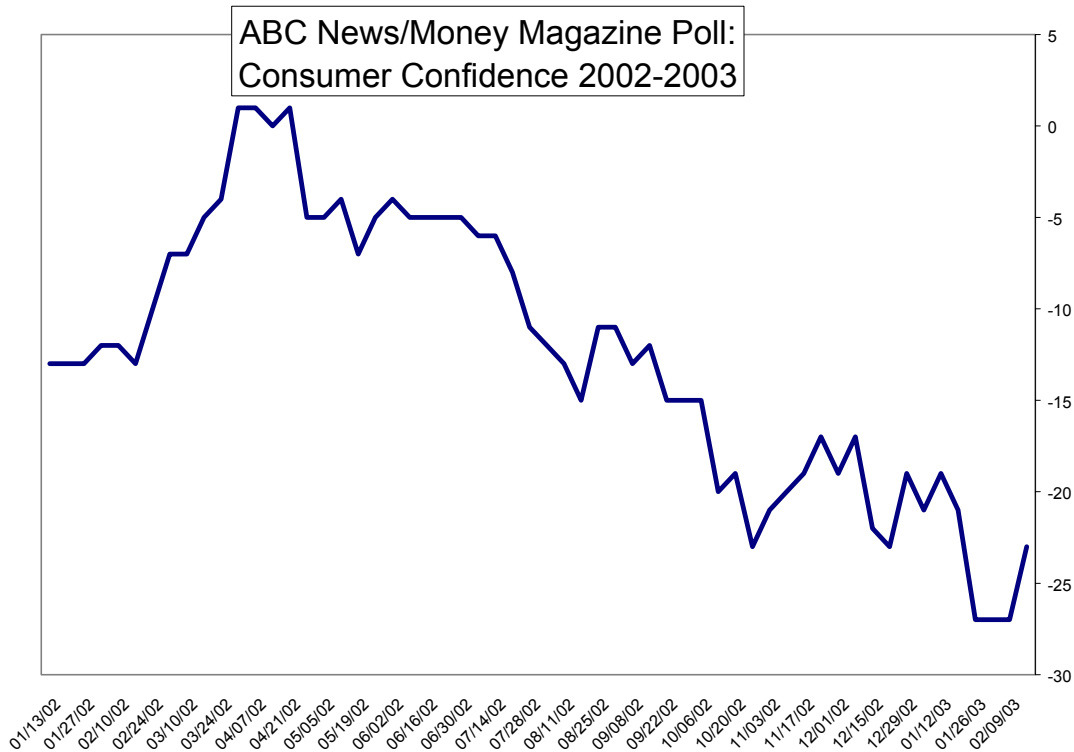


Confidence, Still Low, Gains Back Some Ground

Consumer confidence gained back some ground this week after wallowing for the past three weeks at a nine-year low. But it's still down on the year, and well below average.

The ABC News/Money magazine Money Consumer Comfort Index stands at -23 on its scale of +100 to -100, up four points since last week. Two components improved: ratings of the national economy, up four points to 28 percent positive; and ratings of personal finances, up three points to 55 percent positive.

