



Consumer Comfort Index™

Weekly Data Report

*Embargoed for release:
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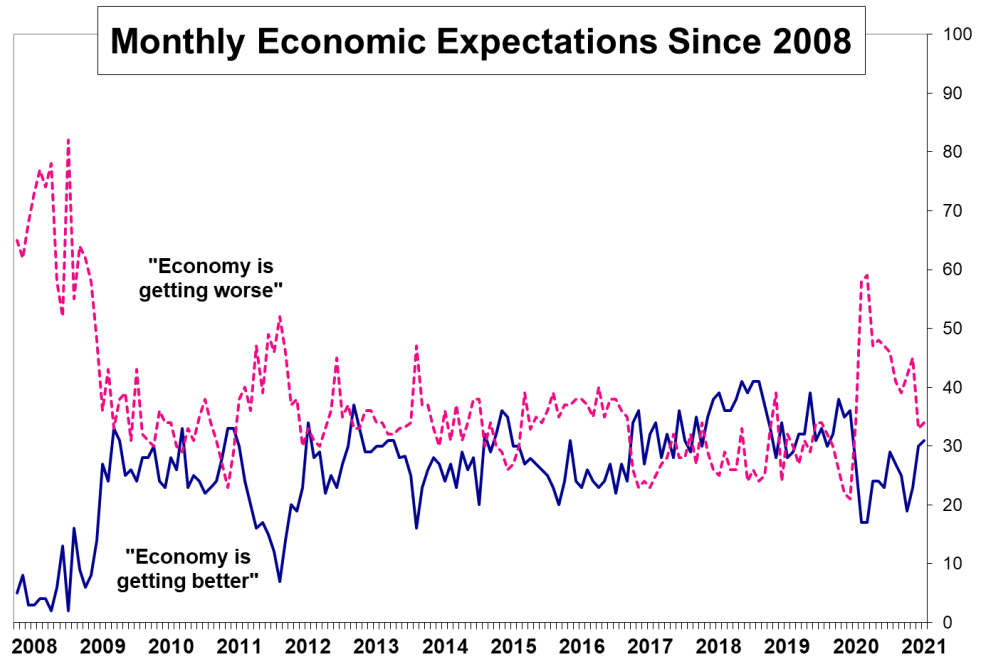
Americans' optimism about the economy's direction reached its highest since before the pandemic began in the latest Consumer Comfort Index survey, with indications of possible gains ahead as stimulus checks land and COVID-19 restrictions lift.

Thirty-one percent of Americans say the economy is improving, maintaining an 11-point jump from December to February – the largest in four years – and adding a further (nonsignificant) 1 percentage point this month to the most since pre-pandemic February 2020.

The latest survey was fielded in the first two weeks of March; 27 percent expressed optimism in the first week, 34 percent in the second week. While the difference does not reach statistical significance, it holds out the possibility of more gains as both the \$1.9 trillion stimulus hits home and states ease their pandemic restrictions.

Expectations, to be sure, aren't rosy; 34 percent of Americans think the economy is getting worse, while the rest, 36 percent, say it's staying the same. Still, pessimism is down from 45 percent just in January and 59 percent last spring.

