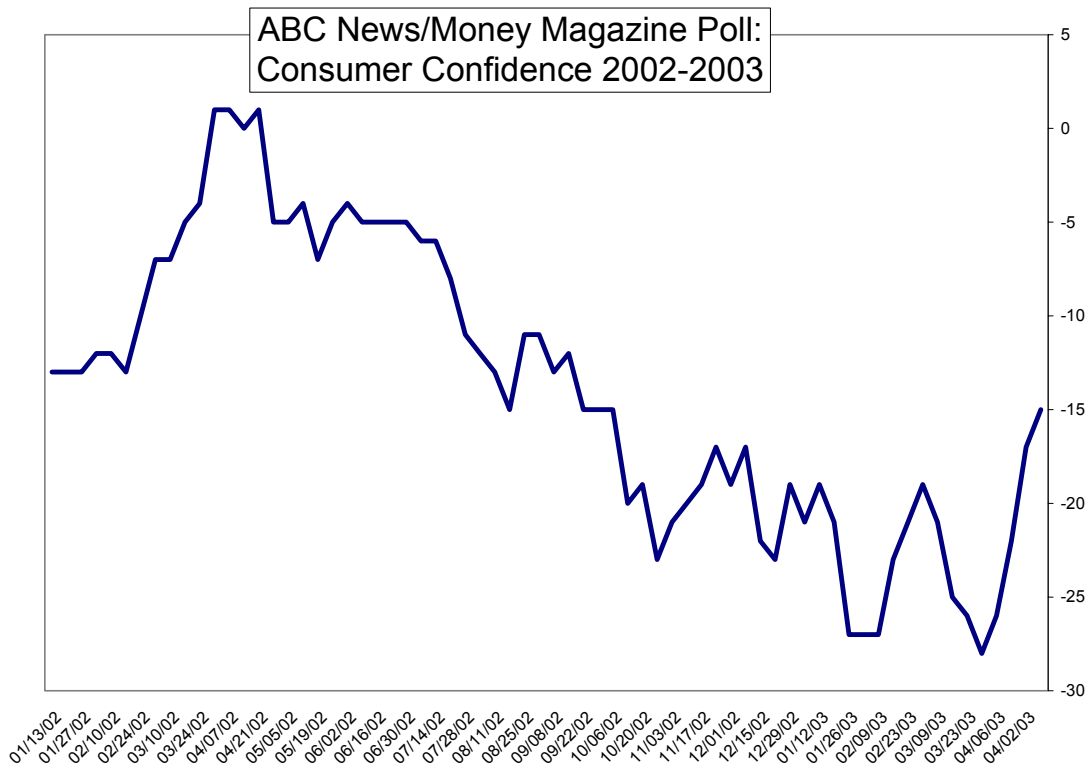


Confidence its Best in Seven Months

Continuing its remarkable surge since the successful war in Iraq, consumer confidence advanced this week to its best level in seven months.

Positive ratings of the national economy are up by nine points since just after the war began; ratings of personal finances, up six points; and the buying climate, up four. That rally has lifted confidence sharply from what was, on March 23, its lowest in nine years.

The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on these ratings, has gained 13 points, jumping from -28 to -15 on its scale of +100 to -100. Though much improved, and its best since Sept. 29, that's still below its average in this 17-year-old survey, -9.



