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

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## **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 -10.

					ABC/Money	Index
Τ	'oday	7			+29	
J	an.	16,	2000		+38	Record high
2	000	ave	rage		+29	
1	999	ave	rage		+28	Best full year
1	992	ave	rage		-44	Worst full year
F	eb.	9,	1992		-50	Record low
Α	vera	age	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 12/8	35 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 12/8	5 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: <a href="http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/PollVault/PollVault.html">http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/PollVault/PollVault.html</a>

Overall Index State of Economy Personal Finances Buying Climate	29 54 34 0	28 54 32 -2	26 50 32 -4	32 52 38 6	29 46 32 10	38 60 40 14	23 40 30 -6	29 50 34 3
		OVERALL	IND	EX BY	DEMOGR	APHIC	GROUPS	
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	24	18	24	17	32	37	15	27
45 – 54	32	34	35	33	33	45	11	32
55 - 64	33	37	31	39	42	51	13	31
65 +	36	28	21	39	29	45	12	29
Income:								
Under \$15K	-12		-13	-18	-32	-8	-36	-21
\$15K To \$24.9K	0	-8	-6	-9	6	26	-20	0
\$25K To \$39.9K	15	12	18	26	28	33	12	23
\$40K To \$49.9K	39	41	45	33	43	60	19	39
Over \$50K	65	64	57	63	65	68	54	61
Region:	11	20	2 E	2.2	2.4	40	1 7	2.2
Northeast	41	29 25	25	32	34	48	17 17	33
Midwest	36 16	35 21	30 23	37	33	46	16	32 22
South West	31	29	28	28 35	30 18	31 43	17	32
Race:	31	49	20	33	10	43	Ι/	34
White	34	32	32	37	34	43	25	34
Black	4	-4	-9	3	-1	25	-15	1
Politics:	_	-	,	5	_	23	13	
Republican	45	42	43	38	44	55	31	42
Democrat	22	20	24	30	32	38	7	28
Independent	29	25	20	31	15	39	15	24
Education:				0_				
< High School	-13	-20	-19	1	-2	13	-23	-9
High Sch. Grad.	22	18	10	24	21	32	8	19
College +	47	48	51	47	45	53	38	47
Home:								
Own	37	38	34	39	39	44	31	36
Rent	10	2	7	14	4	19	2	9
Marital Status:								
Single	16	20	31	42	27	42	9	26
Married	36	33	31	33	37	44	30	34
Sep/Wid/Div	19	18	1	16	3	27	-3	9
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	34	33	34	34	39	44	28	36
Part-Time	31	38	19	40	32	40	11	26
Not Employed	21	16	17	27	13	29	10	20

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