

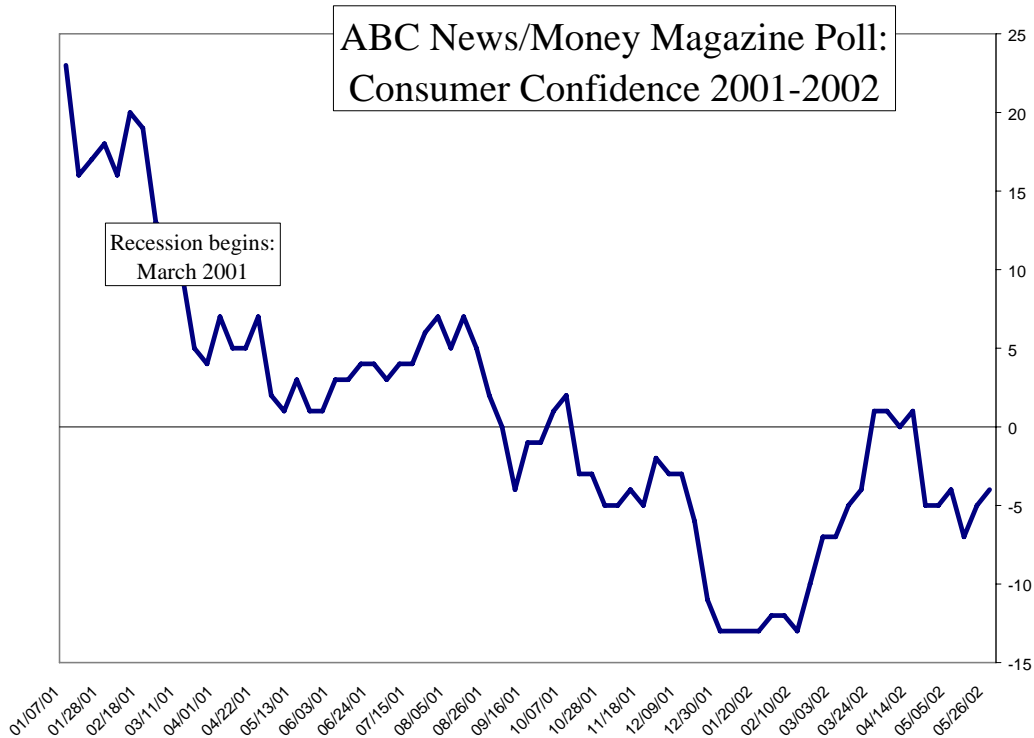
Confidence Remains Muted

Consumer confidence remains muted this week, but shows a bare hint of improvement after its late-April dive.

The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on public assessments of current economic conditions, stands at -4 on its scale of +100 to -100, up three points in two weeks. It rose from -13 in February to +1 in late March before falling late last month.

The index is based on ratings of the economy, buying climate and personal finances. Forty-one percent of Americans now say the economy's in good shape and 43 percent call it a good time to spend money – the most since mid-April. Positive ratings of personal finances remain stronger, at 60 percent.

	ABC News/Money magazine poll			
Positive ratings of:	5/26	4/14	2/10	16-yr. avg.
National economy	41%	44	32	42
Buying climate	43	45	40	39
Personal finances	60	63	59	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-4	+1	-13	-8

