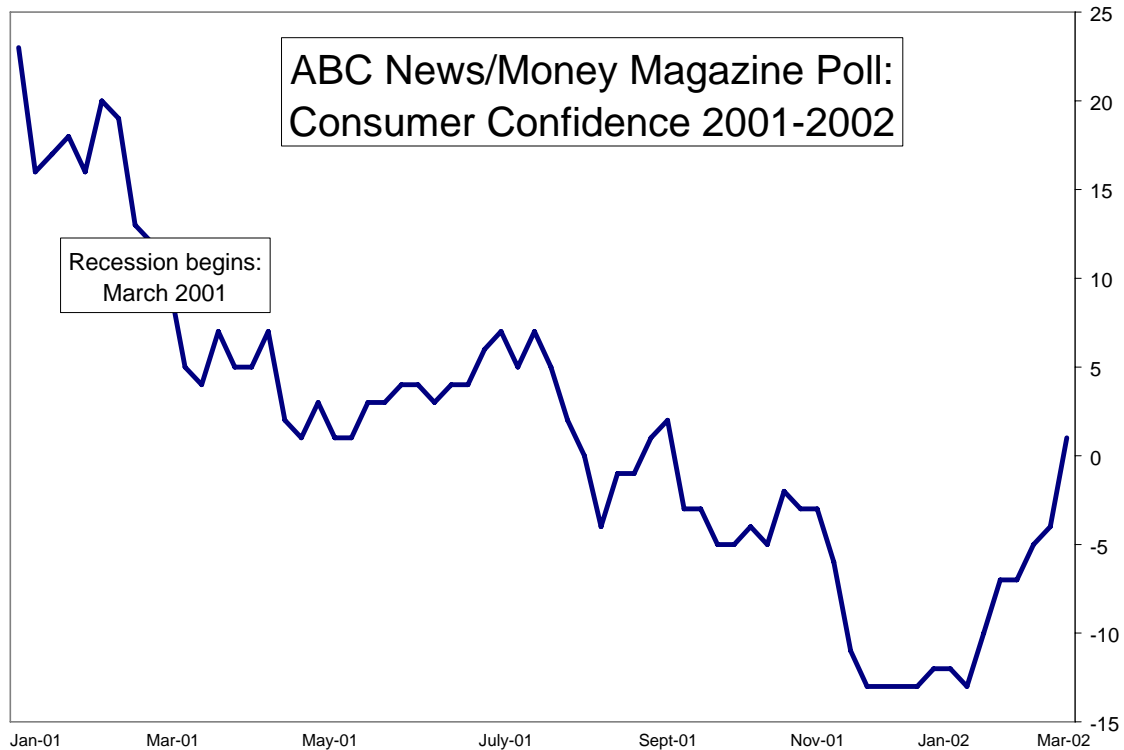


Consumer Confidence Jumps; Best in Nearly Six Months

Consumer confidence in current economic conditions jumped this week to its best level in nearly six months – its largest one-week gain in more than three years.

The advance pushes confidence into positive territory: The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index stands at +1 on its scale of +100 to –100, up five points. That’s its best one-week gain since January 1999, and a rare boost. The index has gained five or more points in a week only 13 times in nearly 850 weekly polls since December 1985.

The gain in current sentiment follows last week’s surge in expectations; 47 percent said the economy is getting better, the most in 18 years.



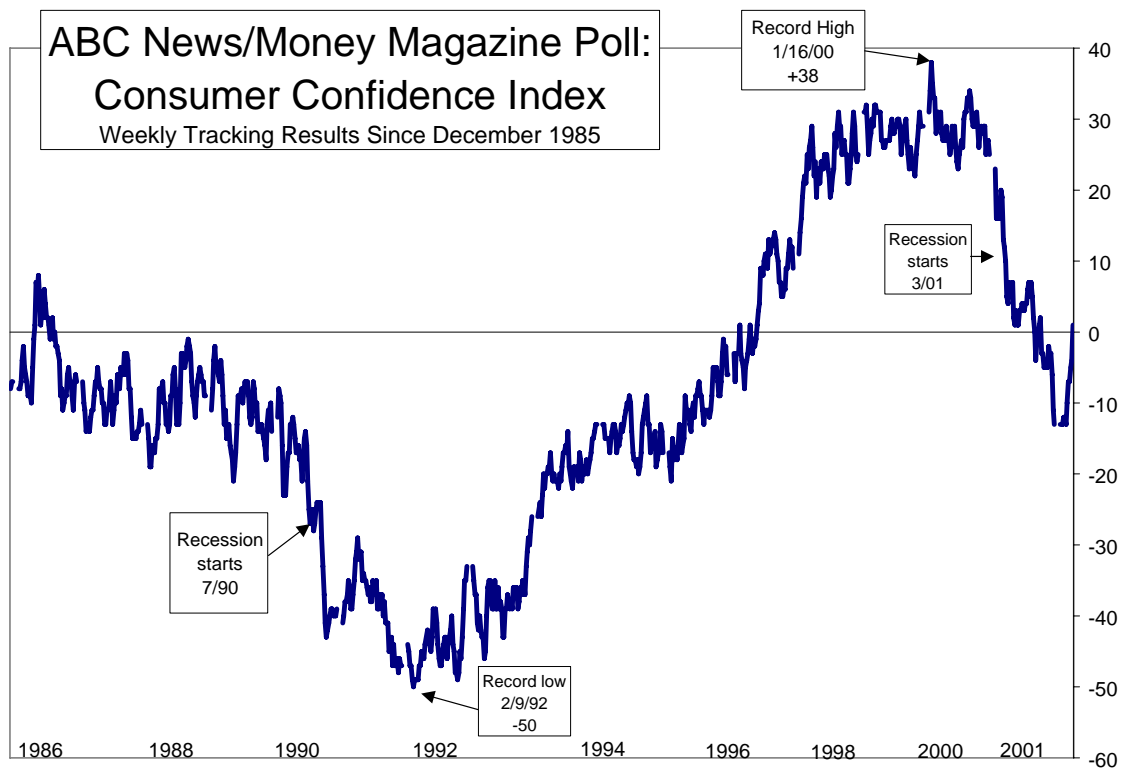
ECONOMY – The recovery in the ABC/Money index has been led in part by rising numbers of Americans who say the national economy is in good shape – up 13 points this year, to 44 percent. However, that’s still far below its high of 80 percent in January 2000.

