

## Confidence Stays in a Slump

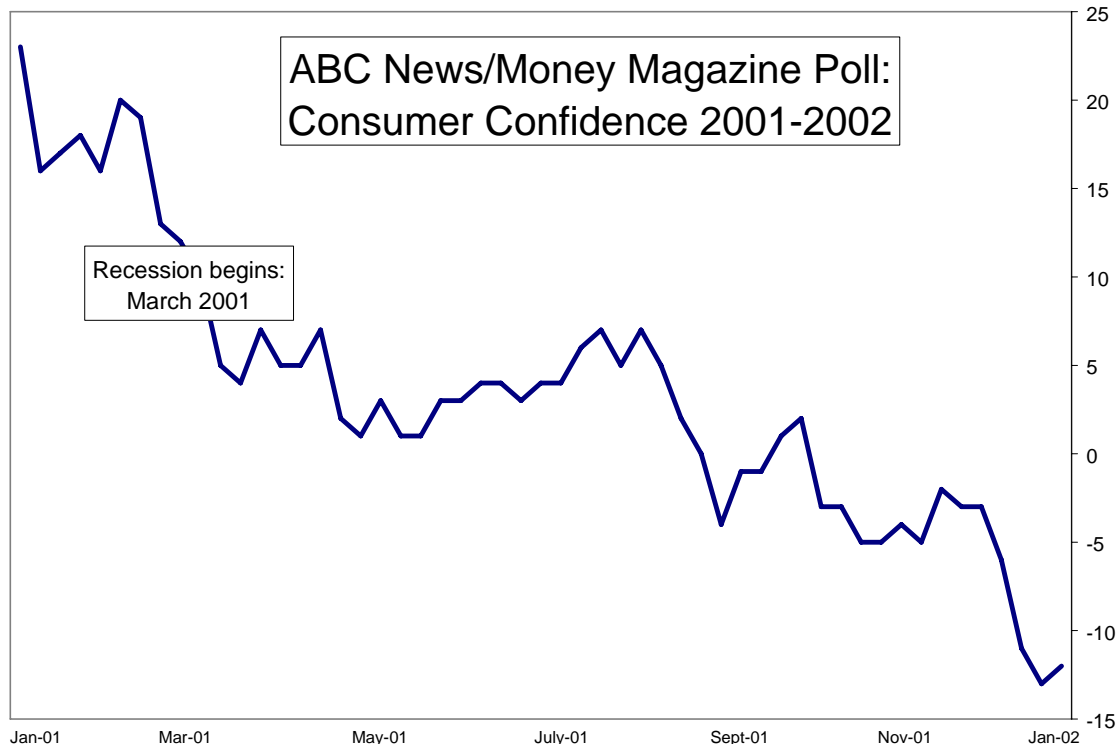
Consumer confidence continued its slump this week, despite recent remarks by Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan that the economy was showing signs of recovery.

Views of current economic conditions have barely budged over the last month. Ratings of the national economy continue to drag down overall confidence – just 34 percent rate the economy positively, eight points below its average in 16 years of weekly polls.

Ratings of the buying climate and personal finances, meanwhile, continue to hover near their averages. Forty percent now call it a good time to buy things, one point below average; 58 percent say their own finances are in good shape, one point above average.