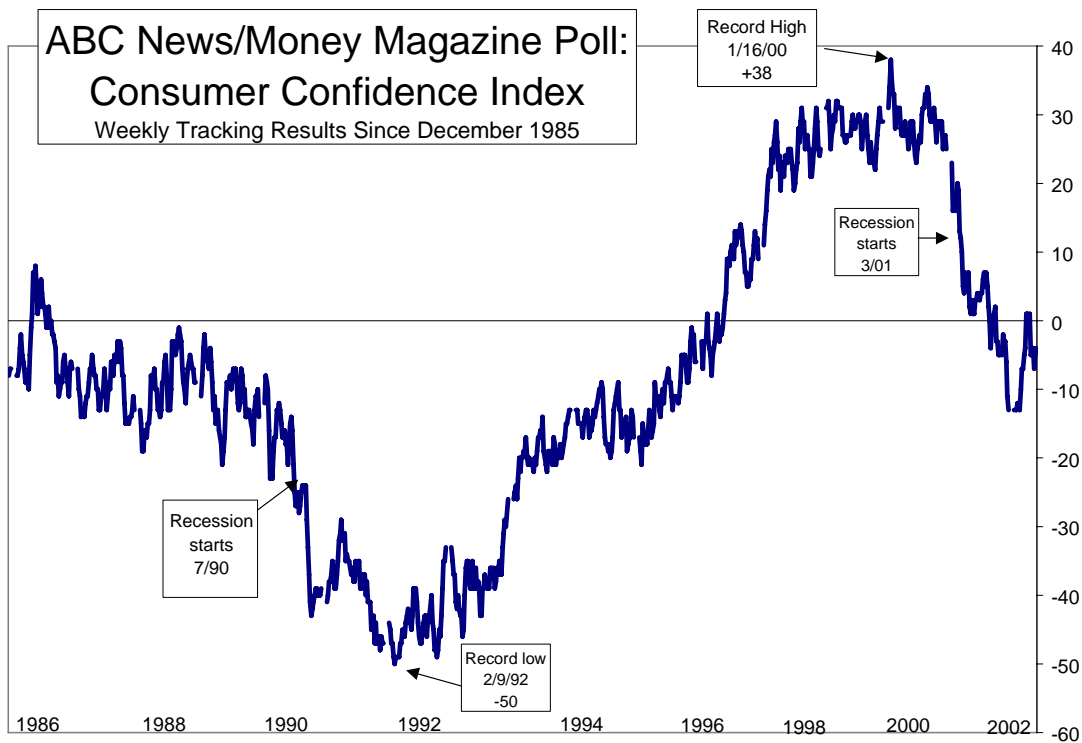


In more encouraging news for the recovery, reports this week showed that consumer spending, personal incomes and sales of existing homes increased last month.

TREND – The weekly ABC/Money index started 2001 at +23 and finished 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 and hit bottom at -50 on Feb. 9, 1992. It's averaged -6 this year.

	ABC/Money Index	
Today	- 4	
Last week	- 5	
2002 high	+ 1	
2002 low	-13	
2002 average	- 6	
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 +25 in higher-income households compared to -38 in the lowest, +8 among college graduates

while -36 among high-school dropouts, +2 among whites but -34 among blacks and +3 among men while -9 among women.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Forty-one percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good, the same as last week. The best was 80 percent Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was seven percent in late 1991 and early 1992.

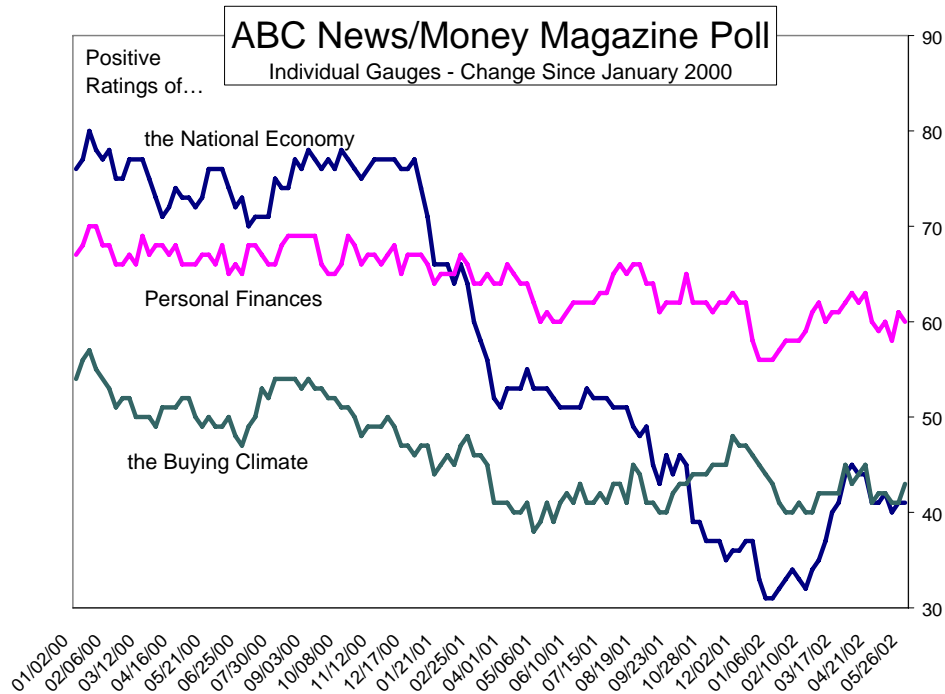
	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	41	2	39	59	46	13
Avg. since 12/85	42	4	38	58	39	19

