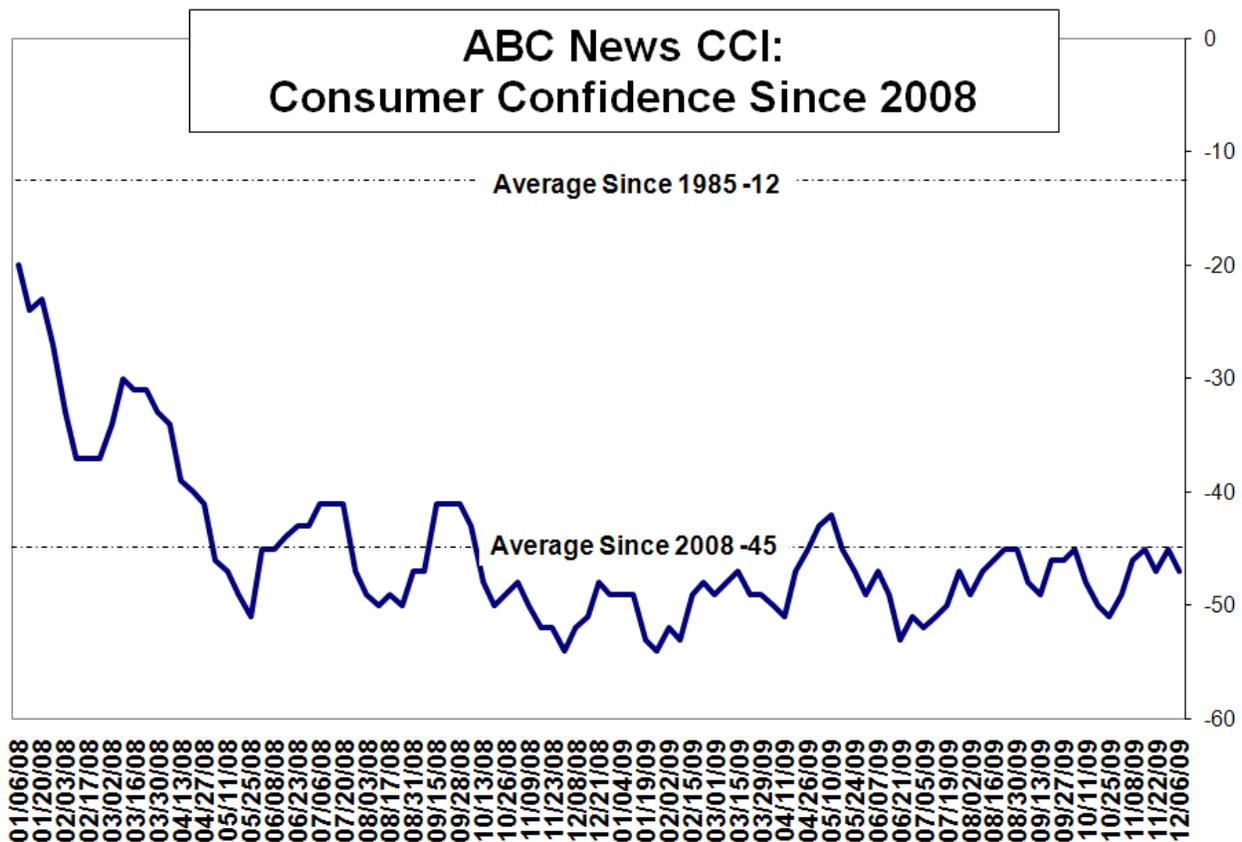


## **Confidence Stuck in Neutral as Obama Focuses on Jobs**

With the Obama administration accelerating its focus on jobs today, consumer confidence is stuck in neutral, near record low territory.

The ABC News Consumer Comfort Index stands at -47 on its scale of +100 to -100, trapped in a narrow 2-point range for the past five weeks and only 7 points above its worst rating, -54 reached in late January.