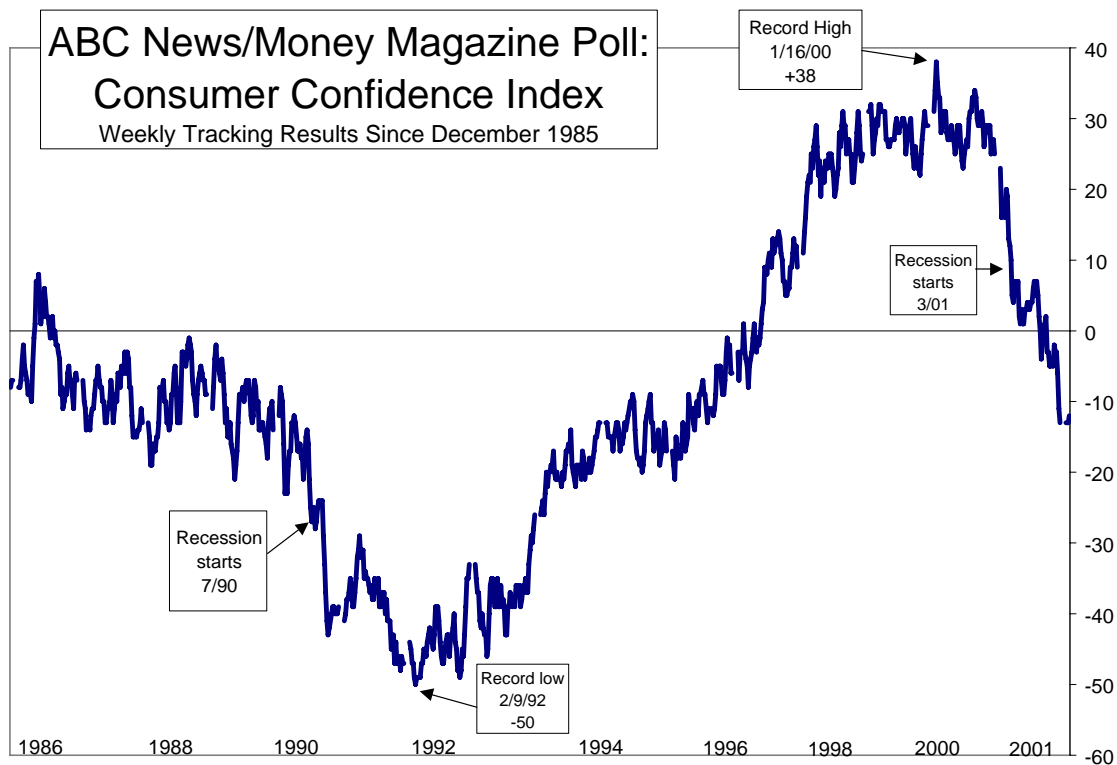
The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on these three gauges, stands at -12 on its scale of +100 to -100; last week it was -13.

	ABC News/Money Magazine Poll			
	Record high	2001	16-year	
Positive ratings of:	1/27/02	1/16/00	average	average
National economy	34%	80	50	42
Buying climate	40	57	43	39
Personal finances	58	70	63	57



TREND – At -12, the index is four points below it's 16-year average, but far better than its low of -50 in 1992. It peaked at +38 in January 2000. Its overall average in 2001 was +4, down from a record setting +29 in 2000 – the largest year-to-year drop since this weekly poll began in late 1985. But it's been far worse, averaging just -44 in 1992.

	ABC/Money	Index	
Today	-12		
Last week	-13		
2001 average	+4		
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	-8		



GROUPS – As usual, confidence is higher among better-off Americans. The index is +15 in higher-income households compared to -49 in the lowest, -1 among college graduates while -43 among high-school dropouts, -7 among whites but -31 among blacks and -2 among men while -21 among women.

Here's a closer look at the three components of the ABC/Money index:

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Thirty-four percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good, up one point from last week. The best was 80 percent Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was seven percent in late 1991 and early 1992.

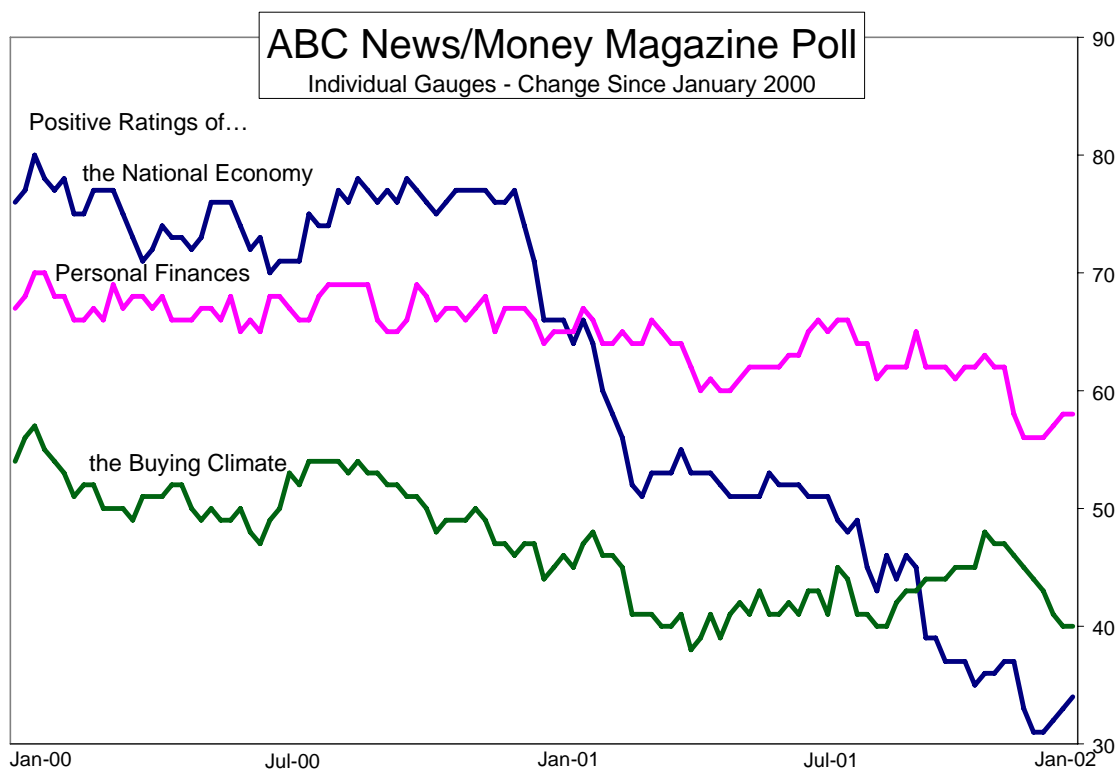
	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	34	2	33	66	48	18
Avg. since 12/85	42	4	38	58	39	19

