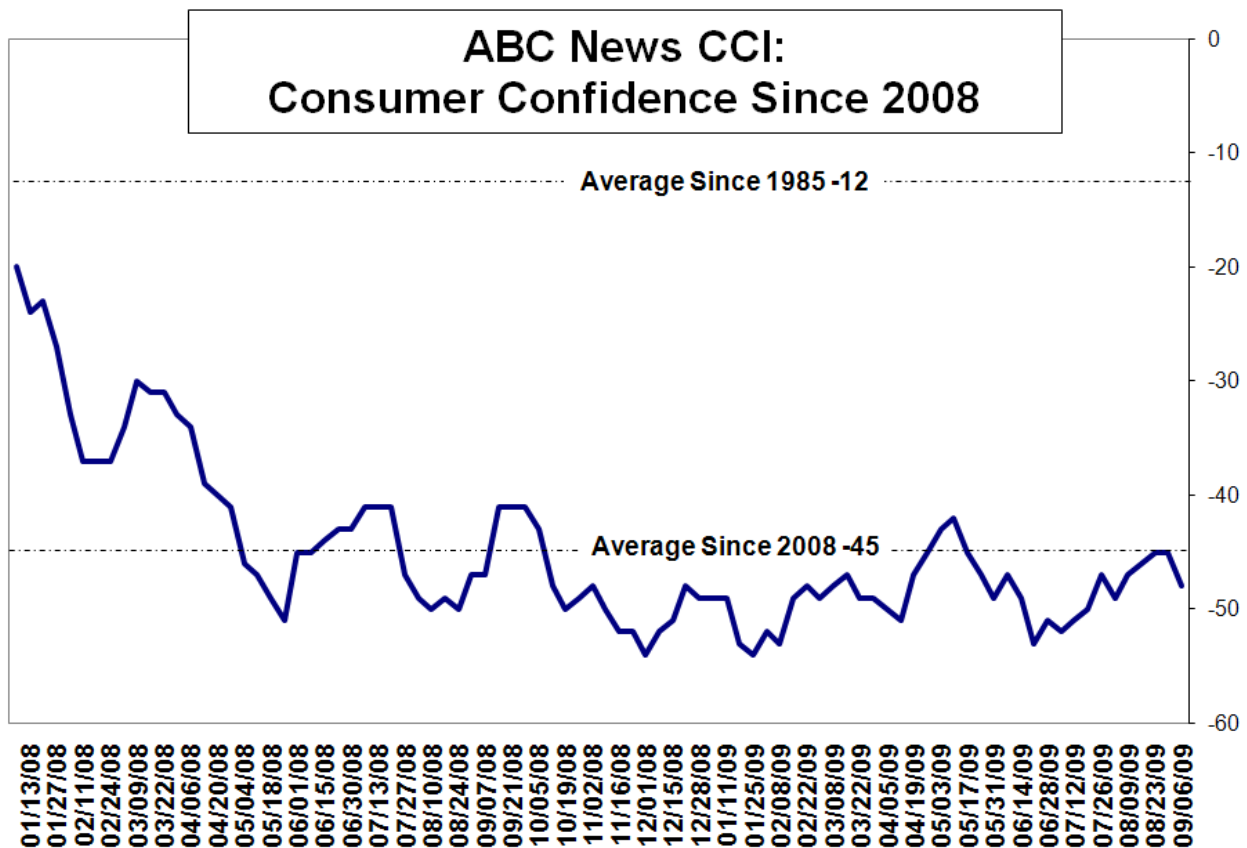


Slight Summer Respite Fades for Consumer Confidence

It's back to school after a slight summertime respite for consumer confidence: After gaining ground from late June through the end of August, economic sentiment stumbled this week.

The ABC News Consumer Comfort Index, figured on a scale of +100 to -100, progressed from -53 in June (a point from its record low) to -45 in each of the last two weeks. But it's back to -48 now, pushed by weaker ratings of personal finances.