PERSONAL FINANCES – Sixty percent rate their own finances as excellent or good, down one point 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	60	6	54	40	30	10
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	53	43	30	12

BUYING CLIMATE – Forty-three percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need, up two points 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	43	2	41	57	40	17
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 1,025 interviews in the month ending May 26, 2002 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>

Media contact: Todd Polkes, (212) 456-4586

05/26/02	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	-4	-5	-5	-7	1	7	-13	-3
State of Economy	-18	-18	-18	-30	2	6	-38	-16
Personal Finances	20	22	18	24	20	32	12	23
Buying Climate	-14	-18	-16	-16	-18	-4	-20	-15

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	3	1	2	4	7	13	-6	4
Women	-9	-9	-12	-17	-5	6	-21	-9
Age:								
18 - 34	8	5	4	2	0	21	-8	4
35 - 44	-5	-2	-13	-13	-1	9	-17	-4
45 - 54	-7	-9	-7	-7	-1	4	-22	-6
55 - 64	-1	-1	-5	-16	14	20	-30	-3
65 +	-21	-22	-10	-12	-3	9	-23	-9
Income:								
Under \$15K	-38	-43	-54	-50	-44	-23	-54	-42
\$15K To \$24.9K	-42	-31	-28	-28	-26	-14	-42	-25
\$25K To \$39.9K	-10	-13	-9	-6	-12	11	-24	-9
\$40K To \$49.9K	-2	4	10	10	10	15	-14	3
Over \$50K	25	22	21	15	23	39	3	22
Region:								
Northeast	-16	-16	-1	-6	-5	9	-17	-4
Midwest	3	3	-4	-15	0	13	-15	-2
South	2	-4	-6	-2	0	8	-13	-2
West	-9	-3	-9	-7	9	9	-21	-4
Race:								

White	2	1	1	-2	4	12	-8	2
Black	-34	-38	-38	-43	-21	-8	-51	-31
Politics:								
Republican	22	19	26	8	20	34	5	21
Democrat	-19	-18	-19	-19	-3	2	-29	-14
Independent	-10	-9	-8	-7	-9	4	-19	-7
Education:								
< High School	-36	-33	-32	-29	-38	-12	-49	-32
High Sch. Grad.	-5	-5	-7	-5	-8	6	-18	-8
College +	8	5	6	-1	18	26	-5	10
Home:								
Own	3	2	5	-3	8	16	-10	3
Rent	-20	-20	-28	-17	-16	-6	-28	-18
Marital Status:								
Single	10	0	-2	-9	-8	15	-19	-2
Married	0	-1	-3	1	8	12	-7	3
Sep/Wid/Div	-26	-21	-14	-37	-20	-10	-42	-24
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	4	6	8	0	9	19	-4	7
Part-Time	14	7	-15	-2	5	14	-15	-3
Not Employed	-20	-22	-19	-17	-11	-5	-28	-16

END