**PERSONAL FINANCES** – Fifty-eight percent rate their own finances as excellent or good, the same as last week. The best was 70 percent, set Aug. 30, 1998 and last matched in January 2000. The worst rating was 42 percent on March 14, 1993.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	58	5	53	42	30	12
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	53	43	30	12

**BUYING CLIMATE** – Forty percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need, unchanged from last week. The best was 57 percent Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was 20 percent in fall 1990.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. net	Not good	Poor
This week	40	3	37	60	41	19
Avg. since 12/85	39	3	36	61	41	21



**METHODOLOGY** - The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index represents a rolling average based on telephone interviews with about 1,000 adults nationwide each month. This week's results are based on 1,029 interviews in the month ending Jan. 27, 2002 and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points. Field work by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

The ABC/Money index is derived as follows: The negative response to each index question is subtracted from the positive response to that question. The three resulting numbers are then 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 Dalia Sussman.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet, at:

<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/PollVault/PollVault.html>

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01/27/02	This Week	Last Week	4 Wks Ago	3 Mo. Ago	1 Yr. Ago	12 Mo High	12 Mo Low	12 Mo Avg
Group								
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GENERAL POPULATION:								
Overall Index	-12	-13	-13	-5	18	20	-13	2
State of Economy	-32	-34	-38	-26	32	32	-38	-5
Personal Finances	16	16	12	24	30	34	12	25
Buying Climate	-20	-20	-12	-12	-8	-4	-24	-14
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OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-2	-6	-6	-2	24	27	-6	8
Women	-21	-17	-19	-7	12	13	-21	-4
Age:								
18 - 34	-4	-5	-6	1	23	23	-8	8
35 - 44	-10	-8	-13	-2	21	33	-15	3
45 - 54	-17	-10	-15	-9	10	19	-19	-2
55 - 64	-18	-29	-15	-2	10	14	-30	-3
65 +	-14	-20	-21	-16	15	25	-21	-4
Income:								
Under \$15K	-49	-47	-44	-30	-31	-18	-52	-37
\$15K To \$24.9K	-31	-37	-31	-14	-6	-6	-40	-24
\$25K To \$39.9K	-12	-18	-16	-21	9	11	-24	-6
\$40K To \$49.9K	-9	-3	3	-7	26	30	-10	7
Over \$50K	15	16	3	21	43	47	3	27
Region:								
Northeast	-12	-10	-9	-8	17	27	-17	0
Midwest	-13	-14	-8	1	18	20	-14	4
South	-10	-12	-12	2	19	20	-13	1
West	-13	-13	-21	-18	15	20	-21	1
Race:								
White	-7	-7	-8	1	17	22	-8	6
Black	-31	-36	-45	-33	20	20	-46	-25
Politics:								
Republican	13	17	16	23	25	34	12	23
Democrat	-23	-25	-26	-23	16	17	-29	-9
Independent	-12	-15	-19	-7	11	14	-19	-3
Education:								
< High School	-43	-48	-41	-34	-19	-7	-49	-30
High Sch. Grad.	-12	-15	-18	-9	17	17	-18	-5
College +	-1	2	-1	6	30	32	-1	15
Home:								
Own	-8	-9	-9	1	22	26	-9	7
Rent	-21	-21	-23	-20	5	5	-27	-13
Marital Status:								
Single	-7	-6	-16	2	27	27	-19	2
Married	-5	-6	-7	0	22	27	-7	8
Sep/Wid/Div	-39	-41	-31	-24	-8	-3	-41	-22
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	1	-2	-1	6	25	26	-4	11
Part-Time	-11	-8	-12	-12	22	28	-15	0
Not Employed	-27	-28	-27	-15	5	7	-28	-11

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