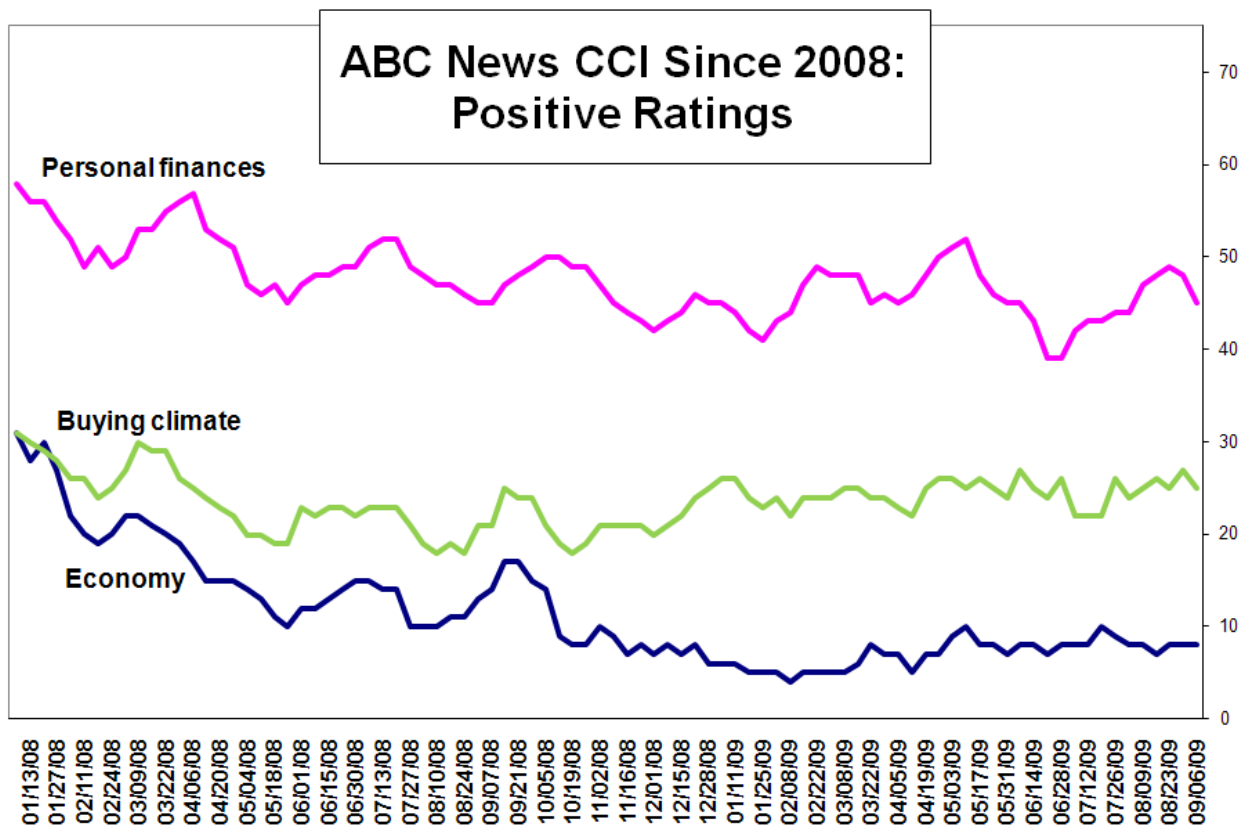
Just 45 percent of Americans now rate their own finances positively, down 4 points in two weeks; it's been below a majority for 17 weeks straight and all but two weeks this year. The CCI's two other components – ratings of the buying climate and the economy – are far weaker, but at least have been stable.



Among the factors troubling consumers, the prospect of a jobless recovery looms large. Even as economists point to a possible end to the recession, unemployment jumped to 9.7 percent in August, its highest since June 1983.

INDEX – A mere 8 percent of Americans rate the national economy positively, steady for the third week, in single digits for a remarkable 45 of the past 48 weeks and 30 points below its long-term average. Just 25 percent call this a good time to buy things, 12 points below the long-term average and below 30 percent for a record 78 weeks.

Ratings of personal finances, for their part – while customarily higher – are just 6 points better than the record low in late June and 12 points below the long-term average in weekly polls since December 1985.

