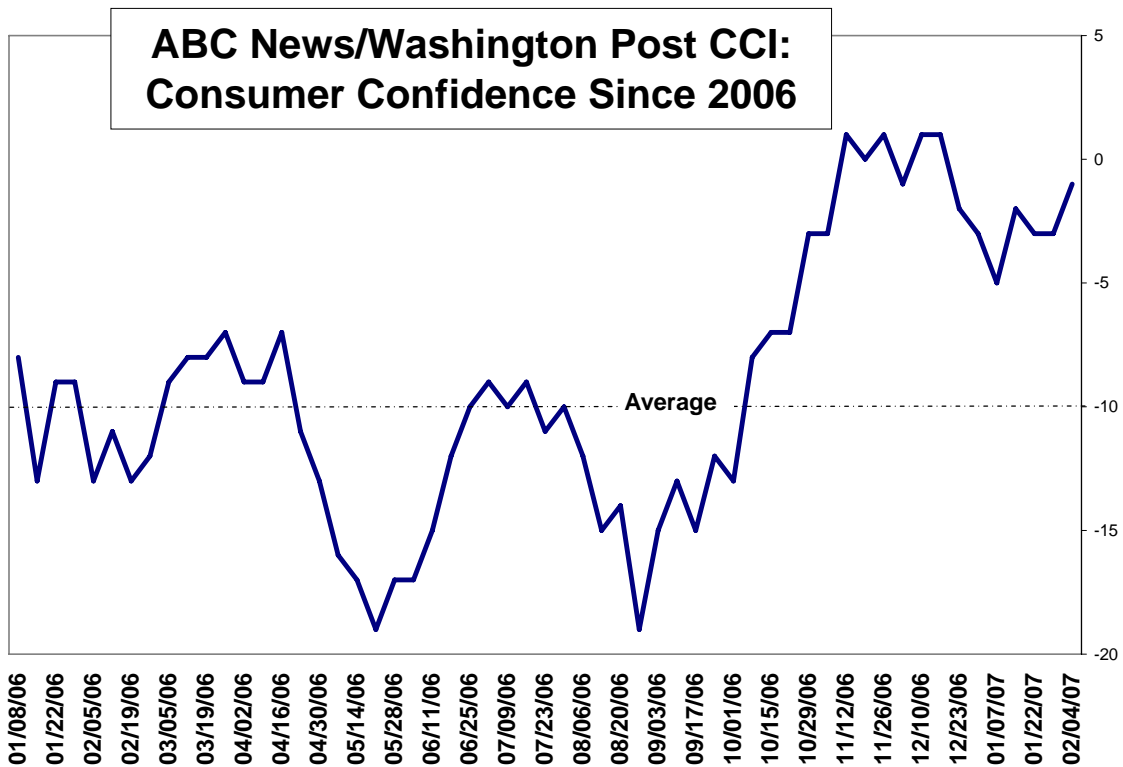


Confidence Approaches Its Elusive Positive Zone

Consumer confidence inched near the elusive positive zone this week, improving slightly from its shaky start to the new year a month ago.

The ABC News/Washington Post Consumer Comfort Index stands at -1 on its scale of +100 to -100, little changed from -3 the last two weeks, but better than its -5 on Jan. 7. It briefly hit positive numbers (+1) in December and November, for the first time since, also briefly, spring 2002.

While still outside the happy zone (which the index sustained from mid-1997 to mid-2001), the CCI is better than usual (a 21-year average of -9) and a good deal better than its recent low, -19 last August. Lower gas prices surely have helped.



