

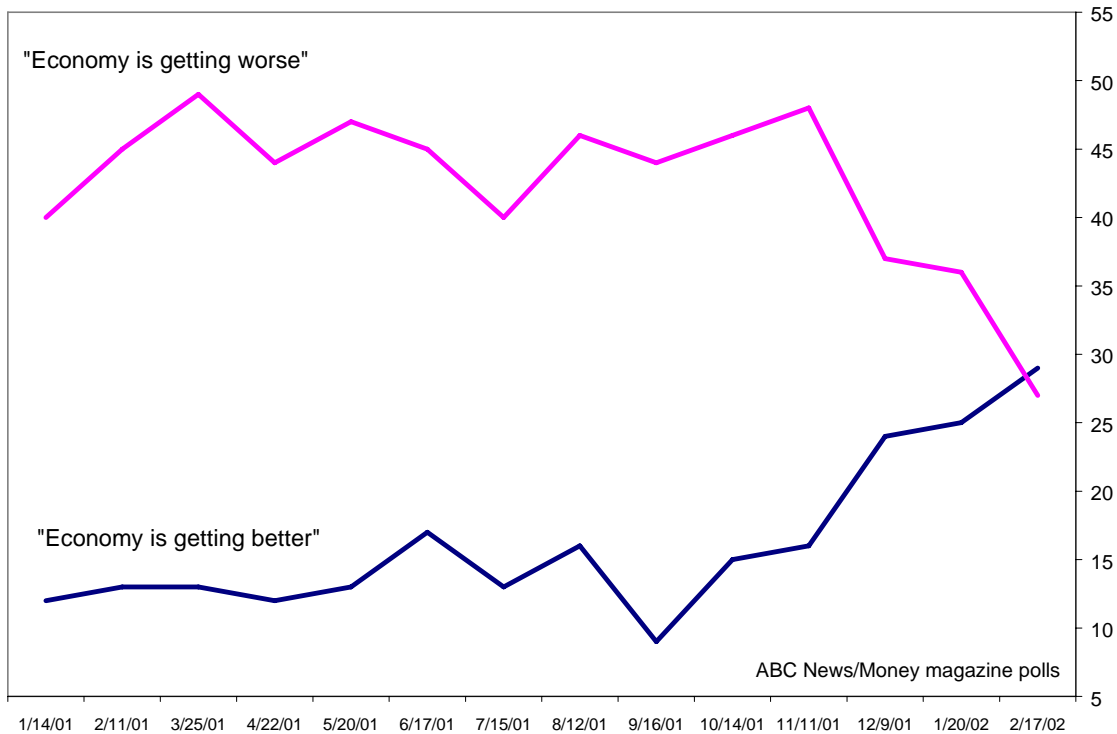
Americans' Economic Outlook is Looking Up

Public views of the economy's future have improved again, with another healthy drop in the number of Americans who say the economy is getting worse. That puts economic pessimism at its lowest level in a year and a half.

Just 27 percent of Americans in the latest ABC News/Money magazine poll say the economy is worsening, the fewest since July 2000. That's down from about 37 percent in January and December, and 48 percent last November.

Twenty-nine percent now say the economy's improving – the most since January 1999 – while the rest, 42 percent, think it's staying the same.

	Getting better	Getting worse	Staying same
2/17/02	29	27	42
1/20/02	25	36	39
12/9/01	24	37	38
11/11/01	16	48	36