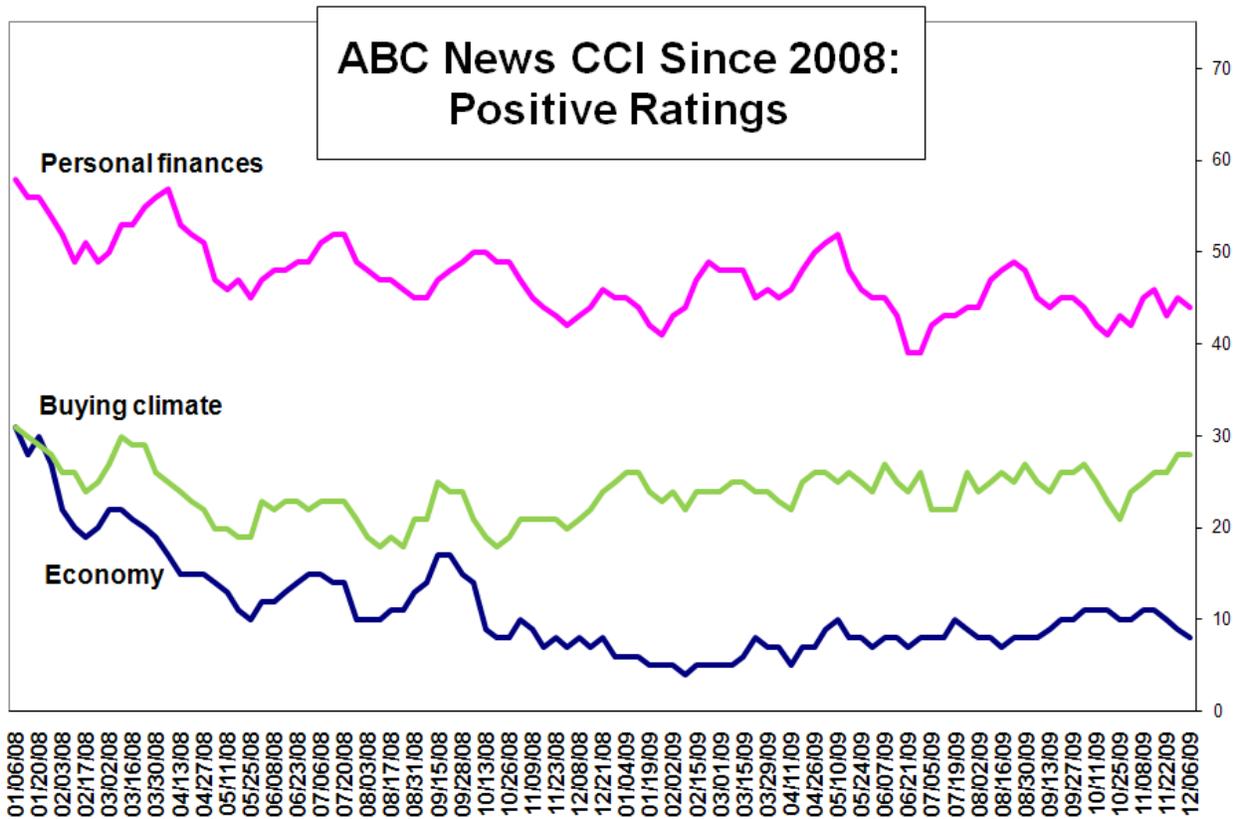
President Obama unveiled a jobs creation program today following his jobs summit last Friday – logical given the 10 percent unemployment rate. Consumer confidence will likely remain in the doldrums until more jobs are created than lost; the unemployment rate is one of the strongest economic correlates of consumer sentiment.



INDEX – Of the three components of the CCI, 44 percent of Americans now rate their personal finances positively, 13 points below average and 5 points from the record low in June. It’s been below a majority for 30 weeks straight and all but two weeks this year.

