

Confidence Stays Afloat

Consumer confidence held steady for the third week in a row, buoyed by high positive ratings of the national economy and personal income. Confidence approached record levels last month, before dipping slightly and then leveling off.

Today 78 percent of Americans say the economy's in good shape, just two points from its record high; and 66 percent say their own finances are in good shape, four points off the record. Fifty-one percent call it a good time to buy things, six points from its high.

	Today	Highest	Lowest	Average
Positive ratings:				
National Economy	78%	80	7	41
Personal Finances	66	70	42	57
Buying Climate	51	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. The index has averaged, +29 this year, a point above its record 1999 average. Its lifetime average is -10, depressed by recession in the early 1990s.

	ABC/Money Index	
Today	+30	
Sept. 3, 2000	+34	
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 +59 in higher-income households compared to -24 in the lowest, +51 among college graduates but -12 among high-school dropouts, +34 among whites but -6 among blacks and +38 among men but +21 among women.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY- Seventy-eight percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good, up two points 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	78	12	66	22	17	5
Avg. since 12/85	41	4	37	59	39	20

PERSONAL FINANCES - Sixty-six percent rate their own finances as excellent or good, up one point 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	6	60	34	24	10
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	52	43	31	13

BUYING CLIMATE - Fifty-one percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need, down one point from 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	51	3	48	49	35	14
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 1,028 interviews in the week ending Oct. 8 and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points. 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.

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ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet, at:

<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/PollVault/PollVault.html>

10/08/00	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	29	33	26	26	38	22	29
State of Economy	56	52	54	42	44	60	38	48
Personal Finances	32	30	38	36	34	40	28	34
Buying Climate	2	4	6	0	0	14	-6	4

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

Sex:								
Men	38	32	37	35	35	45	30	36
Women	21	25	27	17	17	30	11	21
Age:								
18 - 34	24	29	36	34	26	37	16	26
35 - 44	30	26	25	20	16	37	13	26
45 - 54	34	33	29	35	26	45	11	32
55 - 64	32	23	34	13	35	51	13	30
65 +	29	30	32	17	29	45	12	29
Income:								
Under \$15K	-24	-23	-17	-31	-31	-12	-36	-24
\$15K To \$24.9K	3	-5	-15	-4	3	26	-20	1
\$25K To \$39.9K	15	14	24	14	14	33	8	23
\$40K To \$49.9K	44	46	43	35	43	60	19	38
Over \$50K	59	60	68	59	55	68	54	61
Region:								
Northeast	27	28	32	23	42	48	17	32
Midwest	28	37	46	28	31	46	17	31
South	23	21	23	19	17	31	17	23
West	42	32	32	37	20	43	13	30
Race:								
White	34	30	35	31	30	43	25	33
Black	-6	17	13	-6	-1	25	-15	1
Politics:								
Republican	45	44	38	31	38	55	31	42
Democrat	33	33	32	25	23	38	7	27
Independent	17	16	30	28	24	39	13	23
Education:								
< High School	-12	-21	-15	-6	-12	13	-23	-8
High Sch. Grad.	15	24	25	18	18	32	8	19
College +	51	48	51	42	43	53	38	46
Home:								
Own	35	32	40	31	34	44	31	36
Rent	13	17	12	11	2	19	-3	8
Marital Status:								
Single	32	29	33	25	18	42	8	25
Married	35	32	33	31	34	44	27	34
Sep/Wid/Div	3	12	27	6	1	27	-9	7
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	34	36	39	34	33	44	28	35
Part-Time	20	23	30	29	25	40	11	26
Not Employed	24	20	22	13	15	28	8	18

END