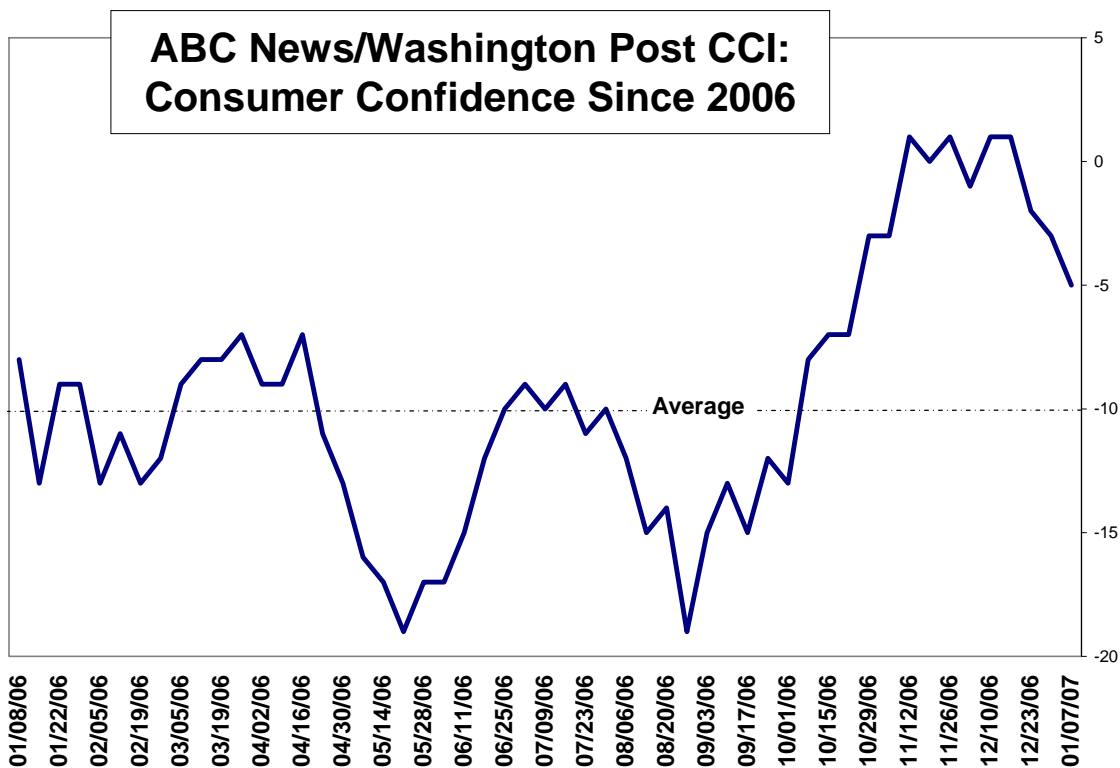


## **Consumer Confidence: A Shaky Start to '07**

Consumer confidence is off to a shaky start in 2007, dipping from the 2006 high it reached in mid-December. It's its lowest this week since Oct. 22.

The ABC News/Washington Post Consumer Comfort Index stands at -5 on its scale of +100 to -100, down from +1 three weeks ago. It's still better than its 2006 average, -10, and its recent low, -19 last August as gasoline prices spiked.

But as in most of the history of this 21-year-old weekly survey – with the exception of mid-1997 to mid-2001 – it's having trouble holding a footing in the feel-good zone of positive numbers. The index's long-term average is -9.

