

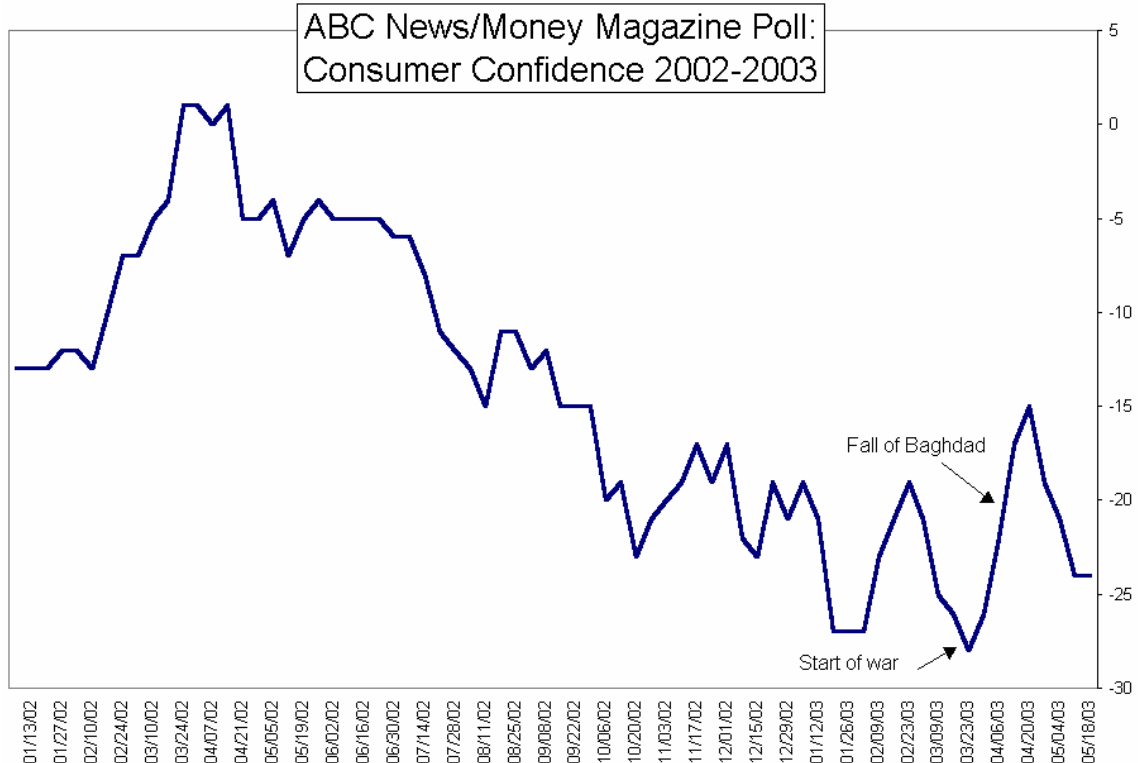
Confidence Stabilizes

Consumer confidence in current economic conditions stabilized this week, halting a nine-point, three-week decline.

The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on Americans' ratings of the national economy, their personal finances and the buying climate, was flat at -24 on its scale of +100 to -100. It had been dropping after a month-long wartime rally.

The three-week skid erased most of the boost in confidence during the Iraq war. During the war the index rose from -28, a nine-year low, to -15, a seven-month high, on April 20. Now it's back near its 2003 average, -23. That's 12 points worse than last year's average; indeed the index hasn't averaged a year below -20 since 1993.

	ABC/Money Index	Change	
5/18/03	-24	=	
5/11/03	-24	-3	Postwar slump: down 9
5/4/03	-21	-2	
4/27/03	-19	-4	
4/20/03	-15	+2	War boost: up 13
4/13/03	-17	+5	
4/6/03	-22	+4	
3/30/03	-26	+2	
3/23/03	-28		

