

Plenty of Blame For Oil Prices

Foreign oil producers bear an ample chunk of the blame for the recent rise in oil and gasoline prices, but there's plenty more to go around.

More than a third of Americans think other oil producing countries are responsible for the rise in prices, but another quarter lay the blame on the Clinton administration, and about two in 10 fault U.S. oil companies, an ABC News/Money magazine poll finds.

Who's to blame for rise in oil and gas prices?		
Other oil countries	Clinton administration	U.S. oil companies
36%	24	22

Not surprisingly, Republicans are more likely than Democrats or independents to blame the current administration; Democrats are more apt to fault foreign countries.

Who's to blame for rise in oil and gas prices?			
	Other oil countries	U.S. oil Companies	Clinton administration
Democrats	47%	28	12
Republicans	27	12	43
Independents	34	24	22

Last month President Clinton announced the release of 30 million barrels of oil from the country's emergency reserve supply, a move designed to help lower prices.

CONFIDENCE – Separately, consumer confidence remains strong: Seventy-seven percent of Americans say the economy's in good shape, 69 percent rate their personal finances positively and 51 percent call it a good time to buy things, all well above average.

Positive ratings:	Today	----- Since 12/85 ----		
		Highest	Lowest	Average
National Economy	77%	80	7	41
Personal Finances	69	70	42	57
Buying Climate	51	57	20	38

INDEX - The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on these ratings, stands at +31 on its scale of +100 to -100, up one point from last week. 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	+31	
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 +56 in higher-income households compared to -19 in the lowest, +52 among college graduates but -6 among high-school dropouts, +35 among whites but +5 among blacks and +38 among men but +25 among women.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY- Seventy-seven 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	77	11	66	23	17	6
Avg. since 12/85	41	4	37	59	39	20

PERSONAL FINANCES - Sixty-nine percent rate their own finances as excellent or good, up 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	69	5	64	31	22	9
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, 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	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 1,035 interviews in the week ending Oct. 15 and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points. The question on oil prices was conducted Oct. 4-15 among 517 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>

10/15/00	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	31	30	30	27	24	38	22	29
State of Economy	54	56	52	42	42	60	38	49
Personal Finances	38	32	32	34	32	40	28	34
Buying Climate	2	2	6	6	-2	14	-6	4

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	38	38	34	35	32	45	30	36
Women	25	21	26	19	15	30	11	21
Age:								
18 - 34	27	24	33	35	24	37	16	26
35 - 44	31	30	29	24	16	37	13	26
45 - 54	40	34	27	34	25	45	11	32
55 - 64	33	32	24	21	27	51	13	30
65 +	31	29	30	14	25	45	12	29
Income:								
Under \$15K	-19	-24	-16	-19	-36	-12	-36	-23
\$15K To \$24.9K	14	3	-20	0	4	26	-20	2
\$25K To \$39.9K	21	15	21	14	8	33	8	23
\$40K To \$49.9K	51	44	42	26	39	60	19	38
Over \$50K	56	59	66	60	58	68	54	61
Region:								
Northeast	40	27	31	29	37	48	17	32
Midwest	35	28	38	27	29	46	17	32
South	22	23	22	22	17	31	17	23
West	34	42	32	33	14	43	13	30
Race:								
White	35	34	32	31	28	43	25	33
Black	5	-6	11	0	-7	25	-15	1
Politics:								
Republican	45	45	38	31	41	55	31	42
Democrat	37	33	29	28	15	38	7	28

Independent	21	17	26	26	20	39	13	23
Education:								
< High School	-6	-12	-18	-1	-19	13	-23	-8
High Sch. Grad.	17	15	22	16	16	32	8	19
College +	52	51	49	44	41	53	38	47
Home:								
Own	38	35	35	33	35	44	31	36
Rent	15	13	15	10	-3	19	-3	8
Marital Status:								
Single	34	32	29	33	12	42	8	25
Married	37	35	32	31	35	44	27	34
Sep/Wid/Div	6	3	21	4	-9	27	-9	7
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	35	34	39	37	34	44	28	35
Part-Time	19	20	27	33	24	40	11	26
Not Employed	29	24	17	10	9	29	8	19

248. Who do you blame for the recent rise in oil and gasoline prices - other oil producing countries, U.S. oil companies, or the Clinton administration?

	Other oil producing countries	U.S. oil companies	Clinton administration	None (vol.)	Other (vol.)	All equal (vol.)	No op.
10/15/00	36	22	24	1	2	5	9

END