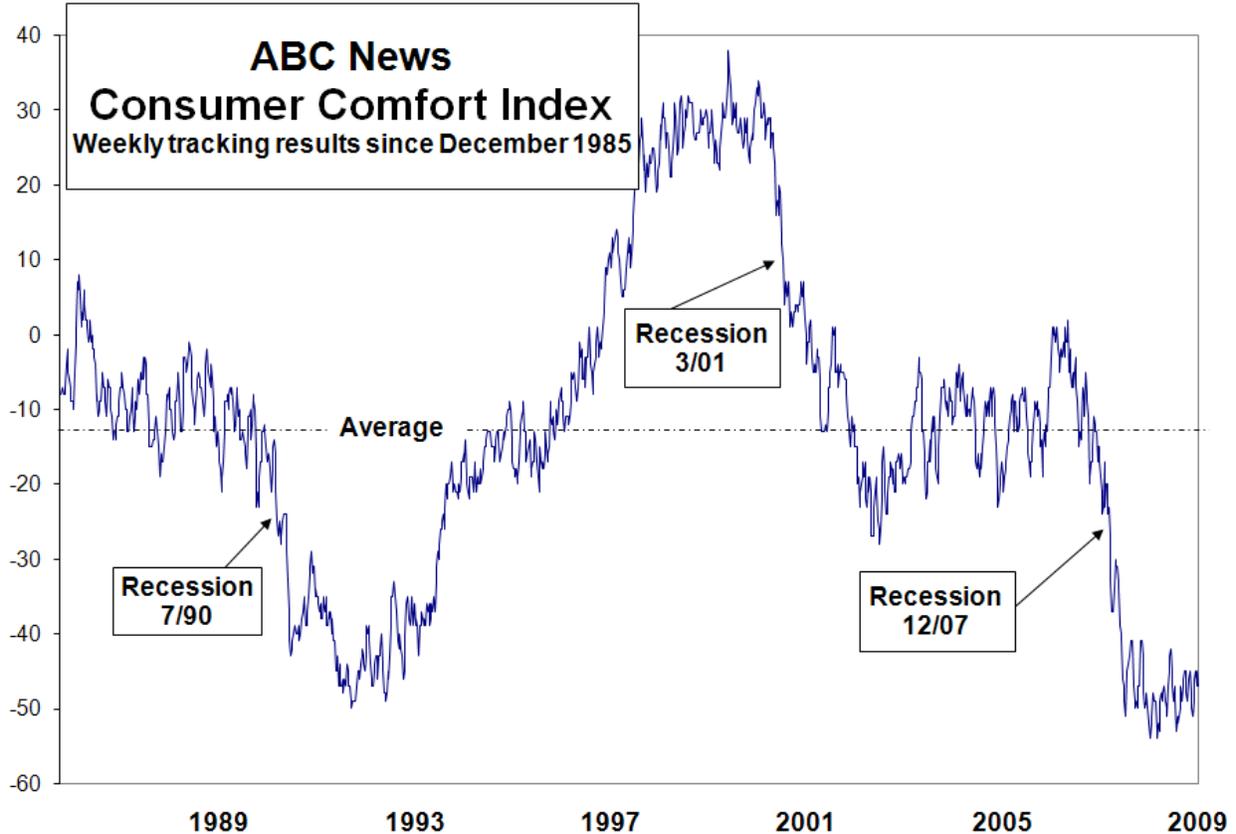
Positive ratings of the buying climate, at 28 percent, are the same as last week and the best of the year. Still, that is 9 points below average and under 30 percent for a record 91 weeks, not what retailers want to hear at the peak of the holiday shopping season.

At just 8 percent, positive ratings of the economy match their yearly average and are 30 points below their long-term average.



Positive ratings of:	ABC News CCI		Averages	
	This week	Last week	2009	'85-'09
National economy	8%	9	8	38
Buying climate	28	28	25	37
Personal finances	44	45	45	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-47	-45	-48	-12

TREND – At -47, the index has not moved up or down significantly in five weeks. In five of the last 16 weeks (including last week and two weeks before that) the CCI reached -45 but was unable to get any better.



The CCI is in very bad shape in historical terms; it has averaged -48 in 2009 and is on pace for its worst full year in 24 years of weekly polls. That compares with the long-term average of -12, -42 last year, -44 in 1992 – its worst full year – and +29 in 2000 – its best year.

Confidence has been below -40 for a record 85 weeks and hasn't seen positive territory since March 2007.

	ABC News CCI	
This week	-47	
Last week	-45	
2009 high	-42	May 10
2009 low	-54	Jan. 25, record low
2009 average	-48	
2000 average	+29	Best full year
1992 average	-44	Worst full year
Jan. 16, 2000	+38	Record high
Average since 12/85	-12	

**GROUPS** – The index is negative across the board for the 41<sup>st</sup> week straight, the longest such run in data since 1990.

It's -3 among those with the highest incomes but -72 among those with the lowest, -39 among people who've attended college vs. -56 among high school dropouts, -41 among men while -50 among women, -42 among homeowners compared with -52 among renters, and -45 among whites vs. -49 among blacks. The last is far different from the usual 28-point racial gap.

Most unusual is the lack of a partisan difference this week. The CCI is -41 among both Republicans and Democrats and -51 among independents. This partisan parity has happened only three other times in weekly data since 1990. The lack of a gap this week compares with a 32-point difference long-term.