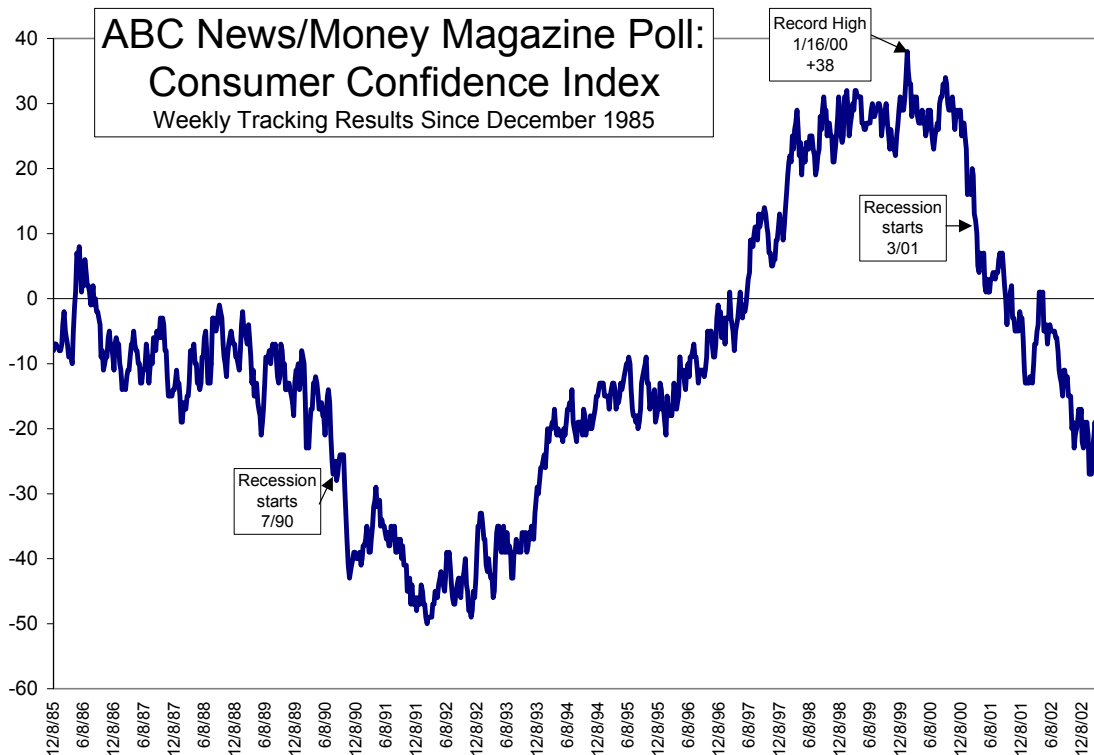
The advance outstrips the index's performance in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, when it gained nine points from January through March, mostly in the weeks immediately following the war's end. It's worth noting that the gains didn't last: Confidence peaked after the 1991 war, then lost ground later that year.

In its current move, the index gained two points the week of March 30, four points a week later, five points last week and two more points this week. The five-point gain was one of its best ever – the index has advanced that much only 14 times in more than 900 weekly surveys. Separately, last week’s poll also found a sharp decline in pessimism – a 15-point drop in the number of Americans who say the economy’s getting worse.

ABC/Money		
	Index	Change
4/20/02	-15	+2
4/13/03	-17	+5
4/6/03	-22	+4
3/30/03	-26	+2
3/23/03	-28	

INDEX - While the index’s largest gain is in ratings of the national economy, these remain well below average – 30 percent positive, compared to a long-term average of 41 percent. By contrast, ratings of personal finances are 60 percent positive, compared to an average of 57 percent; and views of the buying climate are 37 percent positive, compared to an average of 39 percent.

Even with its recent gains, the index is a good deal lower than it was a year ago (-5), and far below the heights it reached from 1998-2000, peaking at +38 on Jan.16, 2000. But it’s also well above its worst, -50 in February 1992.

