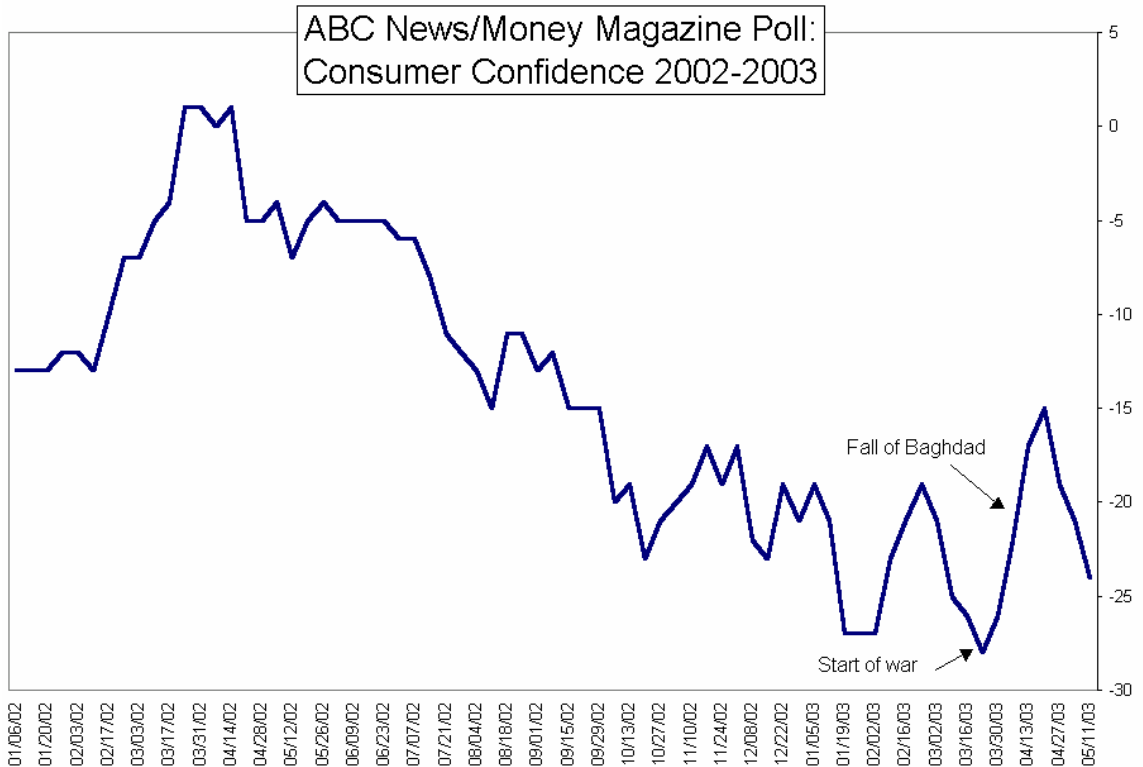


## Consumer Confidence Continues to Fade

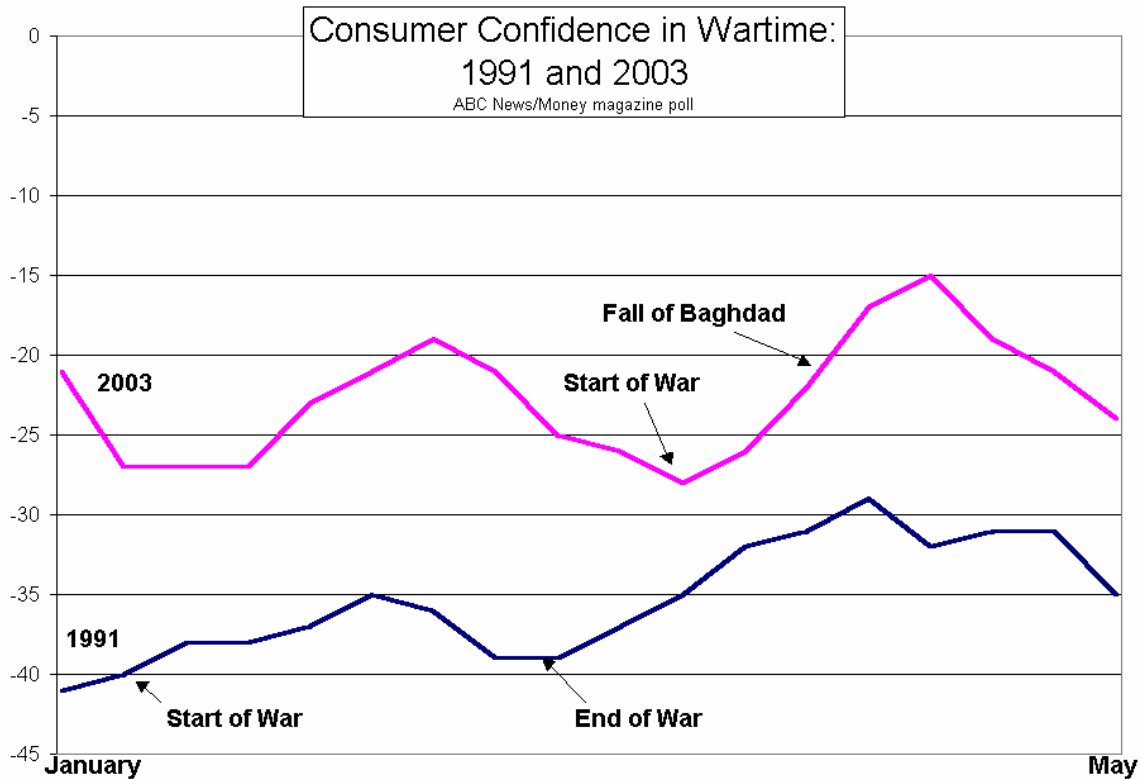
The farther removed from the war with Iraq, the worse consumer confidence gets: After soaring during the fighting it's lost ground for three straight weeks, giving back more than two-thirds of its wartime gains.