This
week's
CCI
48.6



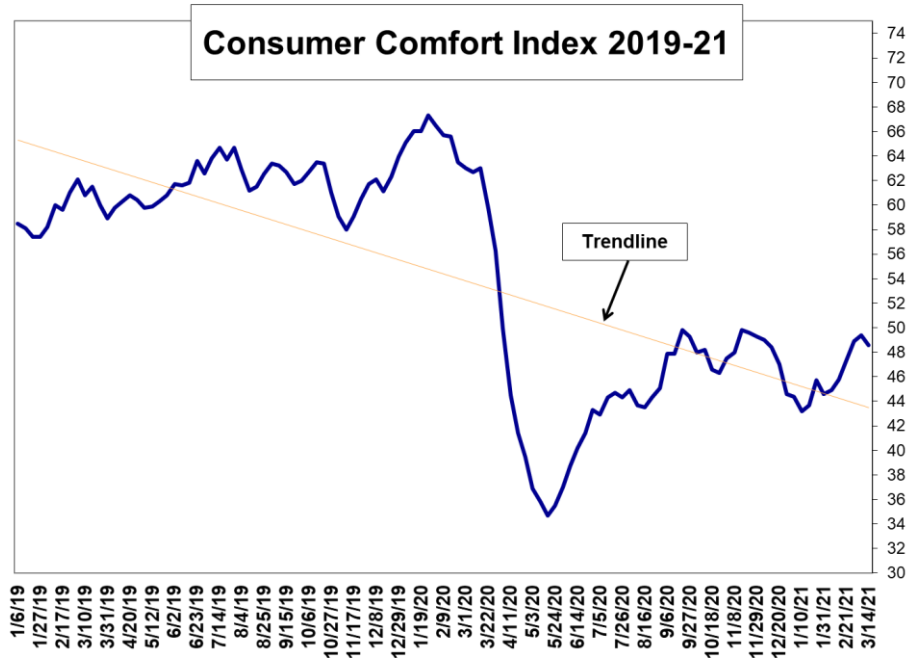
Moreover, the optimism level outpaces its average in data since March 1986 by 9 points and essentially matches its 2019 average, 32 percent. This month's better-worse margin, -3 points, compares with a long-term average of -17.

In terms of views of current economic conditions, measured separately on a weekly basis, the Consumer Comfort Index stands at 48.6 on its 0-100 scale, steadying after a five-week, 4.8-point rise that lifted it to a three-month high. It's a

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nonsignificant 1.2 points off its pandemic high last reached in mid-November, albeit 14.4 points from its pre-pandemic level one year ago.



The CCI is based on Americans' ratings of the national economy, the buying climate and their personal finances. Current ratings of the economy lost 1.5 points this week to 40.3, backing off a three-month peak last week after a sharp 7.0-point advance the month prior. It's now 1.8 points short of its pandemic high in late November and 26.8 points below its level a year ago.

The CCI's remaining gauges are essentially unchanged. At 62.2, the personal finances subindex is 4.0 points off its COVID-19 peak in mid-September and 6.4 points below its level a year ago. The buying climate gauge, at 43.2, is very near its pandemic high in mid-September (44.2), while still down 10.1 points year-on-year.

Owned and produced by [Langer Research Associates](http://www.langerresearch.com), the CCI has been conducted on a continuous weekly basis since late 1985. It was sponsored from 2011 to early 2021 by Bloomberg and previously by the ABC News Television Network. For information on sponsorship opportunities, contact info@langerresearch.com.



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Data summary for 3/18/21

This week	48.6	
Last week	49.4	
2021 high	49.4	March 7
2021 low	43.2	Jan. 10
2021 average	46.0	
2009 average	26.0	Worst full year
2000 average	64.5	Best full year
June 21, 2009	23	Record low (also three other dates in 2008-09)
Jan. 16, 2000	69	Record high
Average since 12/85	43.2	

Individual measures:

	This week	Last week	Average 2021	Average '85-'21
Positive ratings of:				
National economy	40%	42	37	36
Personal finances	62	63	60	56
Buying climate	43	43	41	37

	Excel -lent	Good	Not so Good	Poor
Full ratings of:				
National economy	4%	36	42	18
Personal finances	10	52	27	11
Buying climate	5	38	40	17

	Positive High	Positive Low
Economy	80% Jan. 16, 2000	4% Feb. 8, 2009
Finances	71% latest Feb. 16, 2020	39% June 21 and 28, 2009
Buying climate	59% latest Jan. 26, 2020	18% latest Oct. 19, 2008

Economy's direction:

	Better	Worse	Same	Better-worse diff.
3/14/21	31	34	36	-3 pts.
2/14/21	30	33	37	-3
1/17/21	23	45	33	-22
12/13/20	19	42	39	-23
11/15/20	25	39	36	-14
10/18/20	27	41	32	-14
9/14/20	29	46	25	-17
8/16/20	23	47	30	-24
7/19/20	24	48	29	-24

Methodology: The Consumer Comfort Index is produced by [Langer Research Associates](http://www.langerresearch.com). Results are based on 1,000 national random-sample landline and cellular telephone interviews, 250 per week in a four-week rolling average. The index, produced weekly since December 1985, is derived by averaging positive responses to each subindex question. Results of each question have a 3.5-point error margin. The expectations question was asked of 500 respondents March 2-14, 2021; that result has a 4.5-point error margin. Fieldwork and tabulation by SSRS of Glen Mills, PA.