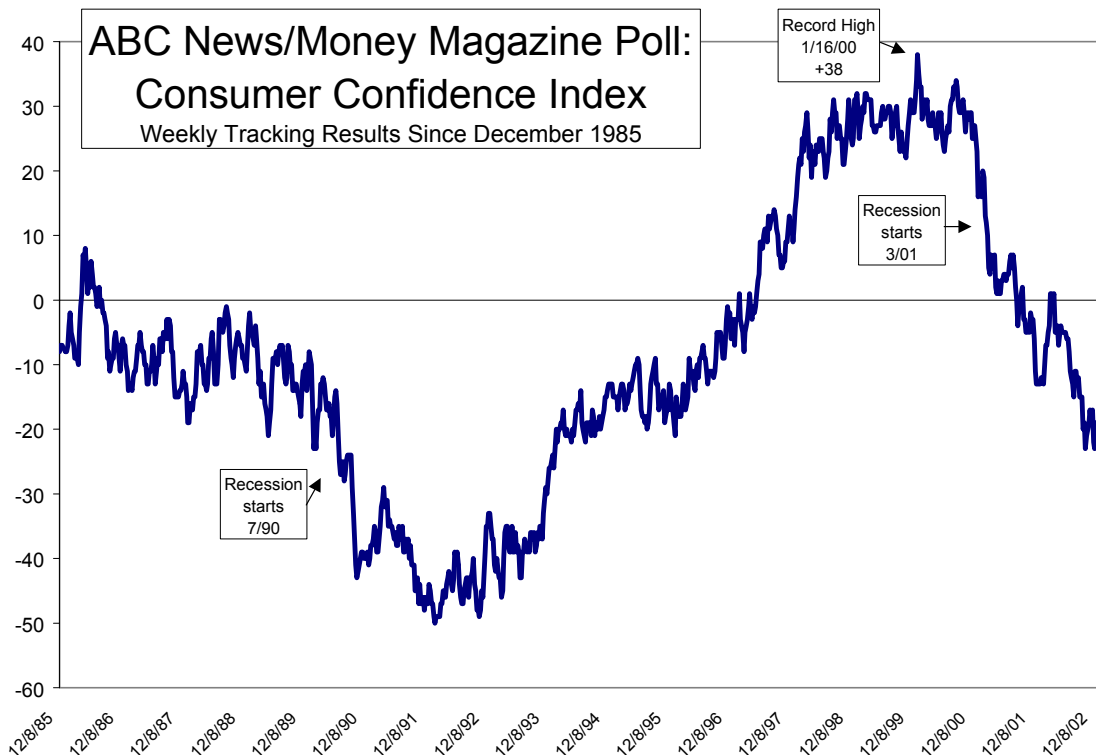
But as gasoline prices continue to rise (they're up 13 cents in the last two weeks), ratings of the buying climate failed to advance. Just 32 percent call it a good time to buy things, a seven-year low.



	ABC News/Money magazine poll				
Positive ratings of:	This week	Last week	2002 high	2002 low	17-yr. avg.
National economy	28%	24	45	25	41
Buying climate	32	33	45	36	39
Personal finances	55	52	63	52	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-23	-27	+1	-23	-9

TREND – At -23, the index is 14 points below its 17-year average and a huge 61 points off its record high in January 2000. But it's been far worse, bottoming out at -50 in February 1992.

ABC/Money Index		
Today	-23	
Last week	-27	
2002 high	+1	March, April
2002 low	-23	Oct. 20, Dec. 15
2002 average	-11	
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	-9	



GROUPS - As usual, confidence is higher among better-off Americans. The index stands at -4 among people in higher-income households compared to -50 in the lowest, -9 among college graduates while -38 among high-school dropouts, -22 among whites while -33 among blacks and -15 among men while -31 among women.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY - Twenty-eight percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good; it was 24 percent last week. The best was 80 percent Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was seven percent in late 1991 and early 1992.

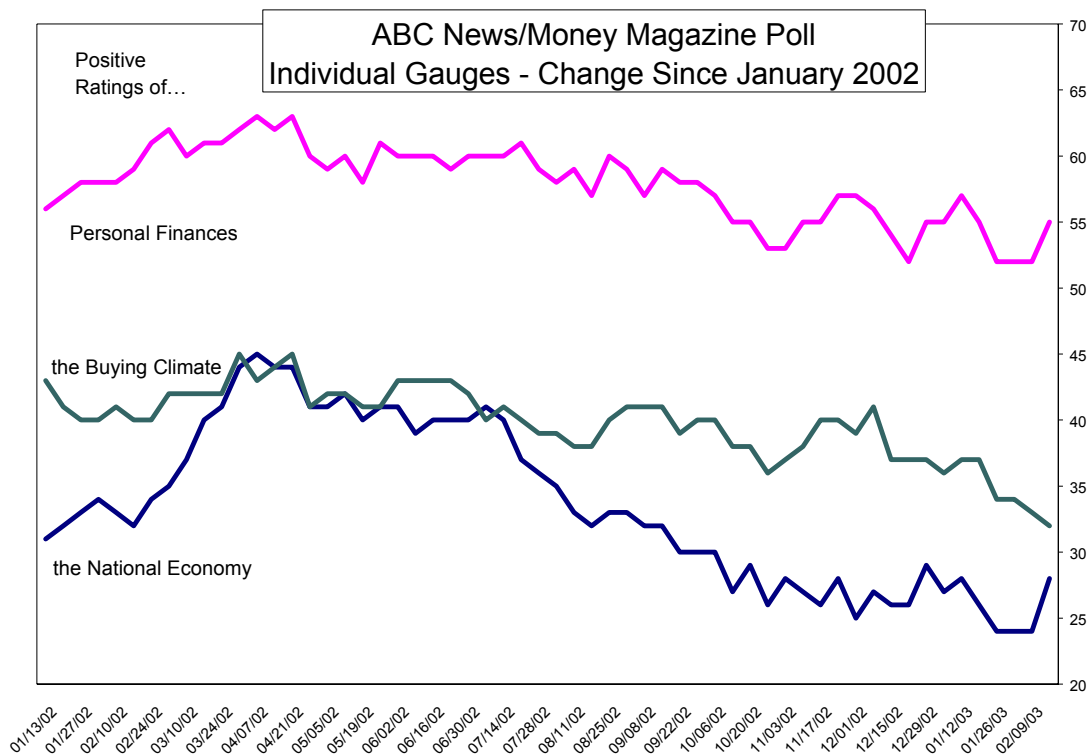
	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	28	1	27	72	46	26
Avg. since 12/85	41	4	37	59	40	19