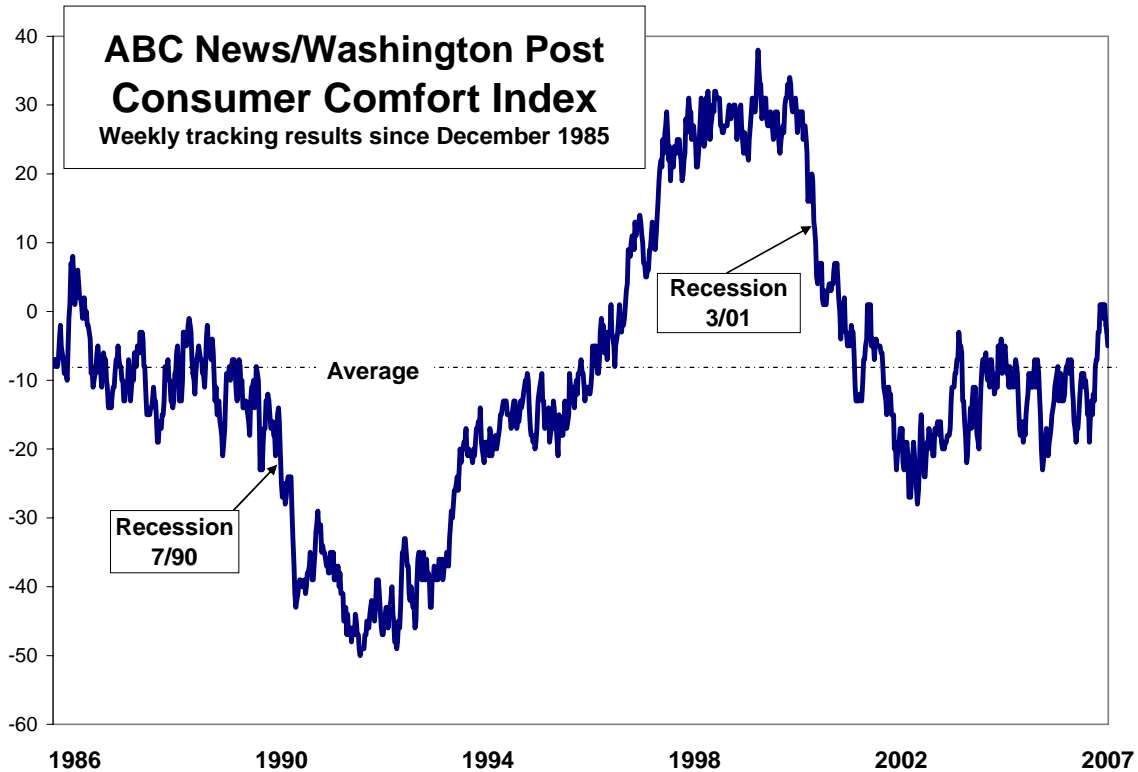


INDEX – The CCI is based on Americans' ratings of the national economy, the buying climate and their personal finances. This week 37 percent call it a good time to buy things, down from a recent high of 44 percent in late November to the fewest since mid-October.

Forty-four percent rate the national economy positively – it was 48 percent, a more than five-year high, three weeks ago – and 61 percent rate their personal finances positively, compared with 65 percent in mid-November, the most since August 2001.

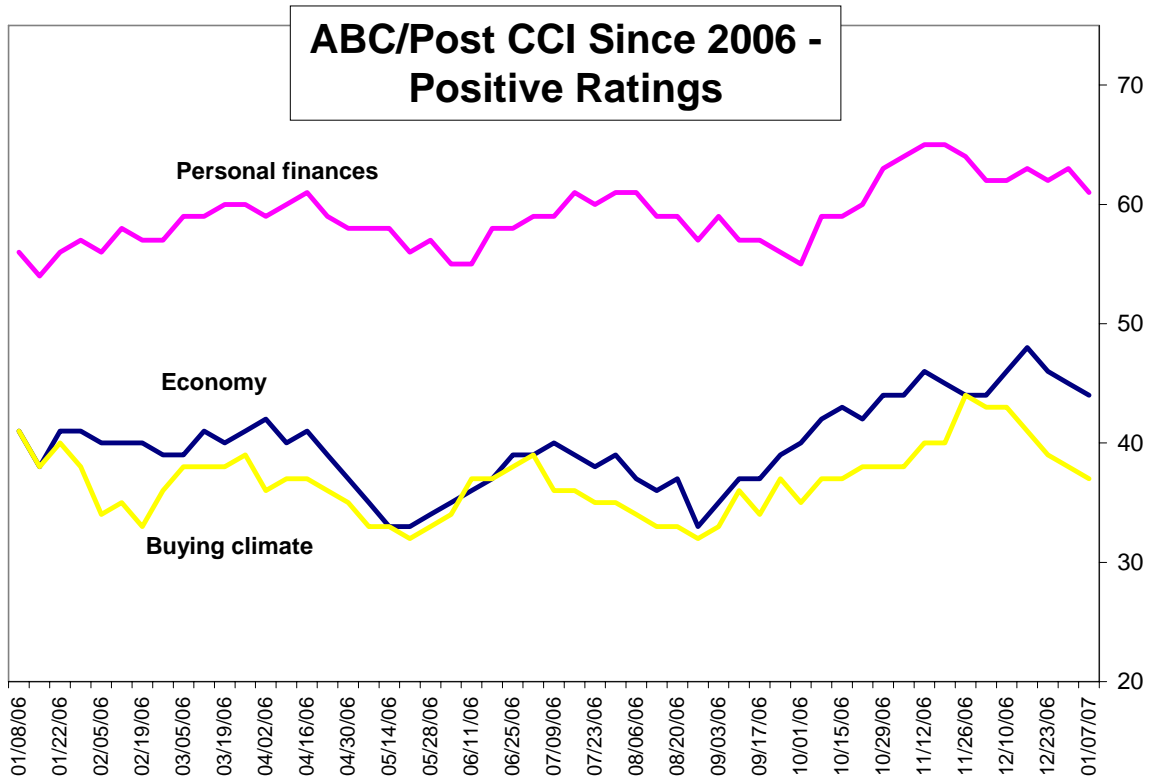
ABC News/Washington Post CCI				
Positive ratings of:	This week	Aug. 27	2006 avg.	21-yr. avg.
National economy	44%	33	40	40
Buying climate	37	32	37	38
Personal finances	61	57	59	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-5	-19	-10	-9

**TREND** – The slow start to 2006 follows a rally that lifted the index through the fall, from -19 on Aug. 27 to +1 in November and December. The CCI is a long way from its best days, an average of +29 in 2000 (peaking at +38 in January 2000). But it's been vastly worse – an average of -44 in 1992, bottoming out at -50 that February.