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03/14/21	This Week	Last Week	4 Wks Ago	3 Mo. Ago	1 Yr. Ago	12 Mo High	12 Mo Low	12 Mo Avg
GENERAL POPULATION:								
Overall Index	48.6	49.4	45.8	48.4	63.0	63.0	34.7	45.6
State of Economy	40.3	41.8	36.1	40.5	67.1	67.1	22.5	36.6
Personal Finances	62.2	63.3	60.8	62.3	68.6	68.6	52.8	60.6
Buying Climate	43.2	43.0	40.4	42.4	53.3	53.3	28.8	39.7
OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	50.8	50.1	46.2	51.8	66.5	66.5	40.2	49.7
Women	46.5	48.7	45.3	45.2	59.7	59.7	28.3	41.9
Age:								
18 - 34	49.9	50.9	47.6	52.0	58.1	58.1	35.9	46.8
35 - 44	54.7	53.8	49.8	47.9	64.7	64.7	31.8	45.8
45 - 54	48.8	53.1	48.0	46.4	68.5	68.5	34.1	45.4
55 - 64	41.1	43.7	45.4	45.5	66.0	66.0	31.2	43.5
65+	46.7	44.2	39.6	46.8	60.9	60.9	35.6	45.6
Income:								
Under \$15K	26.6	30.4	19.1	25.1	38.3	39.4	16.5	24.5
\$15K To \$24.9K	20.6	25.9	25.7	26.2	44.3	45.0	17.0	28.9
\$25K To \$39.9K	40.8	42.5	35.1	36.5	54.6	54.6	27.7	39.3
\$40K To \$49.9K	49.6	43.6	45.6	54.3	63.7	64.1	29.1	46.5
Under \$50K	36.8	38.1	33.2	36.0	51.6	51.6	27.6	36.0
Over \$50K	60.0	61.5	59.9	59.3	74.7	74.7	43.3	55.5
\$50K To \$74.9K	56.9	59.5	57.0	55.6	66.1	66.1	39.3	50.9
\$75K To \$99.9K	58.1	58.1	59.2	56.6	76.7	76.7	36.7	54.4
Over \$100K	66.5	68.2	62.5	66.8	81.0	81.0	49.1	61.2
Region:								
Northeast	46.5	47.3	44.5	42.6	61.2	61.2	30.3	42.4
Midwest	48.5	49.8	46.1	47.9	63.2	63.2	38.9	47.5
South	48.1	49.2	47.6	52.6	66.5	66.5	34.4	46.7
West	50.9	50.8	43.5	46.4	58.5	59.3	34.3	44.7
Race:								
White	50.3	52.2	49.2	52.9	67.9	67.9	37.3	48.9
Black	45.4	40.3	34.1	37.1	44.3	45.4	20.2	33.0
Politics:								
Republican	55.9	58.6	52.6	59.5	83.1	83.1	45.3	59.5
Democrat	47.8	49.6	47.2	45.6	52.0	52.0	27.7	39.5
Independent	44.0	42.1	40.2	45.2	62.4	62.4	33.8	42.4
Education:								
< High School	28.8	28.4	24.5	34.6	43.4	43.6	17.9	27.8
High Sch. Grad.	40.9	40.8	35.1	43.3	59.1	59.1	31.8	41.1
College +	55.0	56.3	53.8	52.8	67.3	67.3	37.0	50.2
Home:								
Own	52.4	53.0	51.9	55.9	69.4	69.4	35.6	50.3
Rent	43.2	44.3	36.8	36.1	51.5	51.5	29.2	37.5
Marital Status:								
Single	48.2	47.2	42.1	48.3	53.5	53.5	33.3	43.0
Married	52.4	53.6	50.7	53.1	71.9	71.9	35.9	50.0
Sep/Wid/Div	37.0	38.2	39.2	34.2	52.2	52.2	29.7	37.5
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	55.7	55.4	54.2	55.0	71.0	71.0	40.9	52.4
Part-Time	42.9	45.4	35.1	39.7	58.7	58.7	29.1	39.8
Not Employed	40.2	41.2	36.5	42.4	51.8	51.8	29.3	38.7

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