

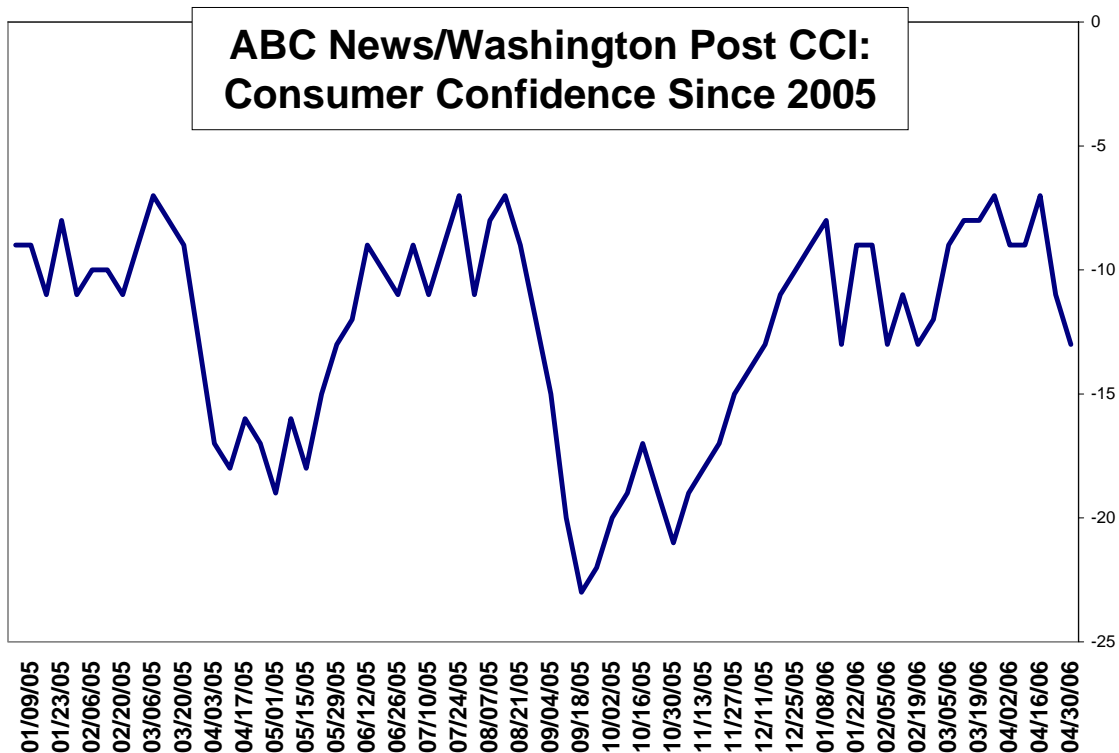
Confidence Matches its '06 Low

Consumer confidence matched its lowest of the year this week, though it still hasn't dived as sharply as it did in the last gas-price spike late last summer.

The ABC News/Washington Post Consumer Comfort Index stands at -13 on its scale of +100 to -100, down six points in the last two weeks. That's its biggest two-week drop since September 2005, just after Hurricane Katrina.

Now as then, high gas prices are the likely culprit. Although prices stabilized this week, regular unleaded is averaging \$2.92 a gallon, its highest since Oct. 3, 2005, and near its nominal high of \$3.07 a month earlier.

The index, however, fell 16 points in five weeks to -23 late last summer, compared with its six-point drop to -13 so far this spring. High gas prices are being countered by other, positive economic factors, including a better-than-expected rise in personal incomes last month.