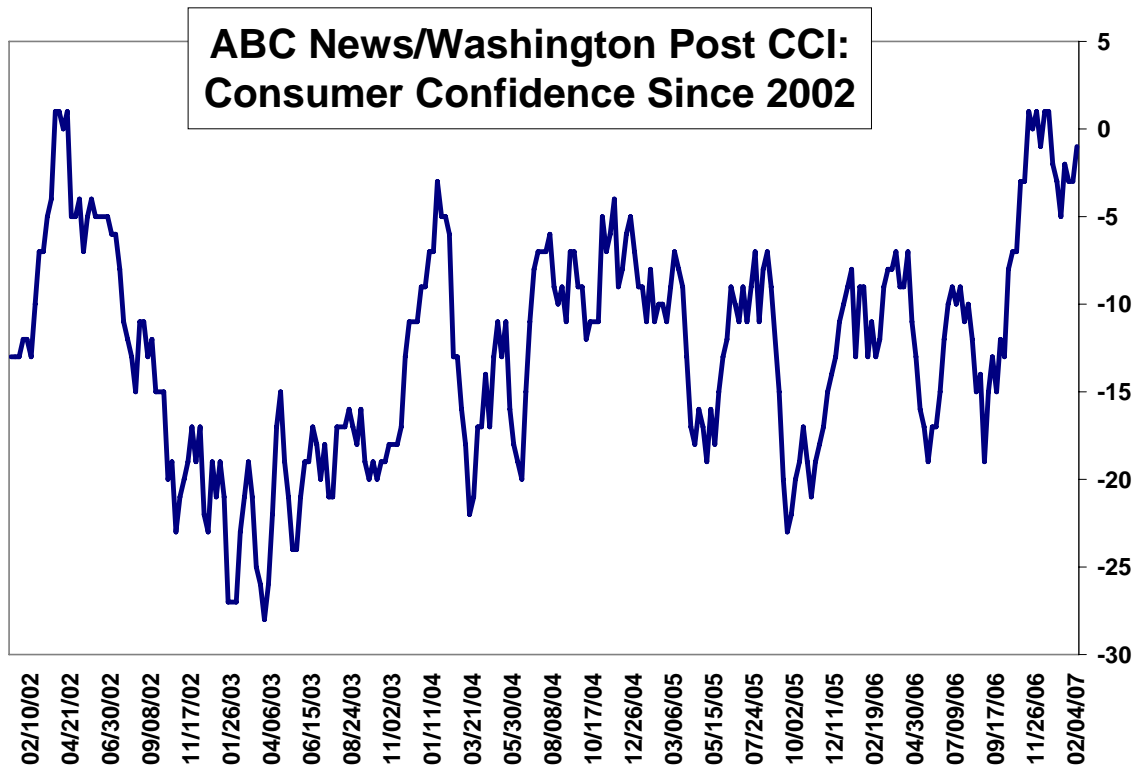
INDEX – The ABC/Post CCI is based on Americans' ratings of the national economy, the buying climate and their personal finances. This week 47 percent rate the national

economy positively – close to its recent five-year high of 48 percent, reached Dec. 17, and seven points above the long-term average in weekly polls since late 1985.

Sixty-one percent rate their personal finances positively, compared with a long-term average of 57 percent. (It hit 65 percent in mid-November, the most since August 2001.) And 41 percent call it a good time to buy things, three points over the long-term average.

Positive ratings of:	ABC News/Washington Post CCI			
	This week	Dec. 17	2006 avg.	22-yr. avg.
National economy	47%	48	40	40
Buying climate	41	41	37	38
Personal finances	61	63	59	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-1	1	-10	-9

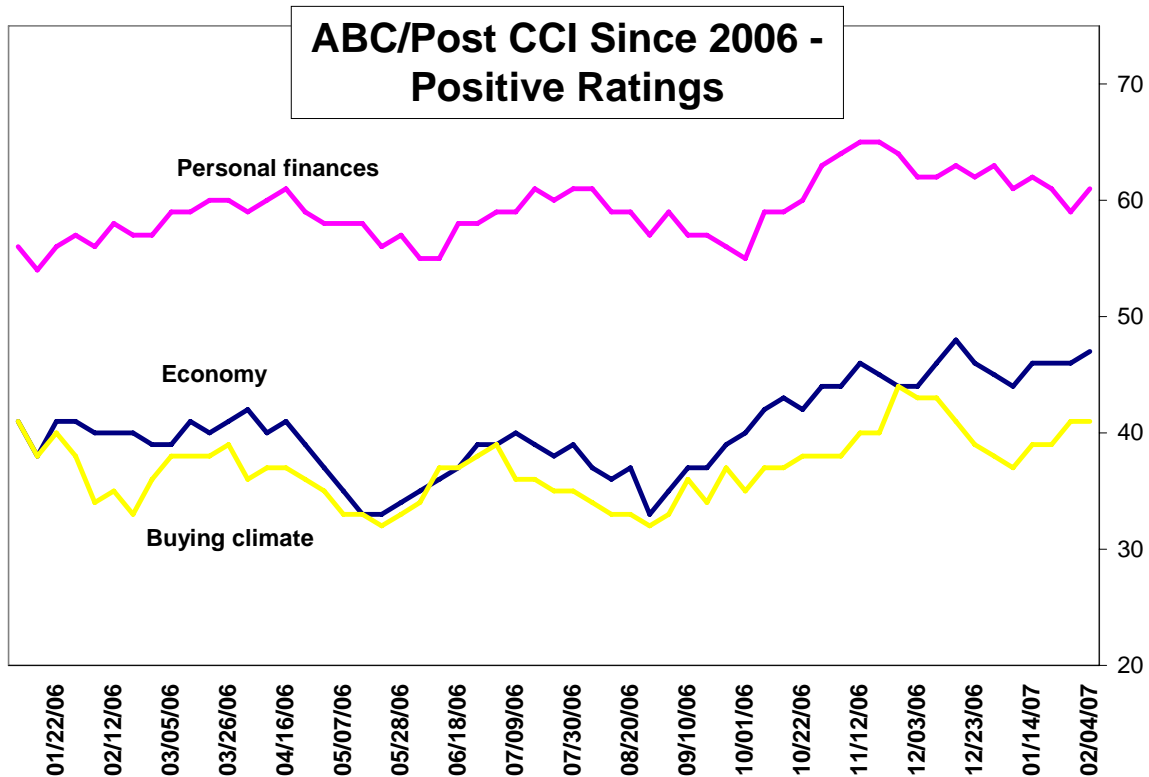
TREND – As noted, a rally in the last quarter of 2006 lifted the index into the positive range, from its 2006 low of -19 on Aug. 27 to +1 in November and December. That trend flattened, then turned south before a slight gain more recently.



