

Confidence Steady at Year's High

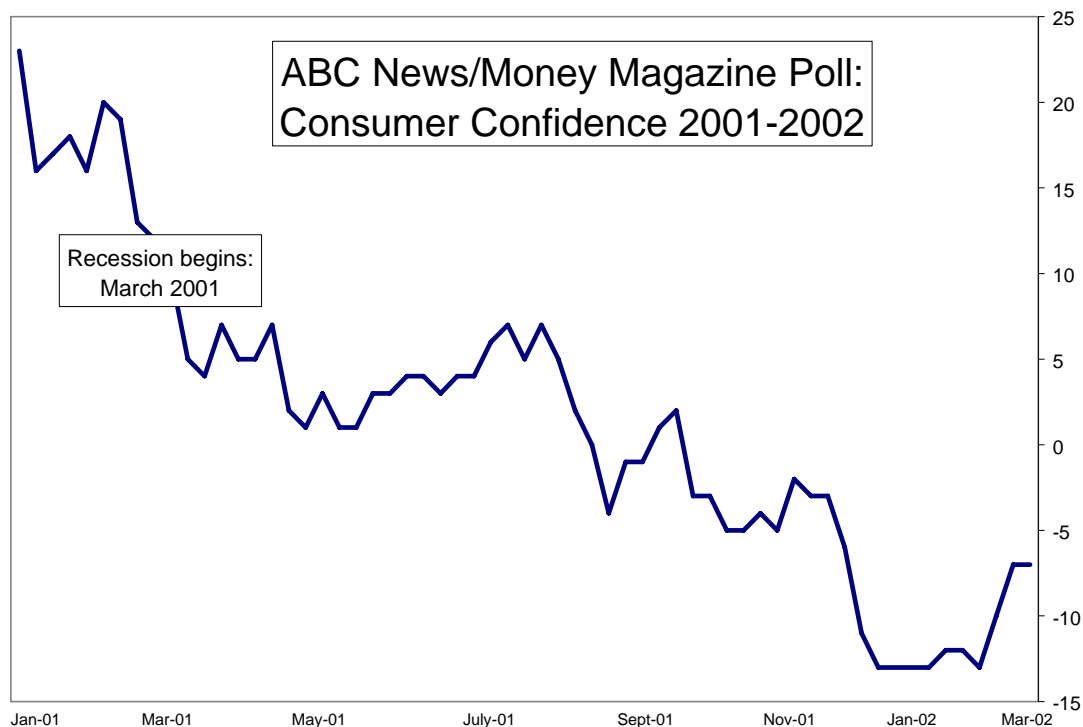
Consumer confidence held steady in the latest ABC News/Money magazine poll, matching its best level in two and a half months.

The ABC/Money Consumer Comfort Index had gained six points in two weeks, reaching -7 on a scale of +100 to -100. The index measures views of current economic conditions; expectations for the future, measured separately, have been improving since last fall.

In the index, 60 percent of Americans this week call their own finances excellent or good, and 42 percent call it a good time to buy things. While just 37 percent say the economy's in good shape, that looks to be slowly improving, up six points since the start of the year.

