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## **Bloomberg ® Consumer Comfort Index™ Weekly Analysis**

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The Bloomberg Consumer Comfort Index matched its best this week since a seven-and-a-half-year peak in late January, bolstered by improved ratings of personal finances, gains among women and improvement among lower- and lower-middle income Americans that may signal a widening recovery.

The CCI reached 45.5 on its scale of 0 to 100, up 2.2 points in the last two weeks. That reverses a February correction to put consumer sentiment back to its second best of the year, surpassed only by the index's 47.3 on Jan. 25, after a remarkable 12.5-point gain the previous four months.

The CCI is now 3.9 points above its 29-year average of 41.6, a welcome finding after the long 2008-2014 trough in consumer attitudes.

The index this week is among its highest levels since the start of the recession among those with household incomes less than \$50,000. That coincides with employment data finding heavier concentrations of job growth last month in the lower-paying service, retail and leisure sectors.

Moreover, with overall employment on the rise, the CCI's subindex on personal finances is up by a particularly sharp 4.1 points in the last two weeks. A two-week boost this large or larger has only occurred 17 times before in more than 1,500 weeks of continuous CCI polling.

The Bloomberg CCI, produced by [Langer Research Associates](#), is based on Americans' ratings of the national economy, their personal finances and the buying climate. Among groups, it's its highest since July 2007 among women, up 1.8 points this week alone to 44.9. It's at an even longer-term high among Democrats, 54.0, its best in that group since February 2001.

The CCI is its highest since the beginning of the recession among seniors (45.6); those not working for pay (41.9); renters (40.9); and those who are separated, widowed, or divorced (37.0). By income, it's its highest since February 2007 among those in the \$25,000-\$40,000 bracket, and among its highest in other under-\$50,000 income categories.

The CCI's three subindices, for their part, are at least numerically above their yearly and long-term averages alike:

- At 58.9, the personal finances subindex is back near its seven-and-a-half-year high in late January, and significantly better than its 2015 average (56.8) and full average (55.2) alike.
- At 37.7, the national economy subindex is its best since mid-February, near its 2015 average of 37.2 and better than its full average of 34.1. It's held in a tight 0.6-point range the last four weeks.
- The buying climate subindex is its second highest of the year, up 1.6 points in two weeks to 39.8. That's very close to beating its nearly eight-year high of 39.9 in early January, and better than its full average, 35.7.

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