Forty-five percent say it's a good time to buy things – up three points from last week to its best of the year. It's an encouraging sign that this gauge has held tough in the face of higher gasoline prices; in the past it's responded negatively to rising fuel costs.

The index's final gauge, personal finances, continues to hold strong. Sixty-two percent say their own finances are excellent or good, just eight points off their peak.

ABC News/Money Magazine Poll				
Positive ratings of:	3/24/02	3/17/02	1/6/02	16-year average
National economy	44%	41	31	42
Buying climate	45	42	43	39
Personal finances	62	61	56	57
Consumer Comfort Index	+1	-4	-13	-8

TREND – The weekly index was +23 at the beginning of 2001 and dropped throughout the year to a low of -13 at year-end. It stayed there for the first six weeks of this year before starting to improve in mid-February.



ABC/Money Index		
Today	+ 1	
Last week	- 4	
Six weeks ago	-13	
2002 average	- 9	
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 +29 in higher-income households compared to -43 in the lowest, +13 among college graduates while -20 among high-school dropouts, +7 among whites but -42 among blacks and +6 among men while -5 among women.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Forty-four percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good, up three 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	44	2	42	56	44	12
Avg. since 12/85	42	4	38	58	39	19

PERSONAL FINANCES – Sixty-two percent rate their own finances as excellent or good, up one point 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	62	8	54	38	27	11
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	53	43	30	12

BUYING CLIMATE – Forty-five percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need, up three points 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	45	5	40	55	40	15
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 1,015 interviews in the month ending March 24, 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/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

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

03/24/02

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:

Group	This Week	Last Week	4 Wks Ago	3 Mo. Ago	1 Yr. Ago	12 Mo High	12 Mo Low	12 Mo Avg
Overall Index	1	-4	-7	-11	4	7	-13	-2
State of Economy	-12	-18	-30	-34	2	10	-38	-13
Personal Finances	24	22	24	12	28	32	12	23
Buying Climate	-10	-16	-16	-10	-18	-4	-24	-15

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

Sex:

Men	6	6	4	0	8	13	-6	5
Women	-5	-12	-17	-20	0	6	-21	-7

Age:

18 - 34	-4	-5	2	-2	8	21	-8	5
35 - 44	3	-1	-13	-15	1	9	-16	-2
45 - 54	3	-3	-7	-19	9	11	-22	-5
55 - 64	20	3	-16	-5	-5	20	-30	-4
65 +	-11	-9	-12	-16	-1	9	-22	-8

Income:

Under \$15K	-43	-41	-50	-43	-40	-22	-54	-40
\$15K To \$24.9K	-23	-19	-28	-26	-19	-14	-40	-25
\$25K To \$39.9K	-6	-17	-6	-9	-5	11	-24	-8
\$40K To \$49.9K	2	5	10	5	11	21	-14	4
Over \$50K	29	25	15	5	31	39	3	23

Region:

Northeast	-6	-9	-6	-8	-2	9	-17	-4
Midwest	3	-5	-15	-8	8	13	-15	0
South	-2	-1	-2	-13	0	8	-13	-1
West	8	-2	-7	-11	10	17	-21	-2

Race:

White	7	4	-2	-6	11	14	-8	3
Black	-42	-51	-43	-44	-39	-8	-51	-30

Politics:

Republican	28	17	8	12	23	34	5	20
Democrat	-15	-19	-19	-21	-13	2	-29	-12
Independent	-3	-2	-7	-16	3	4	-19	-6

Education:

< High School	-20	-31	-29	-31	-25	-15	-49	-32
High Sch. Grad.	-7	-11	-5	-16	-5	6	-18	-7
College +	13	10	-1	0	17	26	-5	11

Home:

Own	8	4	-3	-5	8	16	-10	4
Rent	-20	-23	-17	-24	-8	-1	-27	-16

Marital Status:

Single	-10	-8	-9	-14	1	15	-19	-1
Married	9	3	1	-5	13	17	-7	5
Sep/Wid/Div	-23	-29	-37	-25	-29	-10	-42	-25

Employ. Status:

Full-Time	12	6	0	0	10	19	-4	8
Part-Time	7	9	-2	-10	5	11	-15	-3
Not Employed	-18	-21	-17	-23	-7	-1	-28	-14

END