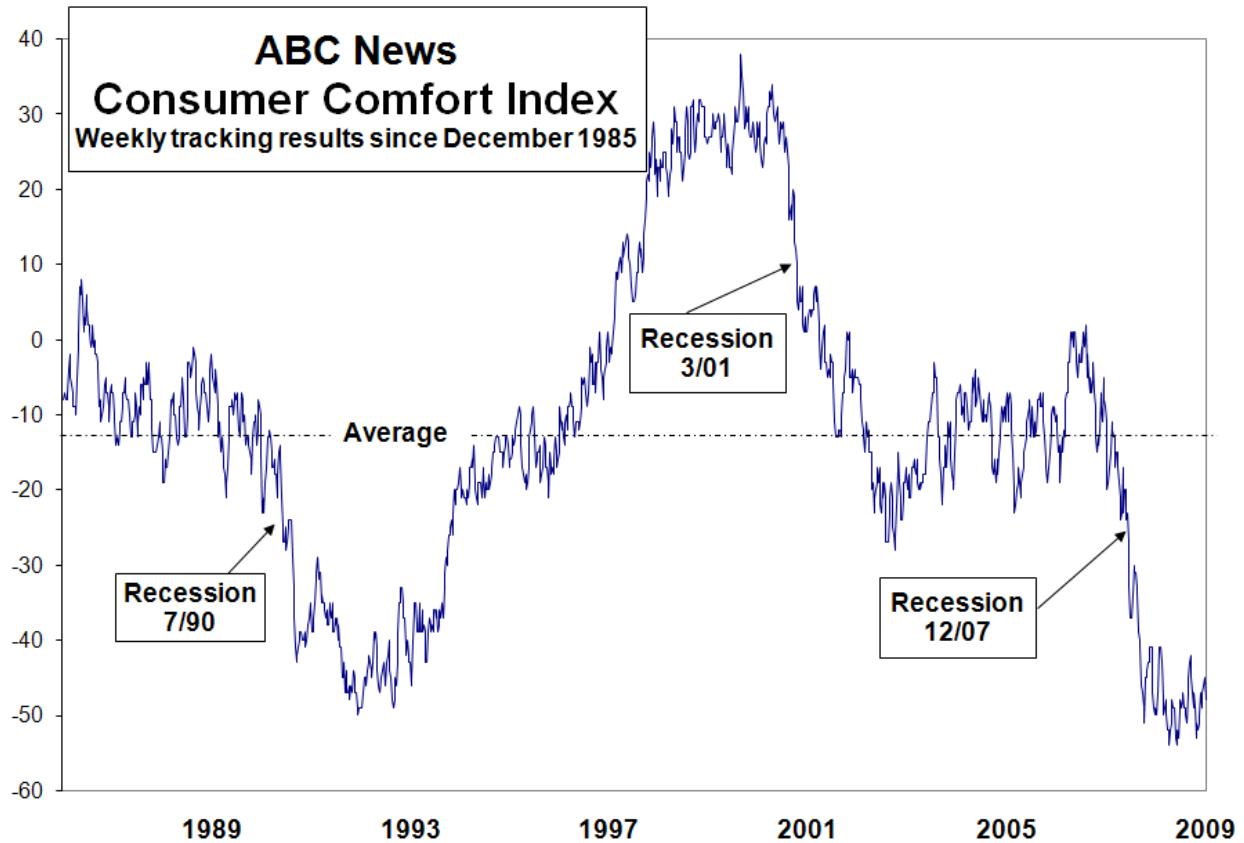


Positive ratings of:	ABC News CCI		Averages	
	This week	Last week	2009	'85-'09
National economy	8%	8	7	38
Buying climate	25	27	25	37
Personal finances	45	48	46	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-48	-45	-49	-12

TREND – The index, between -45 and -49 the past seven weeks, has been trapped in a 4-point range since last hitting the grim -50 mark July 19. While near its record low, the index’s current run above -50 is its second best streak since last summer.

Still, its 2009 average so far, -49, is 37 points below its long-term average and 7 points below its 2008 average – itself the second worst on record, after 1992’s -44.

The CCI has been below -40 for a record 72 weeks and hasn’t seen positive territory since March 2007. It is miles below its record high, +38 in January 2000.



	ABC News CCI	
This week	-48	
Last week	-45	
2009 high	-42	May 10
2009 low	-54	Jan. 25, record low
2009 average	-49	
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 higher as usual among better-off Americans, but negative across the board for the 28th week straight and all but two weeks this year.

