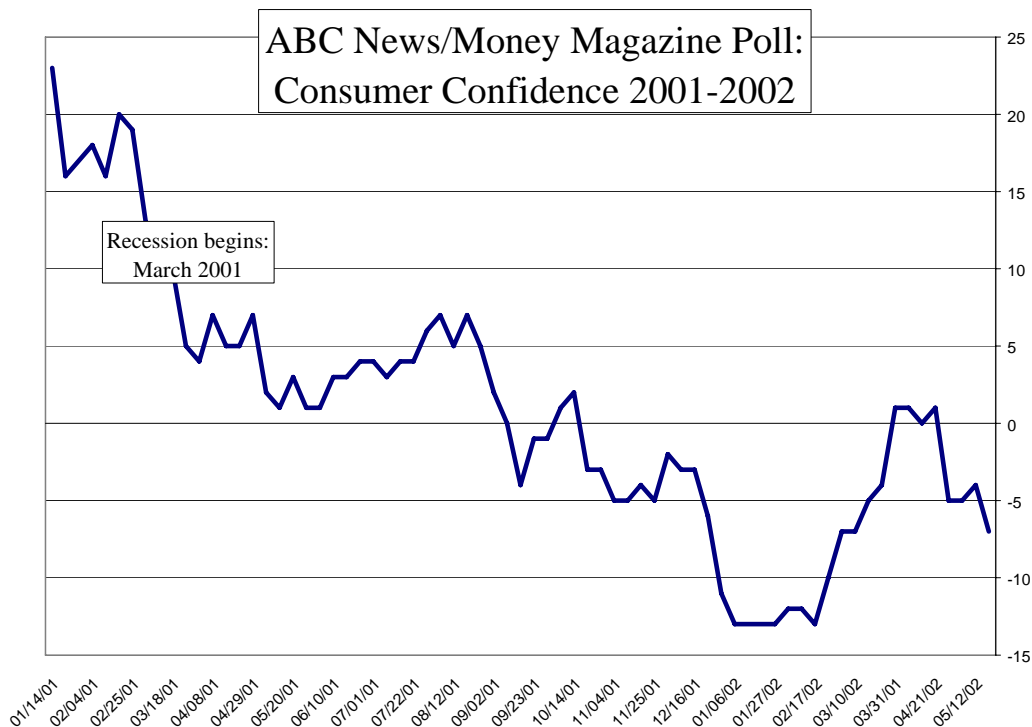


Confidence Dips To Mid-March Level

Consumer confidence dipped this week, sliding back to its early-March level after a short-lived rally. It looks stuck in neutral – too weak for recovery mode, but better than its recession-inspired lows.

Forty percent of Americans say the economy’s in good shape and 41 percent call it a good time to spend money, not dismal ratings but hardly stirring ones. More, 58 percent, say their own finances are in good shape, but that, too, is weaker than it’s been. Each is within two points of its 16-year average. In short: middle ground.

The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on these three gauges of current economic conditions, stands at -7 on its scale of +100 to -100, down three points this week. It had gained in mid-March, but then fell steeply the week of Apr. 21.

