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Bloomberg ® Consumer Comfort Index™ Weekly Analysis

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Americans' ratings of the buying climate reached their second best since November 2007 in this week's Bloomberg Consumer Comfort Index, buttressing last week's result in which views of the national economy hit their highest since early 2008.

The CCI held essentially steady overall, at 37.5 on its scale of 0 to 100. That's at the high end of its range the past seven months, from 33.3 to 37.9 – better than at almost any point in the previous six years, albeit still well short of its pre-recession level.

A separate, monthly measure of economic expectations also is little changed: Underscoring the economy's continued fragility, more Americans say it's getting worse, 34 percent, than better, 26 percent. But that's less negative than the long-term average in data back to the mid-1980s.

The CCI, produced by [Langer Research Associates](#), is based on a national survey that has measured Americans' ratings of the national economy, their personal finances and the buying climate each week since late 1985.

The buying climate subindex, at 34.7, is its best since late April and its second highest in more than six and a half years. That follows last week's result in which the national economy subindex hit 27.7, its best since January 2008. It's 26.4 this week.

The personal finances subindex, by far the strongest of the three, is 51.6, above its 50.0 midpoint for the seventh week in a row – a position it's held for all but three weeks this year.

Of the three CCI gauges, the buying climate index is now closest to its long-term average, just a point shy. The personal finances subindex is 3.6 points off its average; the national economy subindex is further from its historical average, 7.7 points, but has gained substantially in the last two months, up from 20.6 in mid-May.

The CCI overall is 2.0 points higher than its average for the year, 35.5, and 4.2 points off its long-term average, 41.7.

Economic expectations, for their part, match their average the last nine months, after recovering from a dreadful, 31-point net negative rating in October 2013, during the partial government shutdown. This week's gap between "getting worse" and "getting better" sentiment is 8 points, after reaching its lowest in a year, 2 points, last month. Four in 10 say the economy is staying the same – not a positive assessment, since most say it's in bad shape, but not nearly as bad as it was in the downturn's darkest days.

Consumer sentiment tracks closely over the long term with employment and the Dow, both of which are on an upswing. Easing gas prices – down 7 cents per gallon in the last two weeks – may be a bonus factor in the summer driving months.

Among groups, the CCI jumped to its highest since late January 2008 in the West this week, 43.6, up 8.8 points in the last two weeks, and tied its best mark since late December 2007 among homeowners, 41.0. Conversely, the index hit a six-week low, 31.2, among renters. Finally it reached 41.4 among married adults this week, its highest in that group in almost a year.

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