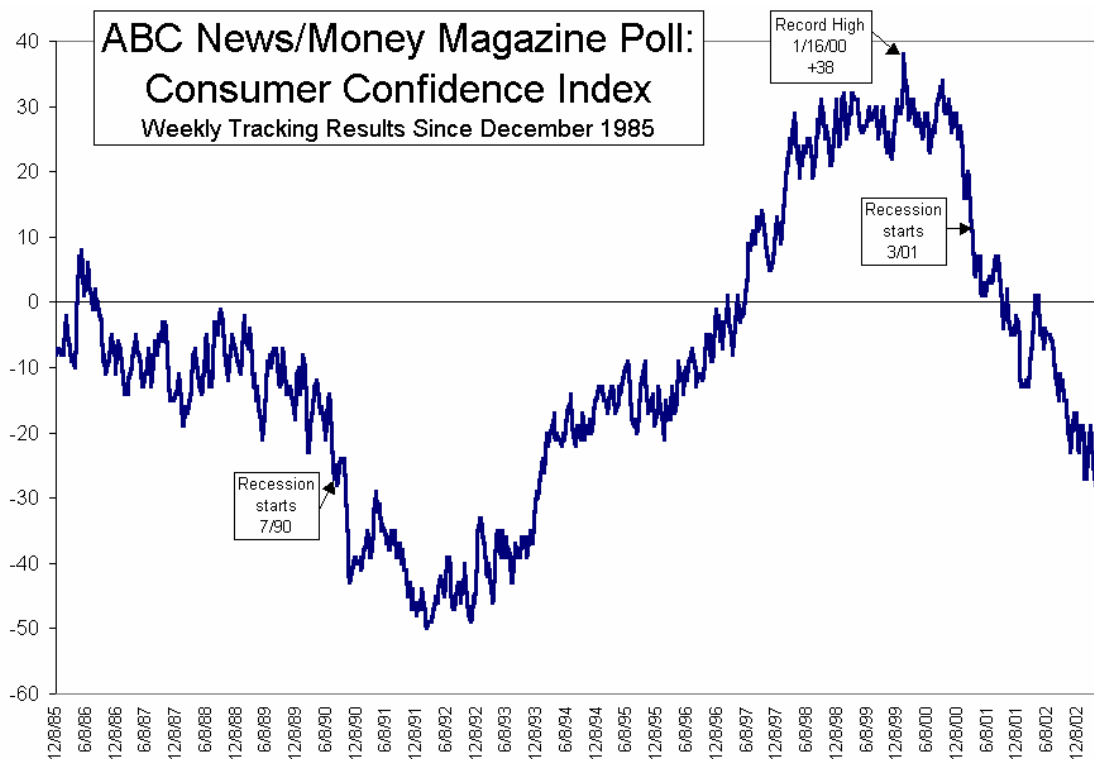


INDEX – Fifty-two percent of Americans say their own finances are in good shape, unchanged from last week. This measure had lost eight points in the previous three weeks, falling below its 17-year average, 57 percent.

Fewer, 36 percent, call it a good time to buy things; its career average is 39 percent. And fewer still, just 26 percent, rate the economy positively –15 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	26%	30	30	21	41
Buying climate	36	37	37	32	39
Personal finances	52	60	60	52	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-24	-15	-15	-28	-9

TREND – The ABC/Money index peaked at +38 in January 2000; that year it averaged +29, its best year on record. Its record-low was -50 in February 1992; that year it recorded its worse one-year average, -44. The index’s 17-year average is -9.



ABC/Money Index	
Today	-24
One month ago	-15
Two months ago	-28
Recent high	+1
2003 average	-23
2002 average	-11
2001 average	+4
	2003 low
	March, April 2002
	To date

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 0 among people in higher-income households compared to -59 in the lowest, -12 among college graduates while -48 among high-school dropouts, -19 among whites but -56 among blacks and -15 among men while -32 among women.

The index is a good deal lower in the Northeast and West (-34) than in the South (-19) and Midwest (-14). And it peaks among Republicans at +8, compared to -26 among independents and -45 among Democrats.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Twenty-six percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good; it was 27 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	26	1	25	74	48	26
Avg. since 12/85	41	4	37	59	40	19

PERSONAL FINANCES – Fifty-two percent rate their own finances as excellent or good, the same as 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-six percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need; it was 35 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	36	3	33	64	45	19
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 1,002 interviews in the month ending May 18, 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 Dalia Sussman.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet, at:

<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

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05/18/03	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	-24	-15	-21	-5	-4	-28	-17
State of Economy	-48	-46	-40	-44	-18	-18	-58	-40
Personal Finances	4	4	20	12	22	22	4	13
Buying Climate	-28	-30	-26	-30	-18	-14	-36	-24

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-15	-19	-9	-13	1	7	-19	-9
Women	-32	-29	-20	-28	-9	-9	-38	-24
Age:								
18 - 34	-20	-17	-5	-11	5	8	-25	-10
35 - 44	-17	-22	-20	-17	-2	-1	-31	-16
45 - 54	-40	-33	-26	-25	-9	6	-41	-21
55 - 64	-14	-23	-16	-39	-1	-1	-39	-20
65 +	-31	-32	-16	-28	-22	-14	-36	-25
Income:								
Under \$15K	-59	-58	-44	-49	-43	-26	-61	-46
\$15K To \$24.9K	-41	-47	-46	-37	-31	-19	-55	-38
\$25K To \$39.9K	-37	-33	-21	-25	-13	-9	-49	-26
\$40K To \$49.9K	-28	-32	-14	-16	4	12	-32	-12
Over \$50K	0	2	7	1	22	28	-15	5
Region:								
Northeast	-34	-38	-25	-22	-16	-4	-38	-22
Midwest	-14	-18	-12	-25	3	4	-34	-16
South	-19	-18	-11	-23	-4	4	-29	-18
West	-34	-27	-16	-11	-3	9	-34	-12
Race:								
White	-19	-18	-9	-21	1	2	-23	-13
Black	-56	-54	-46	-28	-38	-21	-60	-40
Politics:								
Republican	8	7	8	5	19	22	-3	8
Democrat	-45	-43	-37	-38	-18	-14	-46	-32
Independent	-26	-29	-15	-20	-9	-5	-38	-21
Education:								
< High School	-48	-43	-32	-29	-33	-18	-59	-38
High Sch. Grad.	-30	-33	-20	-33	-5	-4	-40	-23

College +	-12	-10	-5	-9	5	11	-18	-6
Home:								
Own	-19	-18	-9	-18	2	3	-24	-13
Rent	-36	-39	-31	-27	-20	-9	-40	-27
Marital Status:								
Single	-31	-32	-12	-13	0	10	-32	-12
Married	-13	-16	-14	-18	-1	2	-27	-13
Sep/Wid/Div	-46	-39	-21	-37	-21	-21	-52	-32
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-20	-20	-9	-8	6	7	-20	-9
Part-Time	-26	-29	-19	-30	7	14	-40	-17
Not Employed	-27	-27	-21	-33	-22	-16	-40	-27

END