
Part-Time	-42	-58	-67	-42	-63	-31	-67	-50
Not Employed	-53	-53	-60	-52	-50	-49	-66	-58

END