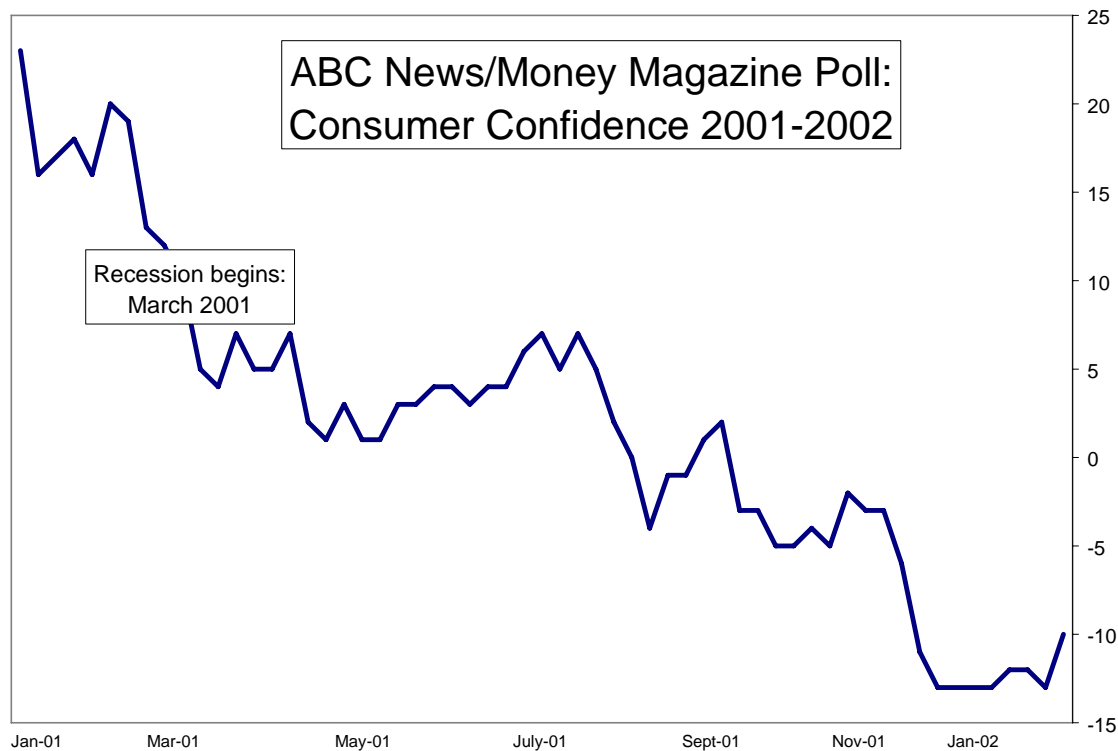
INDEX – Views of current conditions – as opposed to expectations for the future – are much glummer, with two-thirds continuing to rate the current economy negatively. But

the ABC/Money index of current sentiment also did improve slightly this week, after nearly two months in a trough.

The index, based on current ratings of the economy, buying climate and personal finances, stands at -10 on its scale of +100 to -100, up three points from last week. It had been at -12 or -13 for the last seven weeks straight.

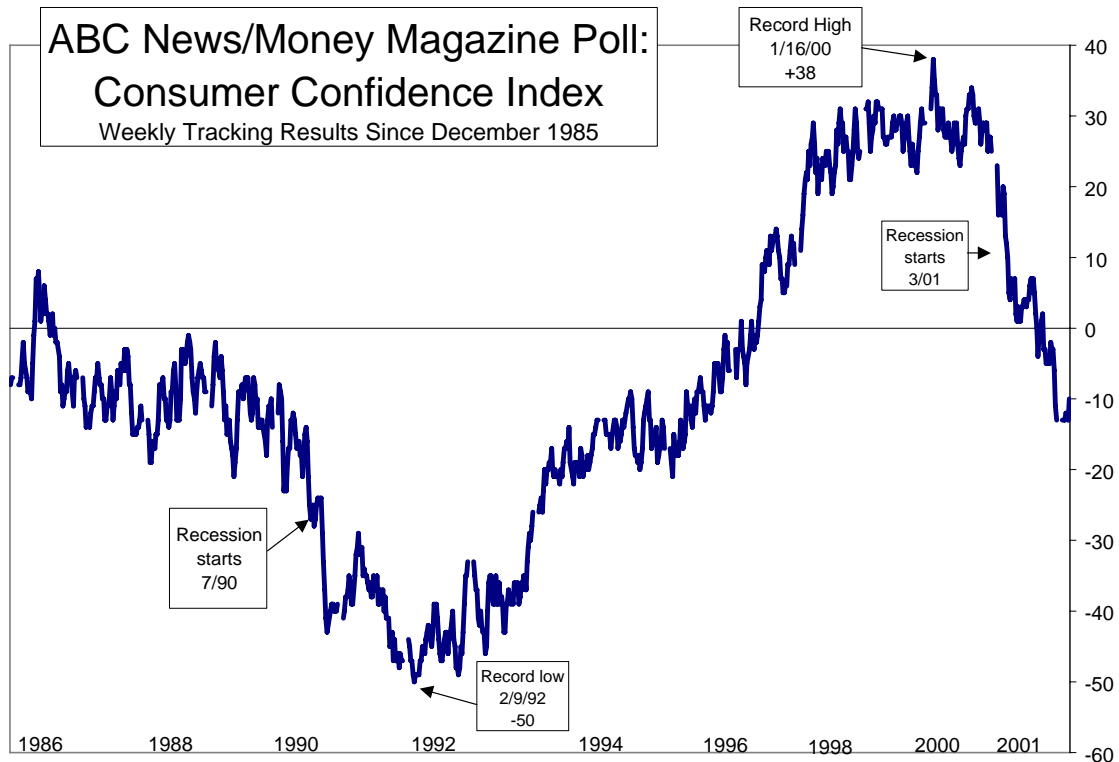
Just 34 percent say the economy's in good shape, and 40 percent say it's a good time to buy things. But far more, 61 percent, say their household finances are OK.