The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index surged by 13 points from March 23 through April 20, reaching a seven-month high. But since then it's lost nine points, falling from -15 to today's -24 on its scale of +100 to -100.

	ABC/Money Index	Change
5/11/03	-24	-3
5/4/03	-21	-2
4/27/03	-19	-4
4/20/03	-15	+2
4/13/03	-17	+5
4/6/03	-22	+4
3/30/03	-26	+2
3/23/03	-28	



Confidence followed a similar course in 1991 – soaring briefly after the Gulf War, then turning down as the victory faded in memory and economic distress reasserted itself.

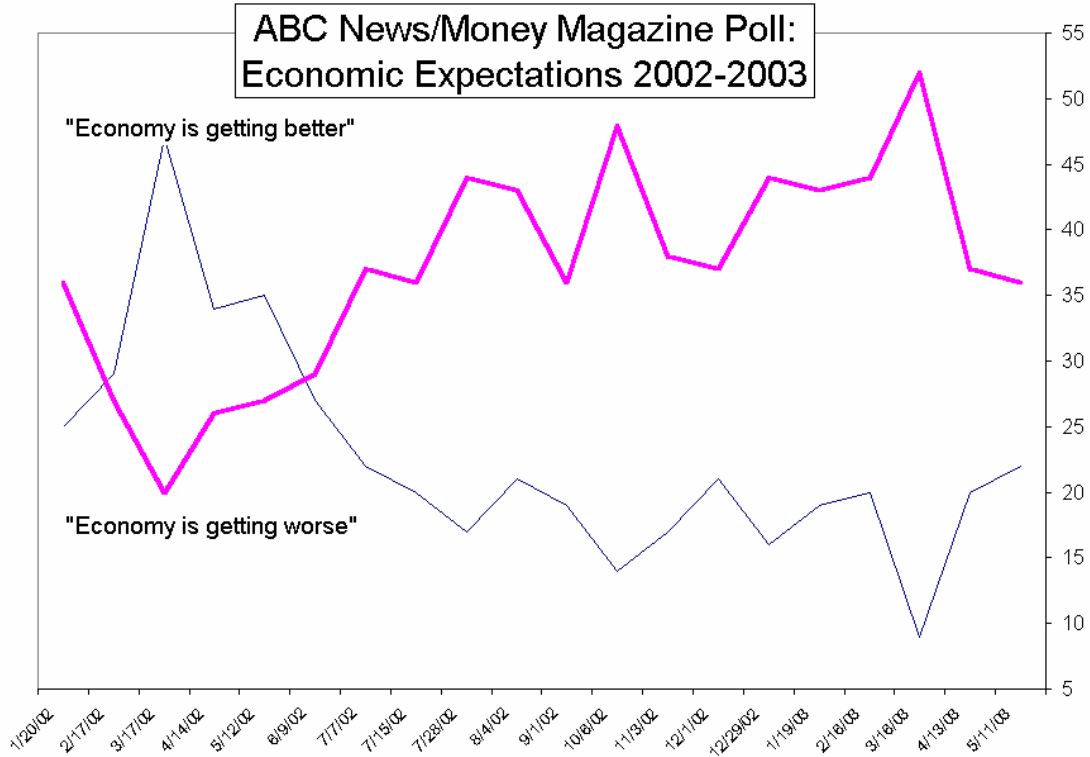


**INDEX** – The ABC/Money index is based on Americans’ ratings of the national economy, their personal finances and the buying climate. The most positive gauge has taken the hardest hit: Fifty-two percent say their finances are in good shape, but that’s down by eight points in the last three weeks.