Here's a closer look at the three components of the ABC News CCI:

**NATIONAL ECONOMY** – Eight percent of Americans rate the economy as excellent or good; it was 9 percent last week. The highest was 80 percent Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was 4 percent Feb. 8, 2009.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	8	1	7	92	42	50
Avg. since 12/85	38	3	34	62	40	22

**PERSONAL FINANCES** – Forty-four percent say their own finances are excellent or good; it was 45 percent last week. The best was 70 percent, last reached in January 2000. The worst was 39 percent June 28 and 21, 2009.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	44	5	39	56	35	21
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	51	43	30	13

**BUYING CLIMATE** – Twenty-eight percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things; the same as last week. The best was 57 percent Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was 18 percent, last reached Oct. 19, 2008.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	28	3	25	72	43	29
Avg. since 12/85	37	3	34	63	42	21

**METHODOLOGY** – Interviews for the ABC News Consumer Comfort Index are reported in a four-week rolling average. This week's results are based on telephone interviews among a random national sample of 1,000 adults in the four weeks ending Dec. 6, 2009. The results have a 3-point error margin. Field work by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

The index is derived by subtracting the negative response to each index question from the positive response to that question. The three resulting numbers are 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 Peyton M. Craighill

ABC News polls can be found online at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934.

12/06/09	This Week	Last Week	4 Wks Ago	3 Mo. Ago	1 Yr. Ago	12 Mo High	12 Mo Low	12 Mo Avg
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Group	-----							
GENERAL POPULATION:								
Overall Index	-47	-45	-46	-48	-52	-42	-54	-48
State of Economy	-84	-82	-78	-84	-84	-78	-92	-84
Personal Finances	-12	-10	-10	-10	-14	4	-22	-10
Buying Climate	-44	-44	-50	-50	-58	-44	-58	-51
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OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-41	-43	-41	-44	-44	-28	-49	-42
Women	-50	-46	-50	-50	-58	-45	-60	-53
Age:								
18 - 34	-43	-45	-41	-42	-54	-31	-61	-44
35 - 44	-56	-50	-50	-46	-42	-35	-62	-49
45 - 54	-40	-36	-47	-61	-61	-36	-65	-49
55 - 64	-49	-48	-48	-49	-49	-39	-65	-52
65+	-44	-45	-45	-42	-48	-40	-56	-48
Income:								
Under \$15K	-72	-73	-78	-80	-51	-51	-84	-72
\$15K To \$24.9K	-68	-70	-47	-47	-58	-40	-81	-66
\$25K To \$39.9K	-53	-54	-50	-52	-59	-49	-73	-60
\$40K To \$49.9K	-42	-41	-42	-41	-62	-27	-68	-49
Over \$50K	-29	-25	-30	-31	-41	-19	-41	-29
\$50K To \$74.9K	-46	-37	-40	-45	-45	-24	-54	-39
\$75K To \$99.9K	-38	-33	-26	-28	-48	-12	-52	-30
Over \$100K	-3	-4	-25	-23	-30	5	-34	-17
Region:								
Northeast	-40	-38	-46	-40	-50	-38	-62	-49
Midwest	-49	-47	-42	-54	-57	-41	-58	-49
South	-47	-47	-50	-50	-53	-39	-59	-50
West	-45	-44	-41	-43	-43	-19	-58	-42
Race:								
White	-45	-44	-46	-47	-48	-39	-52	-47
Black	-49	-46	-53	-50	-60	-41	-68	-56
Politics:								
Republican	-41	-38	-35	-40	-37	-28	-42	-36
Democrat	-41	-40	-50	-58	-57	-40	-65	-54
Independent	-51	-53	-42	-45	-53	-39	-59	-49
Education:								
< High School	-56	-58	-65	-75	-54	-51	-82	-66
High Sch. Grad.	-51	-51	-56	-51	-51	-46	-65	-55
College +	-39	-37	-35	-37	-50	-30	-50	-39
Home:								
Own	-42	-40	-42	-42	-47	-35	-49	-43

Rent	-52	-56	-52	-59	-64	-48	-71	-60
Marital Status:								
Single	-46	-49	-46	-61	-55	-34	-66	-51
Married	-42	-36	-43	-37	-45	-33	-47	-41
Sep/Wid/Div	-55	-59	-55	-60	-61	-53	-70	-61
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-37	-33	-36	-32	-40	-31	-45	-38
Part-Time	-48	-44	-53	-67	-59	-31	-67	-50
Not Employed	-52	-55	-52	-56	-65	-49	-65	-57

\*\*\*END\*\*\*