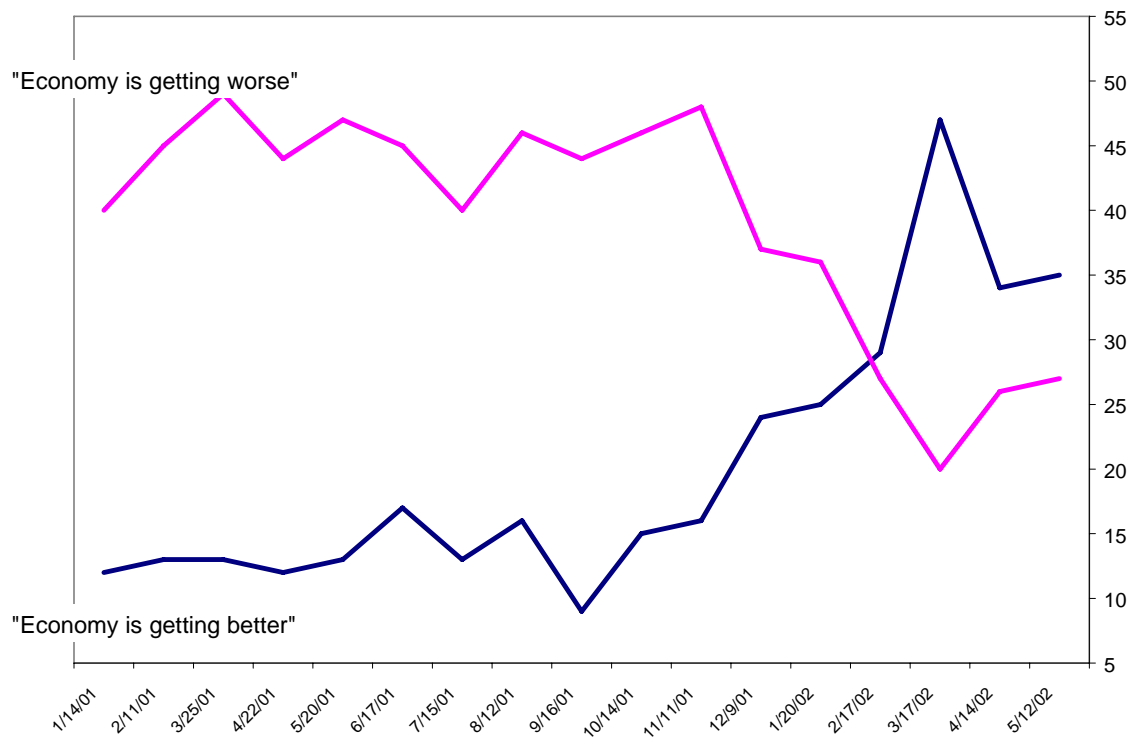


	ABC News/Money magazine poll			
Positive ratings of:	5/12	4/14	2/10	16-yr. avg.
National economy	40%	44	32	42
Buying climate	41	45	40	39
Personal finances	58	63	59	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-7	+1	-13	-8

EXPECTATIONS – Consumer expectations, measured separately from the ABC/Money index, are similarly uninspiring. Thirty-five percent say the economy’s getting better, down from 47 percent in mid-March. Twenty-seven percent think it’s getting worse; it was 20 percent in March.

Still expectations have been much gloomier: Six months ago, 48 percent said the economy was worsening.

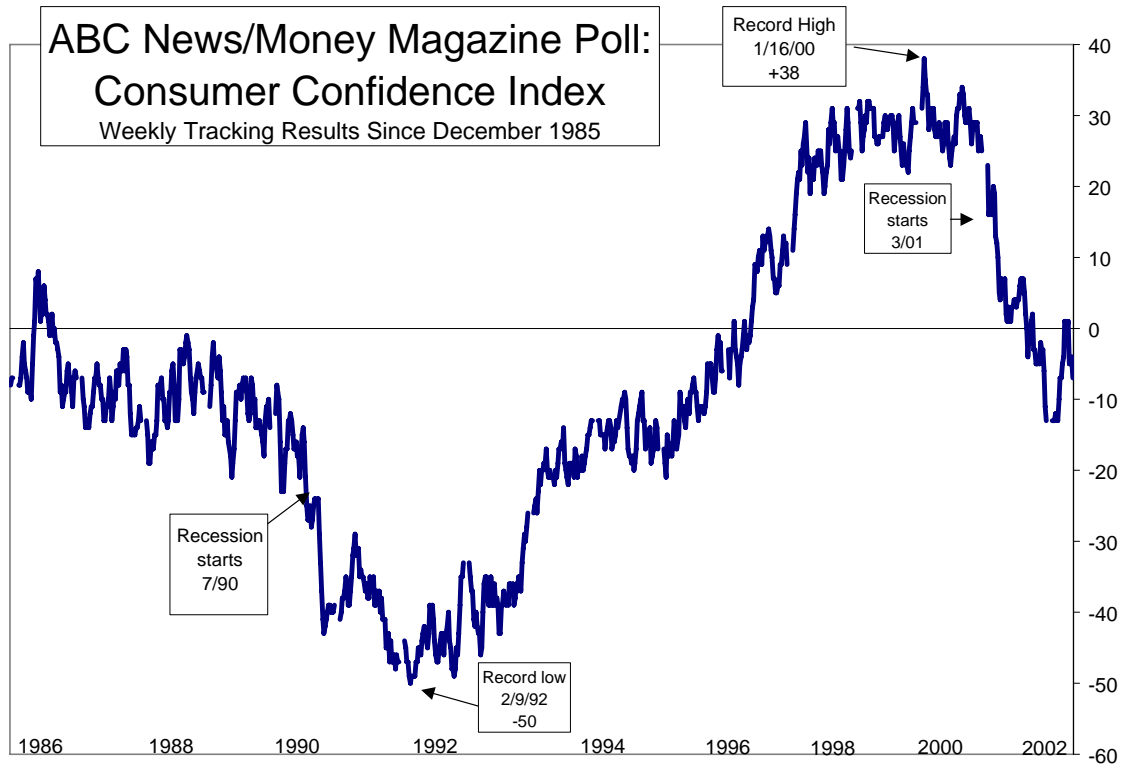
	Economy is...		
	Getting better	Getting worse	Staying the same
5/12	35%	27	38
3/17	47	20	32
11/11	16	48	36