Doubts about the economy continue to be the most negative gauge, with just 27 percent rating it positively, 14 points below the 17-year average. Thirty-five percent call it a good time to buy things, four points off the average.

	ABC News/Money magazine poll				
Positive ratings of:	This week	April 20	2003 high	2003 low	17-yr. avg.
National economy	27%	30	30	21	41
Buying climate	35	37	37	32	39
Personal finances	52	60	60	52	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-24	-15	-15	-28	-9

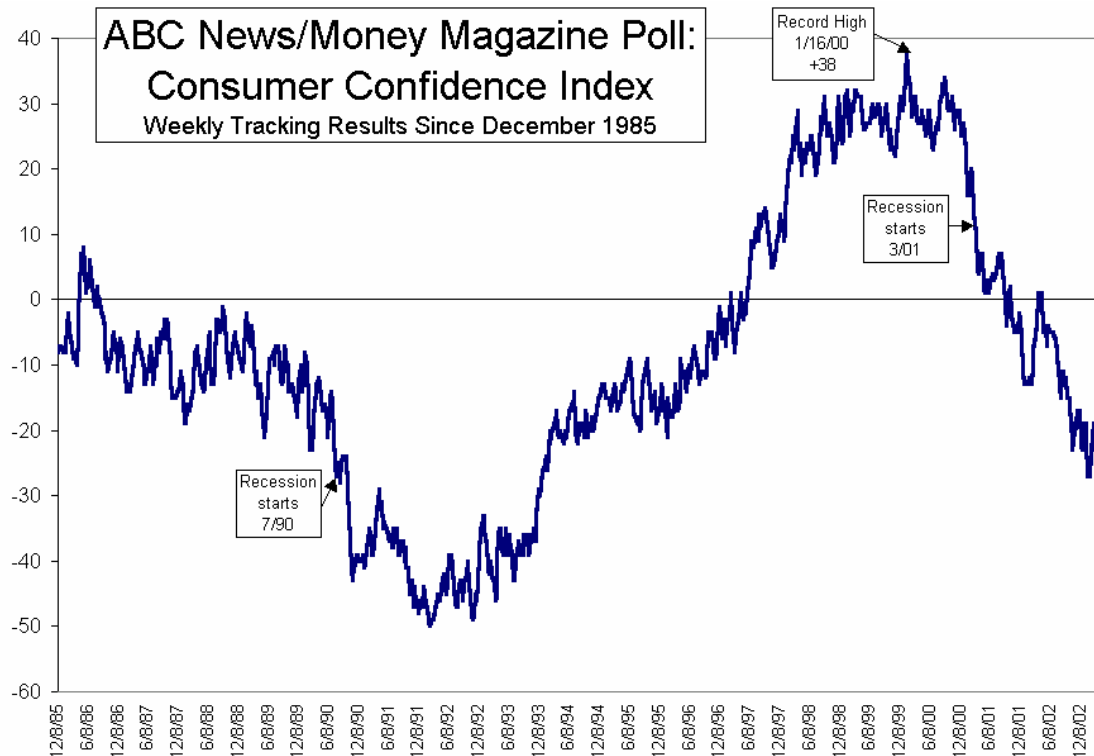
**LOOKING AHEAD** – With ratings of current economic conditions slumping, optimism in the direction of the economy has stalled. Last month saw a 15-point drop in the number of Americans who said the economy was getting worse. This month, views are essentially unchanged. (This monthly measure of expectations is separate from the ABC/Money index).



	Economy is...		
	Getting better	Getting worse	Staying the same
5/11/03	22	36	41
4/13/03	20	37	43
3/16/03	9	52	39

TREND – The ABC/Money index has averaged -23 this year, compared to -11 last year, its weakest since 1996. Its best annual average was +29 in 2000; its worst, an average -44 in 1992. The index peaked at +38 in January 2000, and bottomed out at -50 in February 1992.

	ABC/Money Index	
Today	-24	
Three weeks ago	-15	
Seven weeks ago	-28	2003 low
Recent high	+1	March, April 2002
2003 average	-23	To date
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 +2 among people in higher-income households compared to -58 in the lowest, -10 among college graduates while -43 among high-school dropouts, -18 among whites but -54 among blacks and -19 among men while -29 among women.

The index remains a good deal lower in the Northeast (-38) than in other regions. And it peaks among Republicans at +7, compared to -29 among independents and -43 among Democrats.

