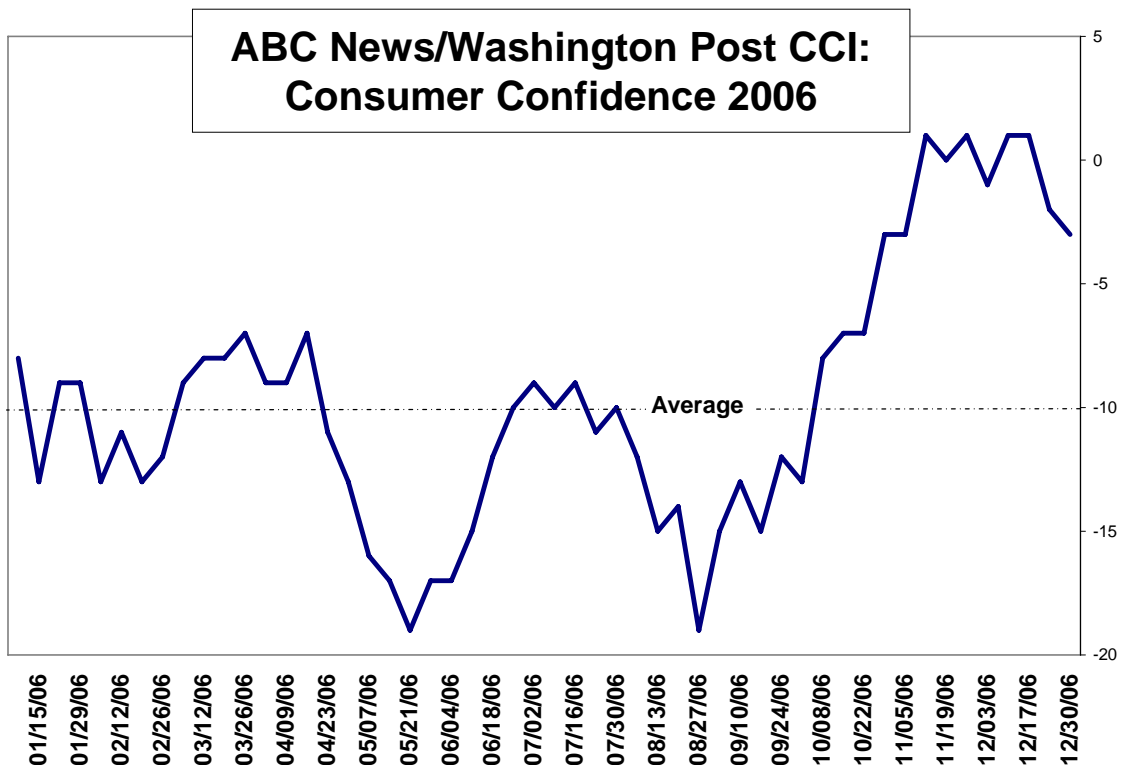


Small December Dip, But 2006 Ends Better Than it Began

Consumer confidence remains in the negative range at the end of the year, after several weeks of matching its positive peak for 2006. Even with these recent negative ratings, the last quarter of 2006 saw confidence surge well above its yearly average.

Forget about those post-Christmas sales; positive ratings of the buying climate remained lower than at the start of the holiday shopping season for the second week in a row. Thirty-eight percent of Americans said it is a good time to buy things. A month ago 44 percent said so.

The ABC News/Washington Post Consumer Comfort Index stands at -3 on its scale of +100 to -100, compared with -2 last week. That's still better than its 2006 average, -10, and its recent low, -19 amid soaring gasoline prices last August.