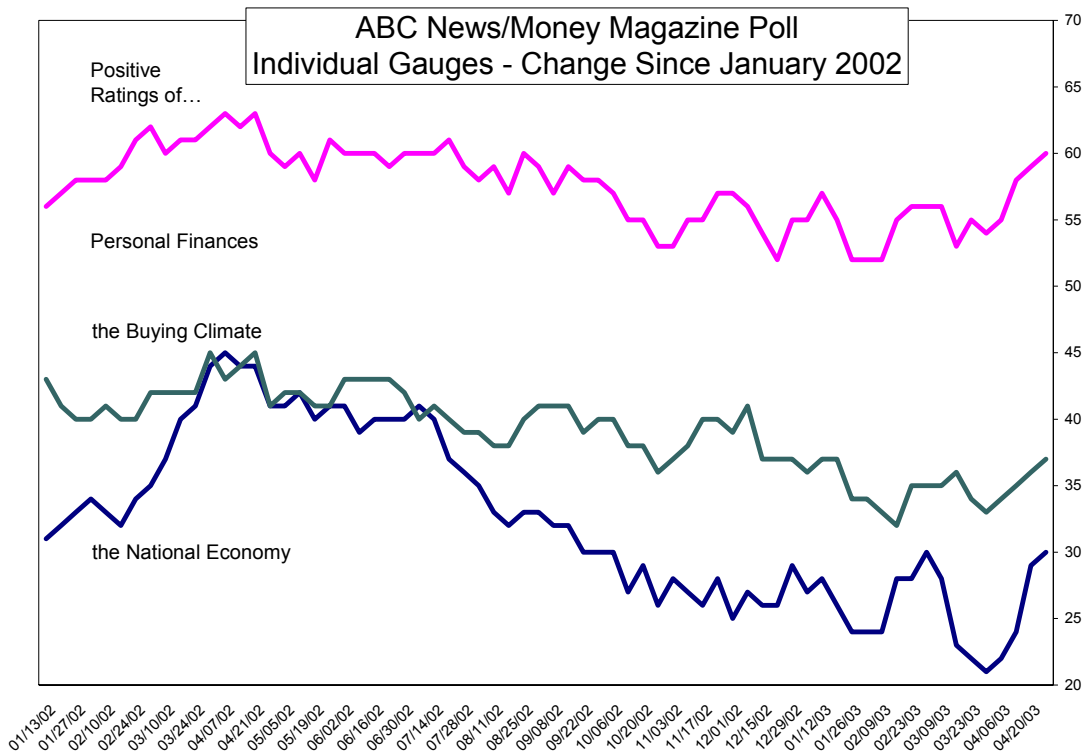


ABC News/Money magazine poll

Positive ratings of:	This week	Last week	2003 high	2003 low	17-yr. avg.
National economy	30%	29	30	21	41
Buying climate	37	36	37	32	39
Personal finances	60	59	60	52	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-15	-17	-15	-28	-9

TREND – The ABC/Money index has averaged -23 so far this year, compared to an average of -11 last year (its worst since 1996). It's best year overall was an average +29 in 2000; its worst, an average -44 in 1992.

ABC/Money Index	
Today	-15
Last week	-17
Month ago	-28
Recent high	+1
2003 average	-23
2002 average	-11
2001 average	+4
2000 average	+29
1992 average	-44
Jan. 16, 2000	+38
Feb. 9, 1992	-50
Average since 12/85	-9



GROUPS - As usual, confidence is higher among better-off Americans. The index is +7 among people in higher-income households compared to -44 in the lowest, -5 among

college graduates while -32 among high-school dropouts, -9 among whites but -46 among blacks and -9 among men while -20 among women.

The index is a good deal lower in the Northeast (-25) than in other regions. And it peaks among celebratory Republicans at +8, compared to -15 among independents and a glum -37 among Democrats.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Thirty percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good; it was 29 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	30	1	29	70	49	21
Avg. since 12/85	41	4	37	59	40	19

PERSONAL FINANCES – Sixty percent rate their own finances as excellent or good; it was 59 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	60	6	54	40	28	12
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	53	43	30	12

BUYING CLIMATE - Thirty-seven percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need; it was 36 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	37	3	34	63	43	20
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 April 20, 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 Gary Langer.

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.

04/20/03	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	-15	-17	-28	-27	-5	-4	-28	-16
State of Economy	-40	-42	-58	-52	-18	-16	-58	-38
Personal Finances	20	18	8	4	20	22	4	14
Buying Climate	-26	-28	-34	-32	-18	-14	-36	-23

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-9	-7	-16	-14	3	7	-18	-8
Women	-20	-25	-37	-38	-12	-8	-38	-23
Age:								
18 - 34	-5	-12	-25	-24	7	8	-25	-8
35 - 44	-20	-10	-16	-27	-17	-1	-31	-15
45 - 54	-26	-30	-41	-28	-9	6	-41	-19
55 - 64	-16	-11	-21	-25	1	3	-39	-18
65 +	-16	-23	-32	-31	-11	-10	-36	-24
Income:								
Under \$15K	-44	-48	-53	-60	-46	-26	-61	-46
\$15K To \$24.9K	-46	-45	-53	-48	-29	-19	-55	-37
\$25K To \$39.9K	-21	-26	-44	-36	-8	-8	-49	-25
\$40K To \$49.9K	-14	-6	-15	-16	5	12	-30	-9
Over \$50K	7	7	3	-2	20	28	-15	7
Region:								
Northeast	-25	-19	-36	-24	2	2	-36	-20
Midwest	-12	-14	-34	-26	-9	4	-34	-15
South	-11	-16	-23	-29	-4	4	-29	-17
West	-16	-17	-18	-24	-9	9	-25	-10
Race:								
White	-9	-11	-22	-21	0	2	-23	-12
Black	-46	-47	-53	-53	-32	-21	-60	-39
Politics:								
Republican	8	12	1	4	27	27	-3	9
Democrat	-37	-41	-45	-42	-18	-14	-46	-31
Independent	-15	-13	-30	-38	-9	-5	-38	-19
Education:								
< High School	-32	-36	-50	-43	-31	-18	-59	-38
High Sch. Grad.	-20	-20	-30	-39	-8	-4	-40	-21
College +	-5	-7	-17	-12	6	11	-18	-4
Home:								
Own	-9	-12	-22	-21	3	5	-24	-11
Rent	-31	-29	-37	-40	-26	-9	-40	-26
Marital Status:								
Single	-12	-13	-25	-20	-4	10	-25	-11
Married	-14	-13	-20	-25	-2	2	-27	-12
Sep/Wid/Div	-21	-31	-52	-37	-17	-14	-52	-31
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-9	-6	-17	-19	4	8	-20	-8
Part-Time	-19	-29	-37	-20	-5	14	-40	-16
Not Employed	-21	-25	-37	-40	-18	-16	-40	-27

END