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ABC NEWS/MONEY CONSUMER INDEX - 11/16/97
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Confidence Advances

Consumer confidence jumped to its best in nearly two months this week, as Americans' ratings of their finances, the national economy and the buying climate all advanced. Confidence remains on track for a record year in the nearly 12-year-old ABC News/Money magazine poll.

Fifty-nine percent now rate the economy positively, the most since Sept. 21 and a huge 26 points above the poll's lifetime average. Sixty-one percent also rate their finances positively, just three points short of the record.

Fewer, 44 percent, call it a good time to buy things. But that's still nine points better than average, and other ABC/Money results last week and in October pointed to a good Christmas season for retailers.

	Positive Ratings	
	Today	11-yr avg.
National Economy	59%	33%
Buying Climate	44	35
Personal Finances	61	55

INDEX - The ABC/Money Consumer Comfort Index, based on ratings of the economy, finances and the buying climate, gained three points this week to +9 on its scale of +100 to -100. It reached a record high, +14, in mid-September, then lost ground last month.

The index is far above its lifetime average of -18, and on pace for a record year. It's averaged +4 in the year to date; its previous best one-year average was -3 in 1986, and it's done as badly as -44 in 1992.

ABC/Money Index			
1997*	+4	1991	-37
1996	-11	1990	-24
1995	-15	1989	-11
1994	-19	1988	-10
1993	-37	1987	-9
1992	-44	1986	-3

*to date

GROUPS - Confidence lags in economically vulnerable groups, including women, blacks, the poor and the less-educated. The index is +17 among men but +3 among women; +15 among whites but -27 among blacks; +33 in higher-income households but -33 in the lowest; and +25 among people who've attended college but -21 among high school dropouts.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY- Fifty-nine percent rate the economy positively, up two points this week. It's averaged 53 percent this year and 33 percent for the life of the index. The best was 62 percent positive in August and September; the worst, 93

percent negative in late 1991 and early 1992.

PERSONAL FINANCES - Sixty-one percent rate their finances positively, up two points. It's averaged 60 percent this year and 55 percent for the life of the index. The best was 64 percent positive Aug. 3; the worst, 58 percent negative March 14, 1993.

BUYING CLIMATE - Fifty-six percent call this a bad time to buy things, down a point. It's averaged 58 percent negative this year and 65 percent for the life of the index. 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	59% pos	61% pos	56% neg
1997 Average	53% pos	60% pos	58% neg
Full Average	67% neg	55% pos	65% neg
Worst	93% neg	58% neg	80% neg
Best	62% pos	64% 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. This week's results are based on 1,051 interviews in the month ending Nov. 16 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.

11/16/97	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	9	6	5	12	-3	14	-8	3
State of Economy	18	14	8	22	-2	24	-8	6
Personal Finances	22	18	14	24	16	28	10	20
Buying Climate	-12	-14	-6	-10	-22	-4	-30	-16

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

Sex:

Men	17	13	15	24	8	28	4	14
Women	3	0	-4	1	-12	6	-19	-7
Age:								
18 - 34	3	-2	0	11	-5	17	-10	1
35 - 44	10	8	8	6	-4	15	-13	2
45 - 54	11	9	6	16	-1	19	-12	3
55 - 64	18	11	0	15	8	26	-17	5
65 +	14	12	12	14	-2	35	-10	9
Income:								
Under \$15K	-33	-44	-39	-33	-35	-24	-56	-40
\$15K To \$24.9K	-6	-20	-28	-34	-22	7	-34	-18
\$25K To \$39.9K	7	2	0	15	-6	20	-8	3
\$40K To \$49.9K	27	26	6	30	26	33	-4	11
Over \$50K	33	37	47	45	23	51	23	38
Region:								
Northeast	6	-1	-4	14	-7	14	-16	0
Midwest	11	6	12	15	4	20	-8	7
South	12	9	-1	14	-2	20	-13	2
West	7	8	15	3	-5	21	-10	4
Race:								
White	15	12	11	19	1	19	-3	8
Black	-27	-29	-32	-11	-21	0	-42	-24
Politics:								
Republican	27	21	19	31	2	31	0	16
Democrat	4	2	3	8	8	12	-10	2
Independent	7	4	1	3	-12	16	-16	-2
Education:								
< High School	-21	-29	-36	-13	-28	-5	-41	-24
High Sch. Grad.	4	2	-3	4	-4	5	-19	-6
College +	25	22	25	26	8	30	8	19
Home:								
Own	20	16	12	19	4	21	-4	10
Rent	-13	-18	-14	-10	-18	2	-27	-15
Marital Status:								
Single	-5	-7	-5	7	-6	12	-16	-2
Married	21	16	13	19	1	23	-3	10
Sep/Wid/Div	-17	-18	-17	-9	-9	0	-29	-17
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	15	15	12	19	4	25	-1	11
Part-Time	5	-3	0	10	-21	15	-22	-3
Not Employed	3	-3	-5	3	-5	9	-21	-6