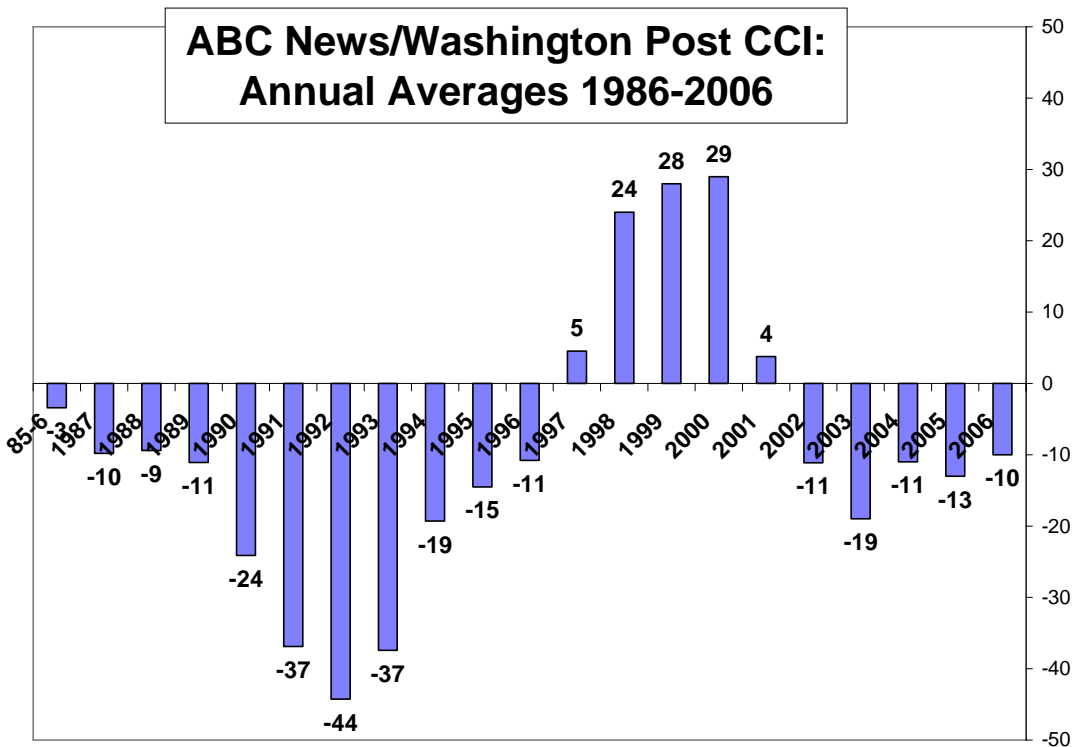


INDEX – The CCI survey, conducted weekly since late 1985, is based on Americans' ratings of the national economy, buying climate and personal finances. This week 45 percent say the economy is in good shape, five points above the long-term average.

Today, 38 percent call it a good time to buy things, matching the long-term average of this measure. Sixty-three percent say their own finances are in good shape, six points above average.

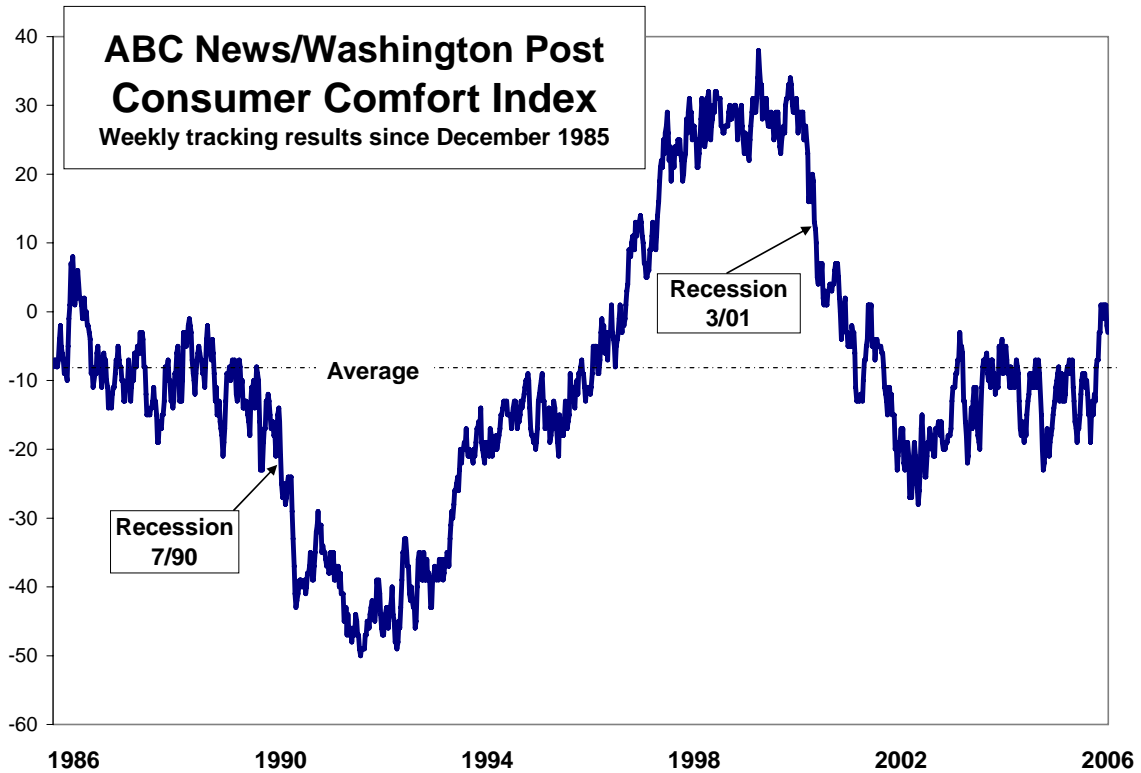
	ABC News/Washington Post CCI			
Positive ratings of:	This week	Aug. 27	2006 avg.	20-yr. avg.
National economy	45%	33	40	40
Buying climate	38	32	37	38
Personal finances	63	57	59	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-3	-19	-10	-9

