## ABC NEWS/MONEY CONSUMER INDEX - 11/26/00

 EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE AFTER 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 29, 2000
## Buying Climate Still Cool

The holiday shopping season has begun with half of Americans calling it a good time to spend money - a bit fewer than at this time in either of the last two years.

Exactly 50 percent call it a good time to spend, compared to 55 percent at this time last year and 56 percent at this time in 1998. The question is whether that's enough of a change to influence spending at this critical time for retailers.

Other ratings are the same or higher than at this time in 1999 or 1998, helping to keep overall consumer confidence strong: Seventy-seven percent of Americans rate the national economy positively, and 67 percent say their own finances are in good shape

| Positive ratings: | $11 / 26 / 00$ | $11 / 28 / 99$ | $11 / 29 / 98$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| National economy | $77 \%$ | 73 | 73 |
| Personal finances | 67 | 66 | 67 |
| Buying climate | 50 | 55 | 56 |

INDEX - The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on these ratings, stands at +29 on its scale of +100 to -100 , up one point from last week. The index peaked at +38 last January. It’s averaged +29 this year, a point above its record 1999 average. Its lifetime average, depressed by recession in the early 1990s, is $\mathbf{- 1 0}$.

| Today | ABC/Money <br> +29 | Index |
| :--- | :---: | :--- |
| 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 +65 in higher-income households compared to -12 in the lowest, +47 among college graduates but -13 among high-school dropouts and +34 among whites but +4 among blacks.

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, unchanged from the previous two weeks. 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 | 12 | 65 | 23 | 16 | 7 |  |
| Avg. since | $12 / 85$ | 41 | 4 | 37 | 59 | 39 | 20 |

PERSONAL FINANCES - Sixty-seven 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 rating was 42 percent on March 14, 1993.

|  | Pos. NET | Excel. | Good | Neg. NET | Not good | Poor |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| This week | 67 | 6 | 61 | 33 | 26 | 7 |
| Avg. since $12 / 85$ | 57 | 5 | 52 | 43 | 31 | 13 |

BUYING CLIMATE - Fifty percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need, up 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 | 50 | 3 | 47 | 50 | 37 | 13 |
| Avg. since $12 / 85$ | 38 | 3 | 36 | 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 1,038 interviews in the week ending Nov. 26 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.

Analysis by Aaron Frechette.
ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet, at: http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/PollVault/PollVault.html

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11/26/00 This Last 4 Wks 3 Mo. 1 Yr. 12 Mo 12 Mo 12 Mo
    Week Week Ago Ago Ago High Low Avg
Group
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GENERAL POPULATION:
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| Overall Index | 29 | 28 | 26 | 32 | 29 | 38 | 23 | 29 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| State of Economy | 54 | 54 | 50 | 52 | 46 | 60 | 40 | 50 |
| Personal Finances | 34 | 32 | 32 | 38 | 32 | 40 | 30 | 34 |
| Buying Climate | 0 | -2 | -4 | 6 | 10 | 14 | -6 | 3 |

Sex:

| Men | 31 | 32 | 36 | 43 | 38 | 45 | 30 | 36 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Women | 27 | 23 | 17 | 22 | 21 | 30 | 13 | 22 |
| Age: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| $18-34$ | 25 | 25 | 24 | 36 | 19 | 37 | 16 | 27 |
| $35-44$ | 32 | 18 | 24 | 17 | 32 | 37 | 15 | 27 |
| $45-54$ | 33 | 34 | 35 | 33 | 33 | 45 | 11 | 32 |
| $55-64$ | 36 | 28 | 21 | 39 | 42 | 51 | 13 | 31 |
| $65+$ |  |  |  |  | 29 | 45 | 12 | 29 |
| Income: | -12 | -15 | -13 | -18 | -32 | -8 | -36 | -21 |

$\$ 15 \mathrm{~K}$ To $\$ 24.9 \mathrm{~K}$
$\$ 25 \mathrm{~K}$ To $\$ 39.9 \mathrm{~K}$
\$40K To \$49.9K Over \$50K
Region:
Northeast
Midwest
South
West
Race:
White
Black
Politics:
Republican
Democrat
Independent
Education:
< High School
High Sch. Grad.
College +
Home:
Own
Rent
Marital Status:
Single
Married
Sep/Wid/Div
Employ. Status:
Full-Time
Part-Time
Not Employed

| 45 | 42 | 43 | 38 | 44 | 55 | 31 | 42 |
| ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| 22 | 20 | 24 | 30 | 32 | 38 | 7 | 28 |
| 29 | 25 | 20 | 31 | 15 | 39 | 15 | 24 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| -13 | -20 | -19 | 1 | -2 | 13 | -23 | -9 |
| 22 | 18 | 10 | 24 | 21 | 32 | 8 | 19 |
| 47 | 48 | 51 | 47 | 45 | 53 | 38 | 47 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 37 | 38 | 34 | 39 | 39 | 44 | 31 | 36 |
| 10 | 2 | 7 | 14 | 4 | 19 | 2 | 9 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16 | 20 | 31 | 42 | 27 | 42 | 9 | 26 |
| 36 | 33 | 31 | 33 | 37 | 44 | 30 | 34 |
| 19 | 18 | 1 | 16 | 3 | 27 | -3 | 9 |
| 34 | 33 | 34 | 34 | 39 | 44 | 28 | 36 |
| 31 | 38 | 19 | 40 | 32 | 40 | 11 | 26 |
| 21 | 16 | 17 | 27 | 13 | 29 | 10 | 20 |