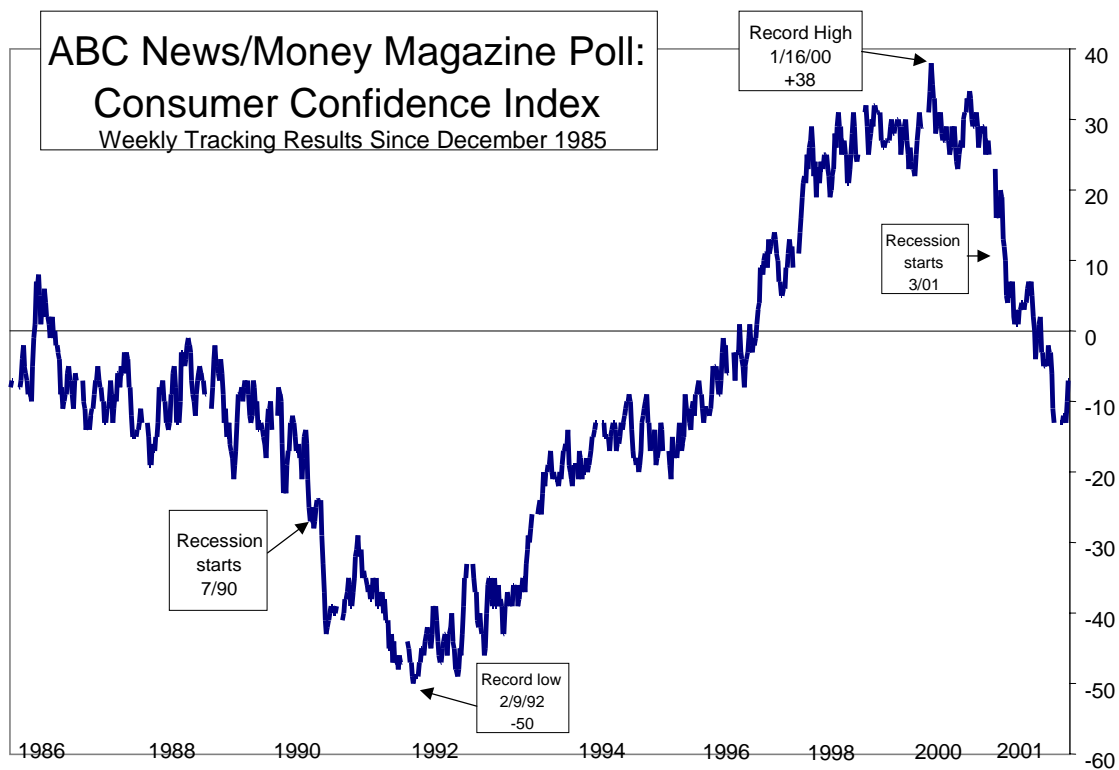
Some other economic news has been encouraging. Last week, the Commerce Department reported a rise in Americans' incomes and spending in January, and said the economy grew by 1.4 percent in the last quarter of 2001.

ABC News/Money Magazine Poll				
	3/3/02	2002 average	2001 average	16-year average
Positive ratings of:				
National economy	37%	33	50	42
Buying climate	42	41	43	39
Personal finances	60	59	63	57



TREND – The weekly index has averaged –11 since the start of the year, slightly 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 +29 in 2000 – the largest year-to-year drop in this poll’s history.

	ABC/Money	Index	
Today	-	7	
Last week	-	7	
Three weeks ago	-	13	
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	-	8	



GROUPS – As usual, confidence is higher among better-off Americans. The index is +14 in higher-income households compared to -51 in the lowest, 0 among college graduates while -36 among high-school dropouts, -2 among whites but -47 among blacks and +3 among men while -17 among women.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Thirty-seven 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.

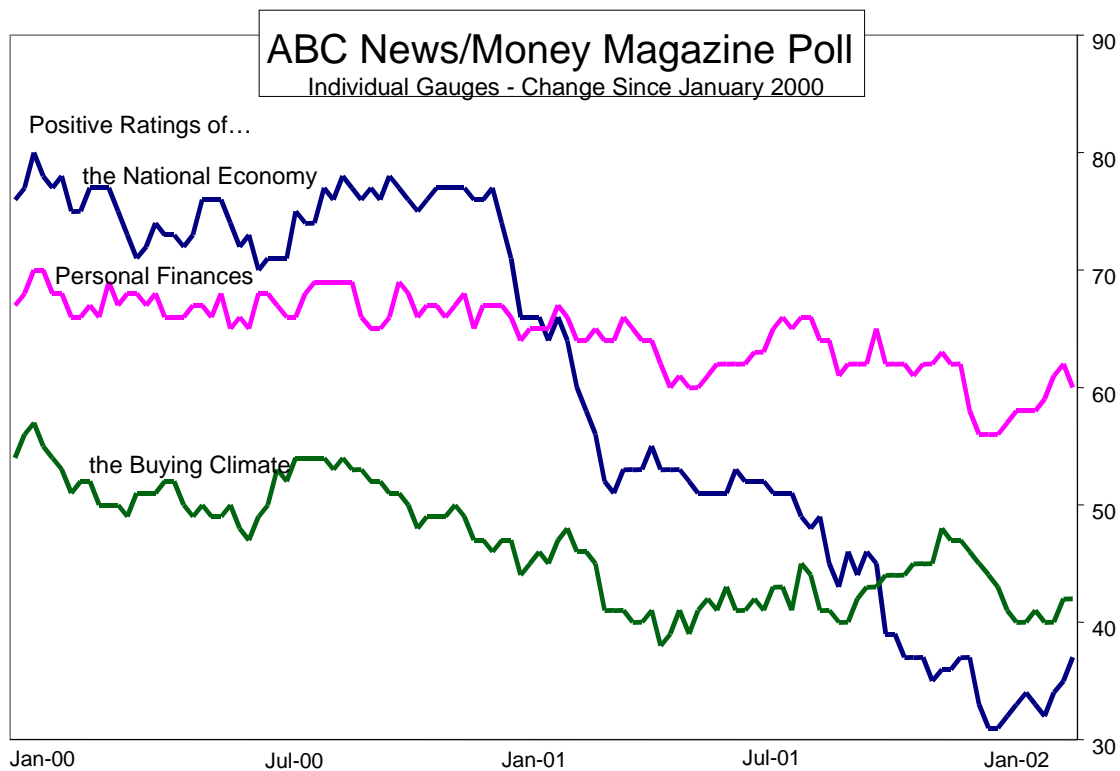
	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	37	3	34	63	49	14
Avg. since 12/85	42	4	38	58	39	19