GROUPS – The index is higher in better-off groups – far better among higher-income Americans, college graduates and whites. It’s +7 among men and -8 among women. And big partisan differences remain: +32 among Republicans, but 1 among independents and -23 among Democrats.

This week	ABC/Post CCI
	-1

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	



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

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Forty-seven percent of Americans rate the economy as excellent or good; 46 percent said this 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	47	6	41	53	37	16
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 59 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
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This week	61	7	54	39	30	9
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	52	43	30	13

BUYING CLIMATE – Forty-one percent say it’s an excellent or good time to buy things; the same as 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	41	4	37	59	39	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 Feb. 4, 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.

02/04/07	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	-1	-3	-5	-3	-13	1	-19	-9
State of Economy	-6	-8	-12	-12	-20	-4	-34	-19
Personal Finances	22	18	22	28	12	30	10	19
Buying Climate	-18	-18	-26	-24	-32	-12	-36	-26

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	7	2	5	8	-6	17	-12	2
Women	-8	-6	-13	-12	-20	-5	-32	-19
Age:								
18 - 34	1	0	-13	2	-9	6	-24	-5
35 - 44	5	9	8	-9	-9	11	-23	-8
45 - 54	-11	-18	-7	-4	-27	2	-30	-15
55 - 64	6	0	-8	-3	-7	6	-25	-9
65+	-5	-5	-1	0	-14	3	-31	-12
Income:								
Under \$15K	-42	-46	-50	-53	-43	-26	-72	-51

\$15K To \$24.9K	-26	-32	-45	-16	-47	-15	-62	-41
\$25K To \$39.9K	-19	-21	-24	-4	-28	0	-37	-17
\$40K To \$49.9K	3	4	-19	4	-24	15	-41	-12
Over \$50K	28	32	29	22	18	35	6	19
\$50K To \$74.9K	18	29	13	0	6	29	-20	3
\$75K To \$99.9K	32	32	32	24	21	44	7	22
Over \$100K	39	37	46	43	31	56	25	37
Region:								
Northeast	-4	-1	-17	-7	-15	7	-30	-15
Midwest	-1	0	-2	-8	-22	0	-33	-15
South	3	-3	-3	5	-13	6	-19	-8
West	-4	-5	0	-4	-4	23	-13	1
Race:								
White	3	1	-2	5	-6	10	-12	-4
Black	-26	-23	-25	-37	-51	-23	-57	-41
Politics:								
Republican	32	34	39	38	29	45	12	31
Democrat	-23	-26	-27	-22	-32	-17	-46	-30
Independent	1	-1	-15	-7	-17	1	-25	-17
Education:								
< High School	-35	-42	-27	-35	-46	-18	-60	-38
High Sch. Grad.	-5	-10	-21	-11	-23	-5	-30	-18
College +	13	15	14	14	4	18	-9	6
Home:								
Own	10	7	5	3	-8	10	-12	-2
Rent	-28	-25	-36	-17	-32	-16	-44	-29
Marital Status:								
Single	-9	-13	-22	-3	-17	1	-32	-15
Married	11	11	13	6	-3	16	-9	2
Sep/Wid/Div	-22	-27	-35	-27	-40	-19	-45	-32
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	13	12	9	7	-6	15	-12	1
Part-Time	5	0	-16	-7	-12	13	-29	-10
Not Employed	-23	-20	-16	-13	-24	-11	-43	-23

END