TREND - The weekly ABC/Money index dropped throughout 2001, starting the year at +23 and finishing it at -13, then began recovering in mid-February this year. It advanced five points the week of March 24, held steady for a month, and then dropped six points the week of April 21 – its steepest decline since just before the start of the recession. The index peaked at +38 on Jan. 16, 2000; its lowest was -50 on Feb. 9, 1992. It’s averaged -7 this year; its lifetime average is -8.

	ABC/Money Index
Today	- 7
Last week	- 4
2002 high	+ 1
2002 low	-13
2002 average	- 7

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 +19 in higher-income households compared to -47 in the lowest, +5 among college graduates while -41 among high-school dropouts, -1 among whites but -48 among blacks and -3 among men while -11 among women.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY - Forty percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good, down two 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	40	2	38	60	45	16
Avg. since 12/85	42	4	38	58	39	19

PERSONAL FINANCES - Fifty-eight percent rate their own finances as excellent or good, down two points 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	58	6	52	42	31	11
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	53	43	30	12

BUYING CLIMATE - Forty-one percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need, down a point 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	41	2	39	59	41	18
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 a random sample of about 1,000 adults nationwide each month. This week's results are based on 1,005 interviews in the month ending May 12, 2002 and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points. The result on expectations is based on 507 interviews May 1-12 and 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 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: Todd Polkes, (212) 456-4586

05/12/02	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	-7	-4	1	-13	3	7	-13	-2
State of Economy	-20	-16	-12	-36	6	6	-38	-15
Personal Finances	16	20	26	18	22	32	12	23
Buying Climate	-18	-16	-10	-20	-18	-4	-22	-15

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-3	0	9	-5	13	13	-6	4
Women	-11	-8	-6	-19	-5	6	-21	-8
Age:								
18 - 34	1	2	10	-1	9	21	-8	4
35 - 44	-7	-5	-8	-14	4	9	-17	-3

45 - 54	-8	-8	-3	-22	-1	4	-22	-6
55 - 64	-6	3	8	-10	14	20	-30	-3
65 +	-23	-16	-5	-22	-6	9	-23	-9
Income:								
Under \$15K	-47	-51	-47	-49	-32	-23	-54	-42
\$15K To \$24.9K	-37	-26	-26	-32	-40	-14	-40	-25
\$25K To \$39.9K	-16	-9	1	-17	-3	11	-24	-8
\$40K To \$49.9K	9	12	4	-7	10	15	-14	3
Over \$50K	19	20	29	9	28	39	3	22
Region:								
Northeast	-10	-2	2	-8	-2	9	-17	-3
Midwest	-2	-1	-5	-14	10	13	-15	-1
South	-9	-9	1	-13	1	8	-13	-2
West	-7	-2	7	-12	7	9	-21	-4
Race:								
White	-1	1	5	-7	8	12	-8	2
Black	-48	-35	-18	-41	-25	-8	-51	-30
Politics:								
Republican	18	24	34	5	26	34	5	21
Democrat	-20	-16	-14	-24	-8	2	-29	-14
Independent	-11	-10	-5	-9	-1	4	-19	-7
Education:								
< High School	-41	-30	-12	-37	-27	-12	-49	-32
High Sch. Grad.	-9	-5	-4	-10	-2	6	-18	-8
College +	5	6	9	-5	18	26	-5	10
Home:								
Own	0	4	9	-10	11	16	-10	4
Rent	-24	-26	-20	-16	-14	-6	-28	-18
Marital Status:								
Single	-7	-4	-2	-6	3	15	-19	-2
Married	-4	-1	7	-4	13	13	-7	3
Sep/Wid/Div	-20	-16	-16	-40	-25	-10	-42	-24
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	4	6	10	-3	14	19	-4	7
Part-Time	-9	-6	7	-1	2	11	-15	-3
Not Employed	-22	-18	-13	-26	-12	-5	-28	-15

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
5/12/02	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
7/09/00	21	28	50	0
9/12/99	21	23	56	1
5/23/99	24	26	49	1
1/31/99	28	21	50	0
1/03/99	29	21	47	2

Call for full trend.

END