

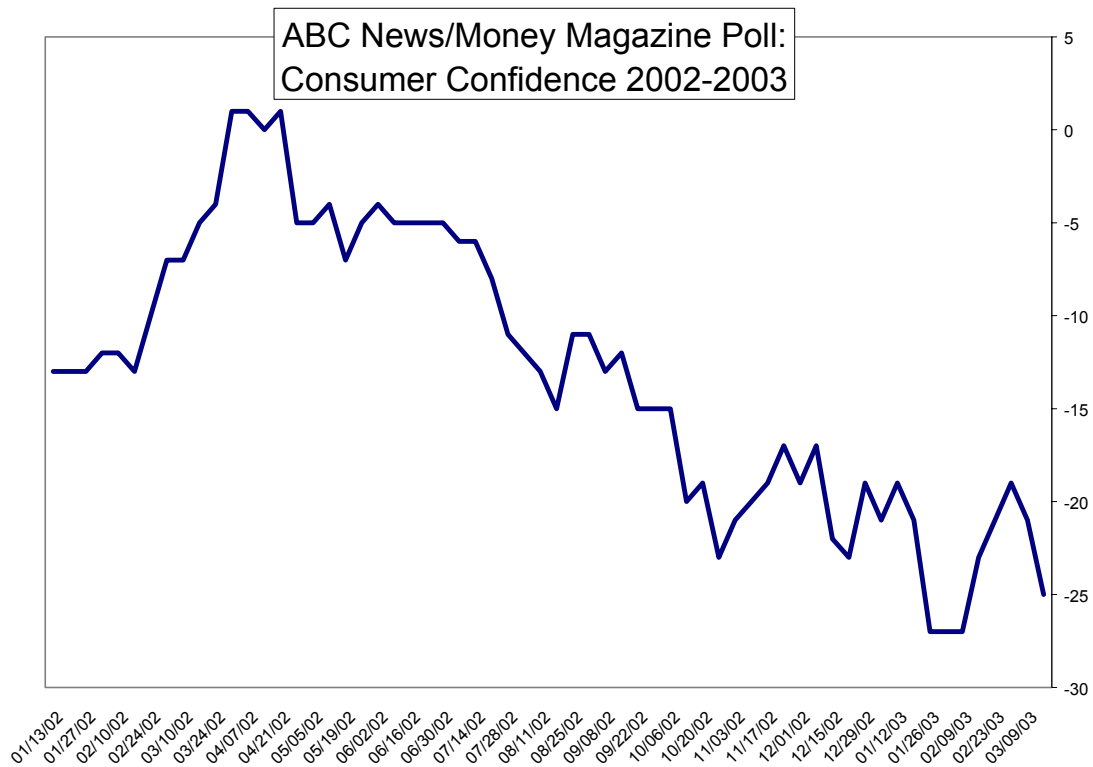
Drop in Economy Ratings Leads Confidence Lower

Consumer confidence dropped this week, catching up with the uncertainties of possible war, a slumping stock market and rising gasoline prices.

The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index fell four points to -25 on its scale of +100 to -100, shedding more of its February gains and approaching the nine-year low it hit in January.

The change was led by a five-point drop in positive ratings of the national economy: Just 23 percent of Americans now say the economy's in excellent or good shape, the fewest for this individual gauge since December 1993. It was 30 percent just two weeks ago.

The index's two other gauges of current economic sentiment are higher, and closer to their long-term averages. Thirty-six percent call it a good time to buy things, about the same as last week, and 53 percent rate their own finances positively, down three points.