It's -23 among those with the highest incomes while -80 among those with the lowest, -37 among those who've attended college vs. -75 among high school dropouts (2 points from the low), -44 among men (the worst since June) while -50 among women and -42 among homeowners compared with -59 among renters. However it's almost even among whites, -47, and blacks, -50, a vast change from the usual 28-point racial gap.

Partisan differences remain, with the CCI at -40 among Republicans (2 points from the low), compared with -45 among independents and -58 among Democrats (the worst since July). But the Republican-Democratic gap has been narrower than usual this year, averaging 20 points compared with 41 points last year and 32 points 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, the same as 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	44	48
Avg. since 12/85	38	3	35	62	40	22

PERSONAL FINANCES – Forty-five percent say their own finances are excellent or good; it was 48 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	45	5	40	55	35	20
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	52	43	30	13

BUYING CLIMATE – Twenty-five percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things; it was 27 percent last week. The best was 57 percent on Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was 18 percent, last reached Oct. 19, 2008.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	25	3	22	75	46	29
Avg. since 12/85	37	3	35	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 Sept. 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.

ERRATA – A software problem at ICR created errors in crosstabulated results by income group and marital status in data Aug. 30 to Oct. 18. The CCI overall and in other crosstabulations was not affected. This report has been updated with corrected results by income group and marital status.

Analysis by Peyton M. Craighill.

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

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09/06/09	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	-48	-45	-47	-47	-47	-41	-54	-48
State of Economy	-84	-84	-84	-84	-72	-66	-92	-84
Personal Finances	-10	-4	-6	-10	-10	4	-22	-8
Buying Climate	-50	-46	-50	-46	-58	-46	-64	-53

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-44	-43	-43	-45	-44	-28	-49	-42
Women	-50	-46	-49	-49	-48	-46	-60	-54
Age:								
18 - 34	-42	-37	-42	-46	-55	-32	-61	-46
35 - 44	-46	-42	-45	-48	-50	-35	-62	-48
45 - 54	-61	-57	-47	-36	-37	-31	-61	-49
55 - 64	-49	-45	-50	-62	-41	-39	-65	-51
65+	-42	-46	-50	-46	-41	-34	-56	-47
Income:								
Under \$15K	-80	-78	-67	-72	-72	-51	-84	-72
\$15K To \$24.9K	-47	-45	-77	-68	-73	-40	-83	-66
\$25K To \$39.9K	-52	-51	-57	-55	-65	-47	-73	-60
\$40K To \$49.9K	-41	-49	-51	-51	-44	-27	-68	-51
Over \$50K	-31	-24	-23	-29	-24	-21	-41	-29
\$50K To \$74.9K	-45	-30	-32	-39	-41	-24	-54	-38
\$75K To \$99.9K	-28	-20	-16	-32	-24	-14	-52	-32
Over \$100K	-23	-26	-21	-16	-1	5	-34	-16
Region:								
Northeast	-40	-39	-54	-49	-50	-39	-62	-51
Midwest	-54	-46	-42	-48	-39	-31	-58	-49
South	-50	-48	-45	-46	-52	-39	-59	-48
West	-43	-40	-44	-46	-42	-19	-58	-43
Race:								
White	-47	-44	-46	-48	-43	-35	-52	-46

Black	-50	-53	-52	-48	-58	-41	-81	-58
Politics:								
Republican	-40	-34	-36	-39	-22	-10	-42	-32
Democrat	-58	-56	-54	-49	-60	-43	-70	-57
Independent	-45	-45	-42	-49	-51	-39	-56	-49
Education:								
< High School	-75	-74	-66	-63	-60	-51	-76	-65
High Sch. Grad.	-51	-49	-52	-62	-56	-38	-65	-54
College +	-37	-33	-37	-35	-38	-30	-50	-40
Home:								
Own	-42	-38	-41	-44	-41	-36	-49	-43
Rent	-59	-58	-59	-54	-59	-48	-80	-61
Marital Status:								
Single	-61	-55	-46	-48	-65	-34	-69	-52
Married	-37	-34	-42	-42	-36	-32	-47	-41
Sep/Wid/Div	-60	-57	-57	-57	-55	-52	-70	-61
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-32	-32	-40	-40	-39	-29	-45	-38
Part-Time	-67	-51	-42	-43	-53	-31	-67	-50
Not Employed	-56	-55	-53	-55	-52	-49	-66	-58

END