PERSONAL FINANCES – Sixty percent rate their own finances as excellent or good, down 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	60	7	53	40	27	13
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	53	43	30	12

BUYING CLIMATE – Forty-two 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	42	4	38	58	41	17
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 1,020 interviews in the month ending March 3, 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>

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

03/03/02	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	-7	-7	-12	-3	12	12	-13	-1
State of Economy	-26	-30	-34	-28	16	16	-38	-11
Personal Finances	20	24	16	24	28	32	12	24
Buying Climate	-16	-16	-18	-6	-8	-4	-24	-15

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	3	4	-3	4	18	18	-6	5
Women	-17	-17	-21	-10	7	7	-21	-7
Age:								
18 - 34	-2	2	-6	2	16	21	-8	6
35 - 44	-15	-13	-11	-6	17	17	-16	-1
45 - 54	0	-7	-19	-10	15	19	-22	-4
55 - 64	-16	-16	-12	4	-2	14	-30	-4
65 +	-14	-12	-17	-8	6	9	-22	-7
Income:								
Under \$15K	-51	-50	-44	-46	-27	-22	-54	-39
\$15K To \$24.9K	-26	-28	-31	-19	-22	-14	-40	-25
\$25K To \$39.9K	-1	-6	-15	-5	11	11	-24	-7
\$40K To \$49.9K	7	10	-14	4	22	22	-14	5
Over \$50K	14	15	12	20	38	41	3	24
Region:								
Northeast	-6	-6	-14	-5	21	21	-17	-3
Midwest	-14	-15	-14	-6	13	13	-15	1
South	-4	-2	-9	-3	5	8	-13	-1
West	-6	-7	-14	1	16	17	-21	-1
Race:								
White	-2	-2	-7	-2	17	17	-8	4
Black	-47	-43	-33	-23	-20	-8	-47	-30
Politics:								
Republican	7	8	11	17	28	34	5	21
Democrat	-16	-19	-23	-14	2	2	-29	-12
Independent	-7	-7	-13	-8	9	9	-19	-5
Education:								
< High School	-36	-29	-39	-25	-18	-15	-49	-32
High Sch. Grad.	-4	-5	-12	-10	2	6	-18	-6
College +	0	-1	-3	7	27	27	-5	12
Home:								
Own	-1	-3	-10	2	16	16	-10	4
Rent	-21	-17	-17	-16	2	2	-27	-14
Marital Status:								
Single	-12	-9	-5	-3	3	15	-19	-1
Married	0	1	-4	2	21	21	-7	5
Sep/Wid/Div	-34	-37	-42	-25	-16	-10	-42	-25
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	1	0	0	3	21	21	-4	8
Part-Time	3	-2	-13	-7	15	15	-15	-3
Not Employed	-21	-17	-25	-12	-2	-1	-28	-13

END