ABC News/Money Magazine Poll				
	2/17/02	2002 average	2001 average	16-year average
Positive ratings of:				
National economy	34%	33	50	42
Buying climate	40	41	43	39
Personal finances	61	58	63	57



TREND – The weekly index has averaged -12 since the start of the year, below its 16-year average of -8 but still much higher than its worst year, 1992, when it averaged -44. The index averaged +4 in 2001, down from a record setting +29 in 2000 – the largest year-to-year drop in this poll's history.

ABC/Money Index		
Today	-10	
Last week	-13	
2002 average	-12	
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 +10 in higher-income households compared to -53 in the lowest, -5 among college graduates while -34 among high-school dropouts, -5 among whites but -43 among blacks and +1 among men while -19 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 two points from last week. The best was 80 percent Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was seven percent in late 1991 and early 1992.

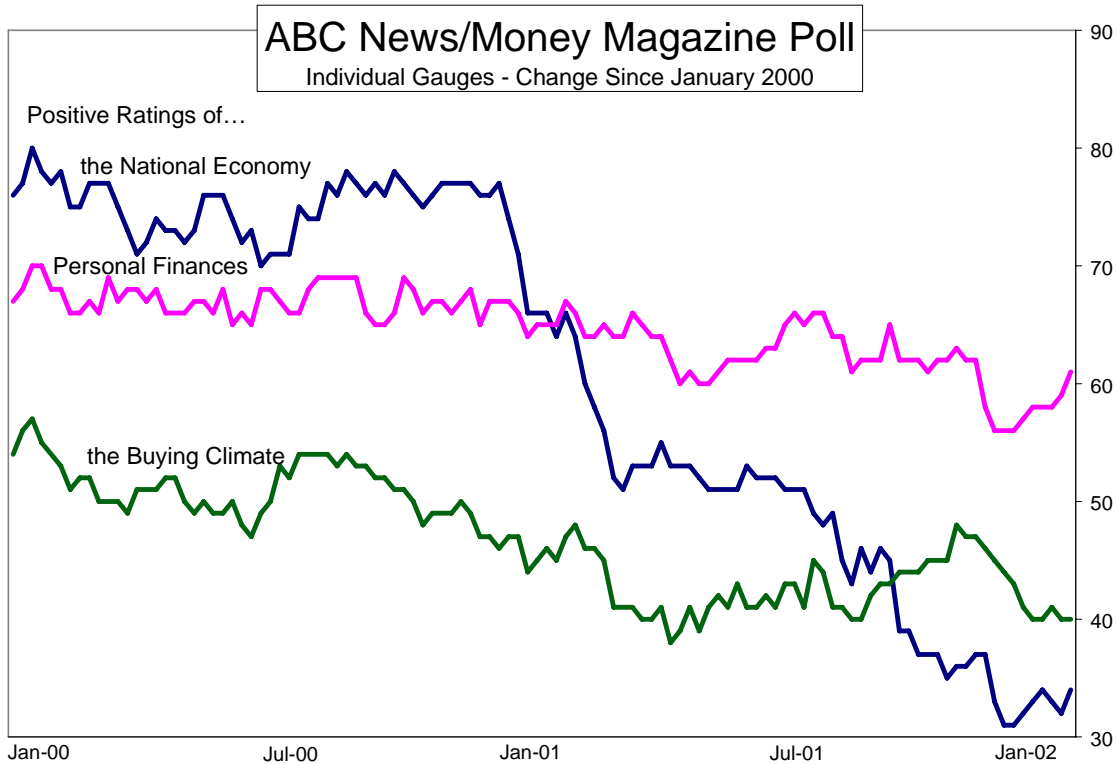
	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	34	1	33	66	50	16
Avg. since 12/85	42	4	38	58	39	19