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

**NATIONAL ECONOMY** – Twenty-seven 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	27	1	26	73	48	25
Avg. since 12/85	41	4	37	59	40	19

**PERSONAL FINANCES** – Fifty-two percent rate their own finances as excellent or good; it was 54 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	52	5	47	48	32	16
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	53	43	30	12

BUYING CLIMATE - Thirty-five 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	35	3	32	65	45	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 1,001 interviews in the month ending May 11, 2003, and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points. The expectations question was conducted among 501 respondents April 30-May 11; that result has a 4.5-point error margin. 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: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934.

05/11/03	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	-24	-21	-17	-23	-7	-4	-28	-17
State of Economy	-46	-42	-42	-44	-20	-18	-58	-40
Personal Finances	4	8	18	10	16	22	4	13
Buying Climate	-30	-28	-28	-36	-18	-14	-36	-24
OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-19	-15	-7	-15	-3	7	-19	-9
Women	-29	-25	-25	-31	-11	-9	-38	-23
Age:								
18 - 34	-17	-14	-12	-14	1	8	-25	-10
35 - 44	-22	-16	-10	-25	-7	-1	-31	-16
45 - 54	-33	-32	-30	-25	-8	6	-41	-20
55 - 64	-23	-21	-11	-39	-6	-1	-39	-19

65 +	-32	-24	-23	-25	-23	-14	-36	-25
Income:								
Under \$15K	-58	-52	-48	-50	-47	-26	-61	-46
\$15K To \$24.9K	-47	-51	-45	-41	-37	-19	-55	-38
\$25K To \$39.9K	-33	-20	-26	-31	-16	-9	-49	-26
\$40K To \$49.9K	-32	-27	-6	-16	9	12	-32	-11
Over \$50K	2	3	7	-4	19	28	-15	6
Region:								
Northeast	-38	-32	-19	-25	-10	-4	-38	-22
Midwest	-18	-20	-14	-26	-2	4	-34	-16
South	-18	-13	-16	-24	-9	4	-29	-18
West	-27	-21	-17	-18	-7	9	-27	-11
Race:								
White	-18	-14	-11	-22	-1	2	-23	-13
Black	-54	-51	-47	-33	-48	-21	-60	-39
Politics:								
Republican	7	10	12	5	18	22	-3	8
Democrat	-43	-38	-41	-38	-20	-14	-46	-32
Independent	-29	-29	-13	-29	-11	-5	-38	-20
Education:								
< High School	-43	-37	-36	-38	-41	-18	-59	-38
High Sch. Grad.	-33	-29	-20	-37	-9	-4	-40	-22
College +	-10	-7	-7	-9	5	11	-18	-5
Home:								
Own	-18	-14	-12	-20	0	3	-24	-12
Rent	-39	-35	-29	-31	-24	-9	-40	-26
Marital Status:								
Single	-32	-22	-13	-11	-7	10	-32	-12
Married	-16	-16	-13	-22	-4	2	-27	-13
Sep/Wid/Div	-39	-30	-31	-39	-20	-20	-52	-32
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-20	-15	-6	-12	4	7	-20	-9
Part-Time	-29	-26	-29	-33	-9	14	-40	-17
Not Employed	-27	-24	-25	-34	-22	-16	-40	-27

1. Do you think the nation's economy is getting better, getting worse or staying the same?

	Getting Better	Getting Worse	Staying the Same	No Opinion
5/11/03	22	36	41	0
4/13/03	20	37	43	0
3/16/03	9	52	39	0
2/16/03	20	44	36	0
1/19/03	19	43	37	0
12/29/02	16	44	39	1
12/1/02	21	37	42	1
11/3/02	17	38	44	0
10/6/02	14	48	37	1
9/1/02	19	36	44	1
8/4/02	21	43	34	0
7/28/02*	17	44	39	1
7/15/02*	20	36	43	2
7/7/02	22	37	41	0
6/9/02	27	29	43	1
5/12/02	35	27	38	0
4/14/02	34	26	40	0
3/17/02	47	20	32	1

2/17/02	29	27	42	2
1/20/02	25	36	39	1
12/9/01	24	37	38	1
11/11/01	16	48	36	1
10/14/01	15	46	39	0
9/16/01	9	44	46	1
8/12/01	16	46	38	0
7/15/01	13	40	46	0
6/17/01	17	45	38	1
5/20/01	13	47	39	0
4/22/01	12	44	44	0
3/25/01	13	49	37	1
2/11/01	13	45	41	1
1/14/01	12	40	47	1

Call for full trend.

\*ABC/Post

\*\*\*END\*\*\*