

Gore Still Doesn't Get Credit for the Economy

Al Gore's two terms as vice president have coincided with an unprecedented economic expansion, but he still gets little credit for it.

Only two in 10 Americans give Gore a "great deal" or a "good amount" of credit for the robust economy, an ABC News/Money magazine poll finds. About three-fourths give him "only some" credit or "little to none," with the latter group the largest of the bunch.

These results have changed little since 1999, despite Gore's effort on the campaign trail to lay claim to the growing economy. This could be one reason Gore has only a slim five-point advantage over Republican George W. Bush in public trust to handle the economy, according to a recent ABC News/Washington Post poll (though he trailed Bush on the issue until after the Democratic convention).

	Gore's Credit for the Economy:					
	-----Credit-----			-----No Credit-----		
	Net	Great deal	Good amount	Net	Only some	Little/none
9/17/00	20%	6	14	74	33	41
7/18/99	16	3	13	74	34	40

Not surprisingly, Gore does best among Democrats – 40 percent give him credit – and worst among Republicans – only three percent give him credit.

Even if most people don't directly give Gore credit for the economy, he still may benefit from it obliquely. It burnishes his credentials, even if indirectly. And good times tend to foster support for the status quo.

CONFIDENCE – Separately, consumer confidence slipped a notch this week, but remains very strong: Seventy-six percent of Americans say the economy's in good shape, 66 percent rate their personal finances positively and 53 percent call it a good time to buy things.

		----- Since 12/85 -----		
Positive ratings:	Today	Highest	Lowest	Average
National Economy	76%	80	7	40
Personal Finances	66	70	42	57
Buying Climate	53	57	20	38

INDEX – The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on these ratings, stands at +30 on its scale of +100 to -100, down three points from last week. The index peaked at +38 on Jan. 16, slipped in the spring and early summer, then rebounded.

The index has averaged +29 this year, a point above its record 1999 average. Its lifetime average, depressed by recession in the early 1990s, is only -10.

	ABC/Money Index	
Today	+30	
Jan. 16, 2000	+38	Record high
2000 average	+29	
1999 average	+28	Best full year
1992 average	-44	Worst full year
Feb. 9, 1992	-50	Record low
Average since 12/85	-10	

Call the ABC News Polling Unit, ext. 2621, for a chart tracking the index over time.

GROUPS - As usual, confidence is higher among better-off Americans: The index is +66 in higher-income households compared to -16 in the lowest, +49 among college graduates but -18 among high-school dropouts, +32 among whites but +11 among blacks and +34 among men but +26 among women.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY- Seventy-six percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good, down one point from last week. The best was 80 percent Jan. 16. The worst was seven percent in late 1991 and early 1992.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	76	14	62	24	18	6
Avg. since 12/85	40	4	37	60	39	20

PERSONAL FINANCES – Sixty-six percent rate their own finances as excellent or good, down three points from last week. The best was 70 percent, set Aug. 30, 1998 and last matched in January. The worst was 42 percent on March 14, 1993.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	66	9	57	34	25	9
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	52	43	31	13

BUYING CLIMATE - Fifty-three percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need, the same as last week. The best was 57 percent Jan. 16. The worst was 20 percent in fall 1990.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. net	Not good	Poor
This week	53	3	50	47	32	15
Avg. since 12/85	38	3	35	62	41	21

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. This week's results are based on 1,037 interviews in the week ending Sept. 17 and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points. The question on Gore was conducted Sept. 6-17 among 513 respondents; that result has a 4.5-point error margin. Fieldwork by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

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 Dalia Sussman.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet, at:
<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/PollVault/PollVault.html>

09/17/00	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	30	33	33	24	27	38	22	28
State of Economy	52	54	54	44	42	60	38	48
Personal Finances	32	38	38	32	38	40	28	34
Buying Climate	6	6	8	-4	2	14	-6	3

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	34	37	44	31	33	45	30	36
Women	26	27	24	18	21	30	11	20
Age:								
18 - 34	33	36	36	23	26	37	16	26
35 - 44	29	25	21	20	28	37	13	26
45 - 54	27	29	35	43	28	45	11	31
55 - 64	24	34	29	13	24	51	13	30
65 +	30	32	43	17	26	45	12	28
Income:								
Under \$15K	-16	-17	-27	-35	-20	-12	-36	-24
\$15K To \$24.9K	-20	-15	-4	-6	-11	26	-20	1
\$25K To \$39.9K	21	24	32	23	29	33	8	23
\$40K To \$49.9K	42	43	33	36	35	60	19	38
Over \$50K	66	68	65	58	61	68	53	61
Region:								
Northeast	31	32	34	27	35	48	17	33
Midwest	38	46	39	17	26	46	17	31
South	22	23	28	22	19	31	14	22
West	32	32	35	31	33	43	13	29
Race:								
White	32	35	38	30	30	43	25	33

Black	11	13	7	2	12	25	-15	1
Politics:								
Republican	38	38	42	40	38	55	31	41
Democrat	29	32	27	18	28	38	7	27
Independent	26	30	34	24	20	39	13	23
Education:								
< High School	-18	-15	-6	-20	-12	13	-24	-8
High Sch. Grad.	22	25	29	20	21	32	8	19
College +	49	51	49	40	45	53	38	46
Home:								
Own	35	40	42	33	31	44	28	36
Rent	15	12	11	3	15	19	-3	8
Marital Status:								
Single	29	33	39	18	23	42	8	25
Married	32	33	36	31	33	44	27	34
Sep/Wid/Div	21	27	13	4	8	27	-9	7
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	39	39	37	33	33	44	28	35
Part-Time	27	30	37	23	30	40	11	26
Not Employed	17	22	26	12	18	28	8	18

247. As you may know, the economy has been growing for the last several years. Do you think Vice President Al Gore should get a great deal of credit for that, a good amount, only some, or little to none?

	-----Credit-----			-----No Credit-----			No
	Net	Great deal	Good amount	Net	Only some	Little/none	opin.
9/17/00	20%	6	14	74	33	41	6
7/18/99	16	3	13	74	34	40	10

END