PERSONAL FINANCES - Fifty-five percent rate their own finances as excellent or good; it was 52 percent last week. The best was 70 percent, set Aug. 30, 1998 and last matched in January 2000. The worst was 42 percent March 14, 1993.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	55	6	49	45	30	15
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	53	43	30	12

BUYING CLIMATE - Thirty-two percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need; it was 33 percent 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	32	2	30	68	45	23
Avg. since 12/85	39	3	36	61	41	20



METHODOLOGY - The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index represents a rolling average based on telephone interviews with a random sample of about 1,000 adults nationwide each month. This week's results are based on 1,006 interviews in the month ending Feb. 9, 2003 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/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934.

02/09/03	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	-23	-27	-21	-19	-13	1	-27	-12
State of Economy	-44	-52	-48	-48	-36	-10	-52	-33
Personal Finances	10	4	10	10	18	26	4	16
Buying Climate	-36	-34	-26	-20	-20	-10	-36	-21

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-15	-18	-13	-7	-5	9	-18	-5
Women	-31	-35	-29	-30	-19	-4	-38	-19
Age:								
18 - 34	-14	-25	-16	-13	-1	10	-25	-5
35 - 44	-25	-23	-18	-14	-14	3	-31	-14
45 - 54	-25	-31	-27	-25	-22	6	-37	-14
55 - 64	-39	-36	-22	-19	-10	20	-39	-13
65 +	-25	-24	-31	-31	-22	-5	-36	-21
Income:								
Under \$15K	-50	-50	-61	-44	-49	-26	-61	-45
\$15K To \$24.9K	-41	-46	-38	-27	-32	-19	-55	-33
\$25K To \$39.9K	-31	-34	-39	-22	-17	1	-43	-20
\$40K To \$49.9K	-16	-22	-7	-10	-7	12	-30	-6
Over \$50K	-4	-8	6	-9	9	33	-15	10
Region:								
Northeast	-25	-30	-25	-29	-8	2	-32	-16
Midwest	-26	-24	-22	-21	-14	4	-27	-12
South	-24	-28	-22	-26	-13	4	-29	-13
West	-18	-25	-16	4	-12	9	-25	-8
Race:								
White	-22	-23	-16	-15	-7	7	-23	-8
Black	-33	-51	-49	-40	-41	-18	-60	-38
Politics:								
Republican	5	0	10	6	5	34	0	12
Democrat	-38	-39	-40	-34	-24	-14	-42	-26
Independent	-29	-34	-34	-19	-9	-2	-38	-16
Education:								
< High School	-38	-45	-37	-36	-37	-12	-59	-36
High Sch. Grad.	-37	-40	-30	-24	-10	-3	-40	-17
College +	-9	-12	-10	-10	-5	13	-18	-1

Home:								
Own	-20	-24	-16	-19	-10	9	-24	-8
Rent	-31	-34	-34	-21	-16	-9	-40	-24
Marital Status:								
Single	-11	-13	-19	-14	-6	10	-20	-9
Married	-22	-27	-18	-18	-4	11	-27	-8
Sep/Wid/Div	-39	-40	-36	-29	-40	-14	-42	-29
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-12	-19	-16	-9	-3	12	-20	-4
Part-Time	-33	-39	-14	-17	-1	14	-39	-10
Not Employed	-34	-34	-33	-32	-26	-13	-40	-24

END