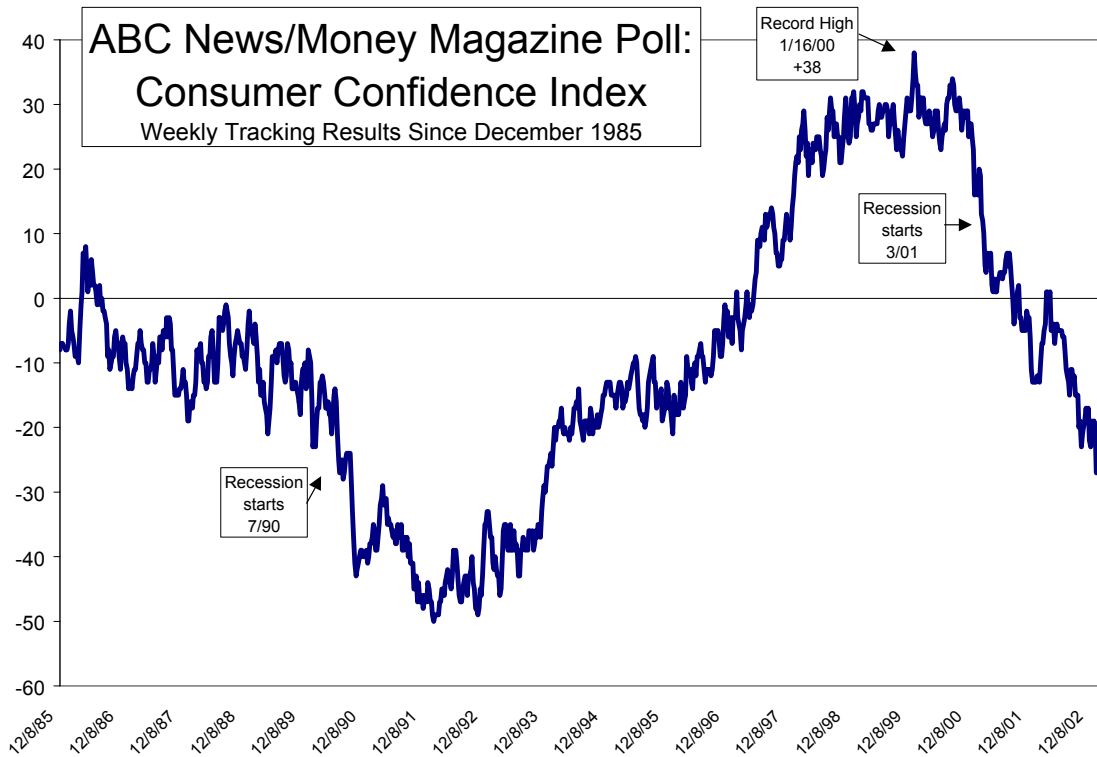


Positive ratings of:	ABC News/Money magazine poll				
	This week	Last week	2002 high	2002 low	17-yr. avg.
National economy	23%	28	45	25	41
Buying climate	36	35	45	36	39
Personal finances	53	56	63	52	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-25	-21	+1	-23	-9

TREND – The ABC/Money index fell to -27, a nine-year low, the week of Jan. 19, and stayed there for three weeks. It improved through February, reaching -19 two weeks ago, before turning back down.

The index peaked at +38 in January 2000 and bottomed out at -50 in February 1992. Last year, its worst year since 1996, it averaged -11. Its best annual average was +29 in 2000; its worst, -44 in 1992.

ABC/Money Index	
Today	-25
Last week	-21
2003 low	-27 January, February
Recent high	+1 March, April 2002
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 is 0 among people in higher-income households compared to -45 in the lowest, -15 among college graduates while -45 among high-school dropouts, -23 among whites but -38 among blacks and -15 among men while -34 among women.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Twenty-three percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good; it was 28 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	23	2	21	77	51	26
Avg. since 12/85	41	4	37	59	40	19

PERSONAL FINANCES - Fifty-three percent rate their own finances as excellent or good; it was 56 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	53	5	48	47	34	13
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	53	43	30	12

BUYING CLIMATE - Thirty-six percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need; it was 35 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	36	3	33	64	48	16
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 1,004 interviews in the month ending March 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>

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03/09/03

This Last 4 Wks 3 Mo. 1 Yr. 12 Mo 12 Mo 12 Mo
 Week Week Ago Ago Ago High Low Avg

Group

GENERAL POPULATION:

Overall Index	-25	-21	-23	-22	-5	1	-27	-13
State of Economy	-54	-44	-44	-48	-20	-10	-54	-34
Personal Finances	6	12	10	8	22	26	4	15
Buying Climate	-28	-30	-36	-26	-16	-10	-36	-21

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

Sex:

Men	-15	-11	-15	-17	6	9	-18	-6
Women	-34	-30	-31	-25	-15	-4	-38	-20

Age:

18 - 34	-25	-17	-14	-10	-6	10	-25	-7
35 - 44	-14	-12	-25	-31	-12	3	-31	-14
45 - 54	-31	-24	-25	-16	4	6	-37	-15
55 - 64	-31	-36	-39	-28	-3	20	-39	-15
65 +	-30	-27	-25	-36	-6	-5	-36	-22

Income:

Under \$15K	-45	-48	-50	-50	-47	-26	-61	-45
\$15K To \$24.9K	-51	-39	-41	-51	-23	-19	-55	-34
\$25K To \$39.9K	-41	-27	-31	-29	-10	1	-43	-21
\$40K To \$49.9K	-28	-19	-16	-30	11	12	-30	-7
Over \$50K	0	1	-4	6	23	33	-15	9

Region:

Northeast	-23	-15	-25	-29	-5	2	-32	-17
Midwest	-29	-26	-26	-17	-8	4	-29	-13
South	-27	-24	-24	-21	1	4	-29	-15
West	-18	-15	-18	-19	-11	9	-25	-8

Race:

White	-23	-20	-22	-19	2	7	-23	-9
Black	-38	-29	-33	-47	-43	-18	-60	-37

Politics:

Republican	1	9	5	7	16	34	0	12
Democrat	-46	-40	-38	-34	-18	-14	-46	-28
Independent	-25	-24	-29	-25	-4	-2	-38	-17

Education:

< High School	-45	-32	-38	-59	-37	-12	-59	-36
High Sch. Grad.	-30	-29	-37	-25	-3	-3	-40	-19
College +	-15	-11	-9	-4	5	13	-18	-2

Home:

Own	-19	-14	-20	-14	4	9	-24	-9
Rent	-37	-35	-31	-38	-23	-9	-40	-25

Marital Status:

Single	-21	-21	-11	-18	-14	10	-21	-9
Married	-22	-16	-22	-17	3	11	-27	-10
Sep/Wid/Div	-40	-39	-39	-38	-31	-14	-42	-29

Employ. Status:

Full-Time	-18	-10	-12	-12	4	12	-20	-5
Part-Time	-19	-19	-33	-15	4	14	-39	-12
Not Employed	-37	-35	-34	-37	-19	-13	-40	-25

END