TREND – The CCI’s average of -10 this year puts 2006 as the best year (narrowly) since 2001, thanks in large part to its rally since August. It’s still a long way from its glory days, an average of +29 in 2000 (peaking at +38 in January 2000). But it’s also been vastly worse – an average of -44 in 1992, cratering at -50 that February.



	ABC/Post CCI	
This week	-3	
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

GROUPS – As usual, the index is higher in better-off groups – far better, for example, among whites, higher-income Americans and college graduates. It’s +15 among men while -19 among women. And huge partisan differences remain: The CCI is +39 among Republicans, but -14 among independents and -26 among Democrats.



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

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Forty-five percent of Americans rate the economy as excellent or good; it was 46 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	45	6	39	55	36	19
Avg. since 12/85	40	4	37	60	40	20

PERSONAL FINANCES – Sixty-three percent say their own finances are excellent or good; it was 62 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	63	10	53	37	24	13
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	52	43	30	13

BUYING CLIMATE – Thirty-eight percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things; it was 39 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	38	3	35	62	43	19
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 Dec. 30, 2006. 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.

12/30/06	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	-3	-2	-1	-13	-9	1	-19	-10
State of Economy	-10	-8	-12	-20	-20	-4	-34	-21
Personal Finances	26	24	24	10	16	30	8	18
Buying Climate	-24	-22	-14	-30	-24	-12	-36	-27

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	15	17	5	-2	6	17	-12	1
Women	-19	-20	-6	-23	-24	-5	-32	-20
Age:								
18 - 34	-8	-5	5	-4	-1	6	-24	-6
35 - 44	3	0	-1	-23	-12	8	-23	-9
45 - 54	0	-2	-7	-16	-13	2	-30	-15
55 - 64	-9	-4	-4	-7	-19	4	-25	-9
65+	2	2	0	-21	-9	3	-31	-12
Income:								
Under \$15K	-43	-46	-28	-62	-54	-26	-72	-52
\$15K To \$24.9K	-36	-33	-38	-34	-46	-15	-62	-42
\$25K To \$39.9K	-17	-17	-17	-31	-29	0	-37	-18

\$40K To \$49.9K	-24	-20	-20	9	24	26	-41	-11
Over \$50K	29	34	29	17	15	35	6	18
\$50K To \$74.9K	5	16	16	-6	0	24	-20	2
\$75K To \$99.9K	41	44	25	19	10	44	7	20
Over \$100K	47	44	46	39	38	56	25	37
Region:								
Northeast	-21	-18	-4	-24	-19	7	-30	-16
Midwest	-2	-3	-18	-19	-11	-2	-33	-15
South	6	3	-2	-10	-12	6	-19	-9
West	-1	5	23	-3	4	23	-13	1
Race:								
White	0	1	7	-8	-6	10	-12	-4
Black	-34	-36	-54	-45	-30	-27	-57	-43
Politics:								
Republican	39	44	38	29	34	45	12	30
Democrat	-26	-20	-18	-37	-39	-17	-46	-31
Independent	-14	-18	-17	-20	-18	-5	-25	-17
Education:								
< High School	-19	-30	-37	-43	-35	-18	-60	-38
High Sch. Grad.	-22	-15	-6	-28	-16	-6	-30	-18
College +	16	16	14	5	1	18	-9	5
Home:								
Own	7	10	9	-7	-1	10	-12	-2
Rent	-33	-33	-24	-33	-30	-16	-44	-30
Marital Status:								
Single	-13	-20	-11	-26	-9	1	-32	-15
Married	11	15	10	2	-2	16	-9	2
Sep/Wid/Div	-32	-26	-21	-36	-25	-19	-45	-32
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	10	15	8	-2	3	15	-12	0
Part-Time	-10	-20	10	-13	-11	13	-29	-11
Not Employed	-17	-17	-15	-26	-26	-11	-43	-24

END