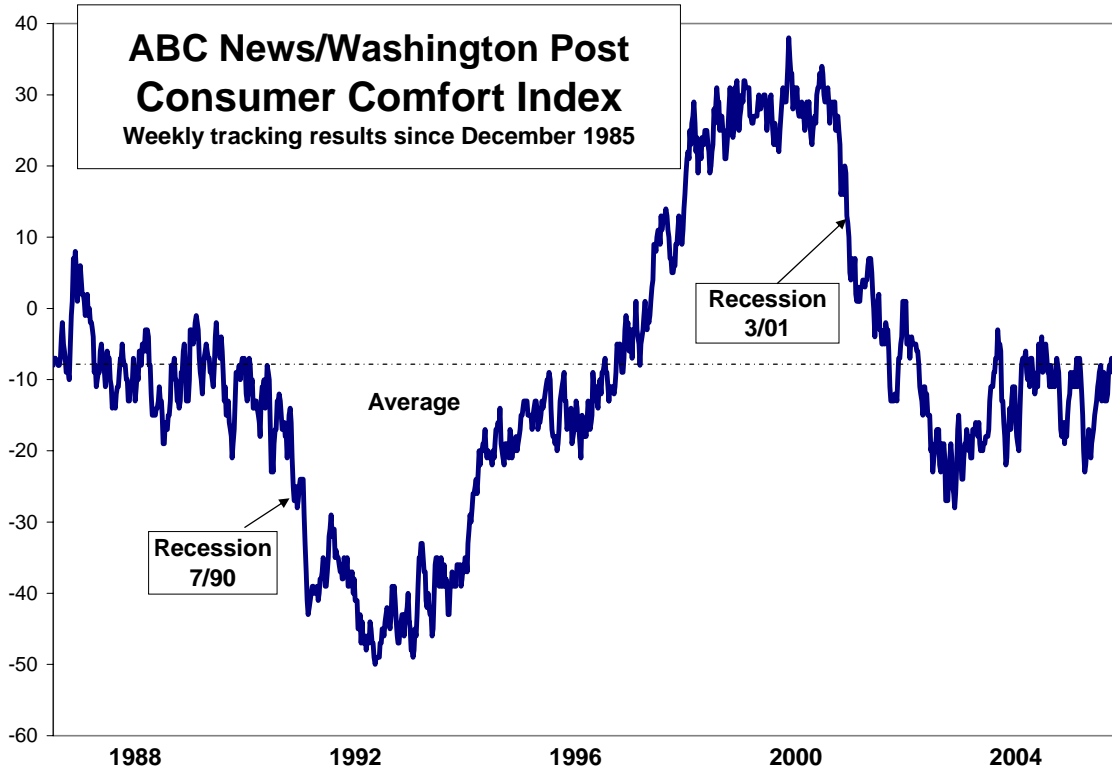


INDEX – The weekly CCI is based on Americans' ratings of the national economy, the buying climate and personal finances. This week 37 percent rate the economy positively,

down five points in the last month, and 35 percent call it a good time to buy things. As usual, many more, 58 percent, say their own finances are in good shape.

	ABC News/Washington Post CCI			
Positive ratings of:	This week	Last week	2006 avg.	20-yr. avg.
National economy	37%	39	40	40
Buying climate	35	36	37	38
Personal finances	58	59	58	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-13	-11	-10	-9

TREND – As noted, at -13 the CCI now matches its low for the year, last seen Feb. 19. It's been as high as -7, as recently as two weeks ago, and has averaged -10 this year, about the same as its average since December 1985, -9. Its all-time high was +38 in January 2000; its all-time low, -50 in February 1992.

