

## **Confidence Exhibits Resilience**

Consumer confidence continues to hold steady despite recent stock market volatility.

Though confidence is down from its all-time high in January, it hasn't moved much since the end of March. Market fluctuations typically don't have much impact on consumer confidence, and that seems to be holding true again.

Confidence is high from a historical standpoint. Seventy-three percent of Americans say the economy is in good shape, seven points below January's record but well above its 14-year average. Sixty-six percent say their own finances are in good shape and 52 percent say it's a good time to buy things, both also well above average.

	-----	Since 12/85	-----	
Positive ratings:	Today	Highest	Lowest	Average
National Economy	73%	80	7	39
Personal Finances	66	70	42	56
Buying Climate	52	57	20	38

**INDEX** - The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on these ratings, stands at +27 on its scale of +100 to -100. So far this year the index has averaged +30, two points above its record 1999 average. Its lifetime average, beaten down in the early 1990s, is -11.

	ABC/Money	Index
Today	+27	
Jan. 16, 2000	+38	Record High
2000 average	+30	
1999 average	+28	Best full year
1992 average	-44	Worst full year
Feb. 9, 1992	-50	Record low
Average since 12/85	-11	

Call the ABC News Polling Unit, ext. 2621, for a chart tracking the ABC/Money index over time.

**GROUPS** - As usual, confidence is higher among better-off Americans: The index is +63 in higher-income households compared to -26 in the lowest; +47 among college graduates but -9 among high-school dropouts; +31 among whites but -1 among blacks; and +36 among men compared to +18 among women.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY- The poll asks: Would you describe the state of the nation's economy these days as excellent, good, not so good or poor? Seventy-three percent say excellent or good, down one point from last week. The record, 80 percent, was set on Jan. 16, 2000. The worst rating was seven percent in late 1991 and early 1992.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	73%	13	60	27	18	9
Avg. since 12/85	39	3	36	61	40	21

PERSONAL FINANCES - The poll asks: Would you describe the state of your own personal finances these days as excellent, good, not so good or poor? Sixty-six percent say excellent or good, down two points from last week. The record, 70 percent, was originally set Aug. 30, 1998 and last matched in Jan. 2000. The worst was 42 percent on March 14, 1993.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	66%	7	59	34	21	13
Avg. since 12/85	56	5	52	44	31	13

BUYING CLIMATE - The poll asks: Considering the cost of things today and your own personal finances, would you say now is an excellent time, a good time, a not so good time or a poor time to buy the things you want and need? Fifty-two percent say excellent or good, up one point from last week. The record, 57 percent, was set on Jan. 16, 2000. The worst rating, 20 percent, was set in fall 1990.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. net	Not good	Poor
This week	52%	3	49	48	33	15
Avg. since 12/85	38	3	35	62	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 1,047 interviews in the week ending April 23 and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points. Fieldwork 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 Bobbi Jo Fuller.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet, at:  
<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/PollVault/PollVault.html>

Group	Week	Week	Ago	Ago	Ago	High	Low	Avg
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GENERAL POPULATION:								
Overall Index	27	29	27	35	27	38	22	28
State of Economy	46	48	46	56	46	60	38	47
Personal Finances	32	36	36	40	30	40	28	34
Buying Climate	4	2	-2	10	4	14	-4	4
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OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	36	36	30	42	34	45	30	36
Women	18	20	22	29	20	30	11	20
Age:								
18 - 34	26	23	16	32	25	37	16	25
35 - 44	27	33	26	36	32	37	13	28
45 - 54	34	27	26	37	25	45	11	28
55 - 64	23	30	40	48	30	48	16	31
65 +	24	33	35	28	23	45	17	29
Income:								
Under \$15K	-26	-19	-23	-19	-18	-12	-42	-25
\$15K To \$24.9K	-5	-8	-9	26	-15	26	-15	1
\$25K To \$39.9K	24	18	22	16	31	33	8	23
\$40K To \$49.9K	35	41	51	55	35	60	27	42
Over \$50K	63	66	59	66	63	68	53	60
Region:								
Northeast	32	34	20	48	33	48	20	31
Midwest	38	40	31	32	30	41	20	31
South	21	20	22	28	24	31	14	24
West	17	22	32	38	20	43	13	28
Race:								
White	31	32	30	40	32	43	26	32
Black	-1	5	-1	6	3	25	-11	1
Politics:								
Republican	37	38	42	47	37	55	32	42
Democrat	31	36	28	37	28	38	15	27
Independent	18	18	16	24	24	29	13	21
Education:								
< High School	-9	-7	-13	-2	-7	9	-27	-10
High Sch. Grad.	14	16	13	27	22	32	8	19
College +	47	48	49	52	42	53	38	46
Home:								
Own	33	36	35	42	34	44	28	35
Rent	11	9	2	16	8	22	-3	10
Marital Status:								
Single	23	23	21	32	24	36	8	24
Married	31	32	32	41	33	44	27	34
Sep/Wid/Div	11	16	7	13	5	17	-9	7
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	37	39	29	43	33	44	29	36
Part-Time	29	21	20	33	29	38	7	22
Not Employed	11	14	23	24	14	28	8	17

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