PERSONAL FINANCES – Sixty-one percent rate their own finances as excellent or good, up two points from 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	61	5	56	39	26	13
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, the same as 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	4	36	60	42	18
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 1,022 interviews in the month ending Feb. 17, 2002 and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points. The question on expectations was conducted among 511 respondents Feb. 6-17, 2002; that result has a 4.5-point error margin. 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>

Media contact: Todd Polkes, (212) 456-4586

02/17/02	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	-10	-13	-13	-5	19	19	-13	0
State of Economy	-32	-36	-34	-30	28	28	-38	-9
Personal Finances	22	18	16	24	32	32	12	24

Buying Climate	-20	-20	-20	-10	-4	-4	-24	-15
----- OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	1	-5	-6	-1	24	24	-6	6
Women	-19	-19	-17	-9	13	13	-21	-6
Age:								
18 - 34	0	-1	-5	1	20	21	-8	6
35 - 44	-16	-14	-8	-1	33	33	-16	1
45 - 54	-12	-22	-10	-12	10	19	-22	-3
55 - 64	-10	-10	-29	-15	5	14	-30	-4
65 +	-17	-22	-20	-6	14	14	-22	-6
Income:								
Under \$15K	-54	-49	-47	-40	-22	-22	-54	-38
\$15K To \$24.9K	-31	-32	-37	-23	-20	-14	-40	-25
\$25K To \$39.9K	-4	-17	-18	-13	4	11	-24	-7
\$40K To \$49.9K	-2	-7	-3	0	29	29	-14	5
Over \$50K	10	9	16	17	47	47	3	25
Region:								
Northeast	-9	-8	-10	-11	27	27	-17	-2
Midwest	-9	-14	-14	-1	12	13	-14	2
South	-5	-13	-12	-3	15	15	-13	0
West	-17	-12	-13	-8	20	20	-21	0
Race:								
White	-5	-7	-7	-5	22	22	-8	5
Black	-43	-41	-36	-8	-6	-6	-46	-28
Politics:								
Republican	9	5	17	18	32	34	5	22
Democrat	-23	-24	-25	-16	12	12	-29	-11
Independent	-7	-9	-15	-11	13	13	-19	-4
Education:								
< High School	-34	-37	-48	-29	-19	-15	-49	-31
High Sch. Grad.	-4	-10	-15	-11	14	14	-18	-6
College +	-5	-5	2	6	32	32	-5	13
Home:								
Own	-5	-10	-9	-2	26	26	-10	5
Rent	-19	-16	-21	-15	-6	2	-27	-14
Marital Status:								
Single	-9	-6	-6	-5	9	15	-19	0
Married	-1	-4	-6	-2	27	27	-7	6
Sep/Wid/Div	-38	-40	-41	-22	-10	-10	-42	-24
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	0	-3	-2	1	26	26	-4	9
Part-Time	-6	-1	-8	-4	25	25	-15	-2
Not Employed	-22	-26	-28	-16	5	5	-28	-12

1. Do you think the nation's economy is getting better, getting worse or staying the same?

	Getting Better	Getting Worse	Staying the Same	No Opinion
2/17/02	29	27	42	2
1/20/02	25	36	39	1
12/9/01	24	37	38	1
11/11/01	16	48	36	1
10/14/01	15	46	39	0
9/16/01	9	44	46	1
8/12/01	16	46	38	0
7/15/01	13	40	46	0
6/17/01	17	45	38	1
5/20/01	13	47	39	0
4/22/01	12	44	44	0
3/25/01	13	49	37	1
2/11/01	13	45	41	1

1/14/01	12	40	47	1
7/09/00	21	28	50	0
9/12/99	21	23	56	1
5/23/99	24	26	49	1
1/31/99	28	21	50	0
1/03/99	29	21	47	2

Call for full trend.

END