ABC/Post CCI		
This week	-5	
2006 high	+1	Dec. 17, Dec. 10, Nov. 26, Nov. 12
2006 low	-19	Aug. 27, May 21
2006 average	-10	
2000 average	+29	Best full year
1992 average	-44	Worst full year
Jan. 16, 2000	+38	Record high
Feb. 9, 1992	-50	Record low
Average since 12/85	-9	

GROUPS – As usual, the index is higher in better-off groups – far better, for example, among higher-income Americans, college graduates and whites. It’s +5 among men while -13 among women. And huge partisan differences remain: The CCI is +39 among Republicans, but -15 among independents and -27 among Democrats.



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

**NATIONAL ECONOMY** – Forty-four percent of Americans rate the economy as excellent or good; it was 45 percent last week. The highest was 80 percent on Jan. 16, 2000. The lowest was seven percent in late 1991 and early 1992.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	44	5	39	56	38	18
Avg. since 12/85	40	4	37	60	40	20

**PERSONAL FINANCES** – Sixty-one percent say their own finances are excellent or good; it was 63 percent last week. The best was 70 percent on Aug. 30, 1998, matched in January 2000. The worst was 42 percent on March 14, 1993.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	61	9	52	39	25	14
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	52	43	30	13

BUYING CLIMATE – Thirty-seven percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things; it was 38 percent last week. The best was 57 percent on Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was 20 percent in fall 1990.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. net	Not good	Poor
This week	37	3	34	63	43	20
Avg. since 12/85	38	3	36	62	41	21

METHODOLOGY – Interviews for the ABC News/Washington Post 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 Jan. 7, 2007. The results have a three-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/pollvault.html>.

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

01/07/07	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	-5	-3	1	-8	-8	1	-19	-10
State of Economy	-12	-10	-8	-16	-18	-4	-34	-20
Personal Finances	22	26	24	18	12	30	8	18
Buying Climate	-26	-24	-14	-26	-18	-12	-36	-27
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OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	5	15	10	4	5	17	-12	1
Women	-13	-19	-9	-20	-21	-5	-32	-19
Age:								
18 - 34	-13	-8	5	-5	-7	6	-24	-6
35 - 44	8	3	1	-11	-3	8	-23	-8
45 - 54	-7	0	-7	-9	-12	2	-30	-15
55 - 64	-8	-9	-3	-1	-11	4	-25	-9
65+	-1	2	3	-15	-9	3	-31	-12
Income:								
Under \$15K	-50	-43	-26	-57	-53	-26	-72	-52
\$15K To \$24.9K	-45	-36	-43	-29	-48	-15	-62	-42
\$25K To \$39.9K	-24	-17	-14	-10	-23	0	-37	-18
\$40K To \$49.9K	-19	-24	-18	15	26	26	-41	-12
Over \$50K	29	29	32	19	20	35	6	19

\$50K To \$74.9K	13	5	21	6	8	24	-20	2
\$75K To \$99.9K	32	41	32	11	16	44	7	21
Over \$100K	46	47	41	41	41	56	25	37
Region:								
Northeast	-17	-21	-4	-22	-19	7	-30	-16
Midwest	-2	-2	-13	-16	-4	-2	-33	-15
South	-3	6	1	-3	-15	6	-19	-9
West	0	-1	16	3	7	23	-13	1
Race:								
White	-2	0	6	-4	-4	10	-12	-4
Black	-25	-34	-50	-36	-36	-25	-57	-43
Politics:								
Republican	39	39	36	31	34	45	12	30
Democrat	-27	-26	-17	-22	-43	-17	-46	-31
Independent	-15	-14	-16	-23	-10	-5	-25	-17
Education:								
< High School	-27	-19	-25	-25	-31	-18	-60	-38
High Sch. Grad.	-21	-22	-8	-20	-18	-6	-30	-18
College +	14	16	14	5	5	18	-9	5
Home:								
Own	5	7	9	-2	1	10	-12	-2
Rent	-36	-33	-20	-23	-31	-16	-44	-30
Marital Status:								
Single	-22	-13	-7	-22	-19	1	-32	-16
Married	13	11	10	7	5	16	-9	2
Sep/Wid/Div	-35	-32	-19	-26	-25	-19	-45	-32
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	9	10	7	5	2	15	-12	0
Part-Time	-16	-10	5	-19	-7	13	-29	-11
Not Employed	-16	-17	-11	-22	-23	-11	-43	-23

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