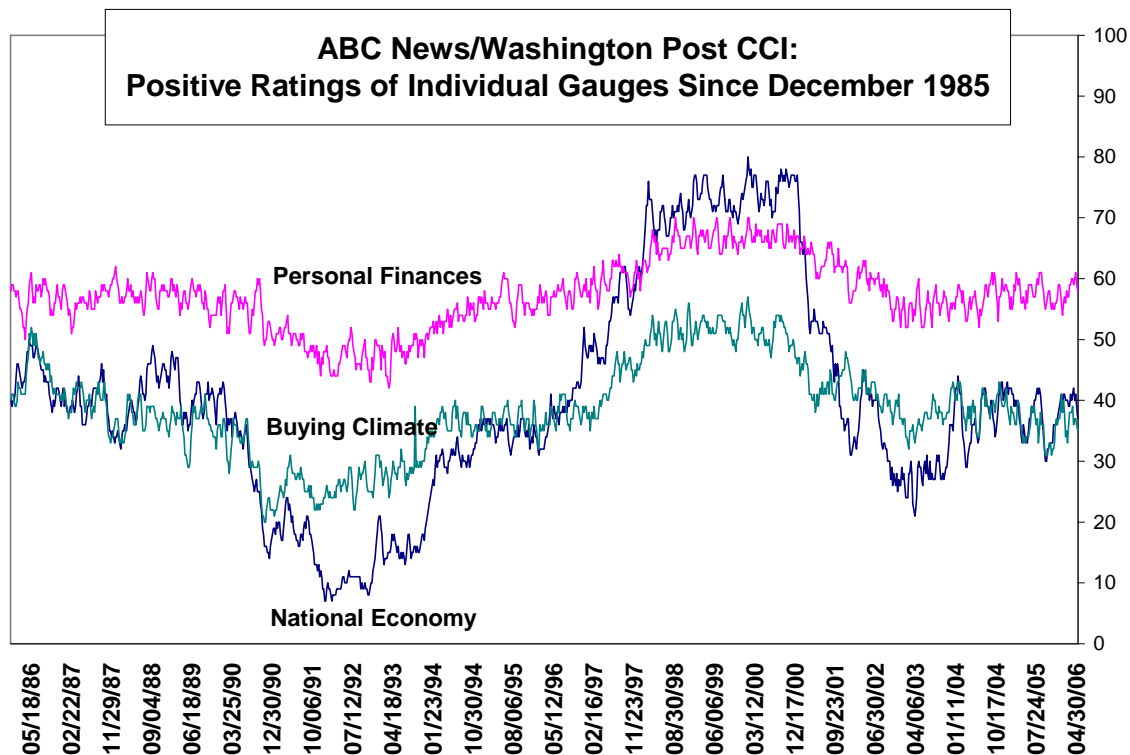


	ABC/Post CCI	
Today	-13	
Last week	-11	
Two weeks ago	-7	
2006 high	-7	April 16, March 26
2006 low	-13	April 30, Feb. 19, Feb. 5, Jan. 15
2006 average	-10	
2005 average	-13	
2004 average	-11	
2003 average	-19	

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 CCI is higher in better-off groups. It's +28 among higher-income Americans while -45 among those with the lowest incomes, 0 among college graduates while -37 among those who haven't finished high school, -7 among whites but -52 among blacks and -3 among men while -22 among women.

Regionally, at -6 the index is best in the West, compared to -21 in the Northeast, -18 in the Midwest, and -10 in the South. Confidence remains far higher among Republicans (+28) than among independents (-20) or, particularly, among Democrats (-40).



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

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Thirty-seven percent of Americans rate the economy as excellent or good; it was 39 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	37	6	31	63	38	25
Avg. since 12/85	40	3	37	60	40	20

PERSONAL FINANCES – Fifty-eight 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
This week	58	6	52	42	29	13
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	52	43	30	13

BUYING CLIMATE – Thirty-five percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things; it was 36 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	35	2	33	65	44	21
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 April 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 Drew Allen.

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

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

04/30/06	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	-13	-11	-9	-9	-19	-7	-23	-13
State of Economy	-26	-22	-16	-18	-34	-16	-40	-25
Personal Finances	16	18	18	14	10	22	8	15
Buying Climate	-30	-28	-28	-24	-34	-18	-38	-29

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-3	3	2	-4	-13	9	-14	-2
Women	-22	-22	-17	-15	-23	-11	-36	-22
Age:								
18 - 34	-2	-2	-2	-15	-17	1	-28	-11

35 - 44	-15	-9	-7	5	-15	5	-27	-9
45 - 54	-22	-20	-13	-19	-16	-5	-34	-17
55 - 64	-11	-5	-3	-2	-19	0	-36	-13
65+	-24	-20	-17	-11	-30	-1	-30	-14
Income:								
Under \$15K	-45	-50	-64	-56	-71	-33	-71	-54
\$15K To \$24.9K	-47	-47	-30	-51	-46	-28	-65	-44
\$25K To \$39.9K	-23	-16	-23	-28	-37	-12	-44	-28
\$40K To \$49.9K	-8	-9	7	-4	-27	26	-40	-8
Over \$50K	21	20	11	25	13	26	4	17
\$50K To \$74.9K	16	10	-13	17	-2	17	-14	3
\$75K To \$99.9K	19	16	20	25	4	37	-1	18
Over \$100K	28	35	37	36	40	50	18	35
Region:								
Northeast	-21	-19	-12	-16	-28	-5	-41	-18
Midwest	-18	-16	-15	-16	-13	-3	-27	-15
South	-10	-8	-10	-10	-16	3	-27	-11
West	-6	1	6	3	-18	7	-20	-7
Race:								
White	-7	-5	-4	-3	-14	-1	-18	-8
Black	-52	-51	-42	-51	-56	-25	-57	-43
Politics:								
Republican	28	30	36	32	22	38	9	27
Democrat	-40	-35	-32	-34	-39	-27	-46	-36
Independent	-20	-21	-18	-11	-30	-10	-31	-19
Education:								
< High School	-37	-34	-34	-44	-52	-23	-63	-40
High Sch. Grad.	-23	-16	-15	-23	-22	-13	-35	-23
College +	0	1	5	9	-6	12	-9	2
Home:								
Own	-6	-4	0	0	-9	4	-17	-4
Rent	-30	-26	-31	-39	-41	-20	-49	-34
Marital Status:								
Single	-13	-18	-21	-24	-29	-8	-31	-18
Married	-1	6	5	6	-1	8	-14	-1
Sep/Wid/Div	-41	-40	-23	-37	-49	-22	-49	-34
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	0	0	2	-1	-7	6	-13	-3
Part-Time	-17	-13	-9	-8	-29	-1	-29	-16
Not Employed	-29	-25	-23	-22	-30	-15	-43	-24

END