

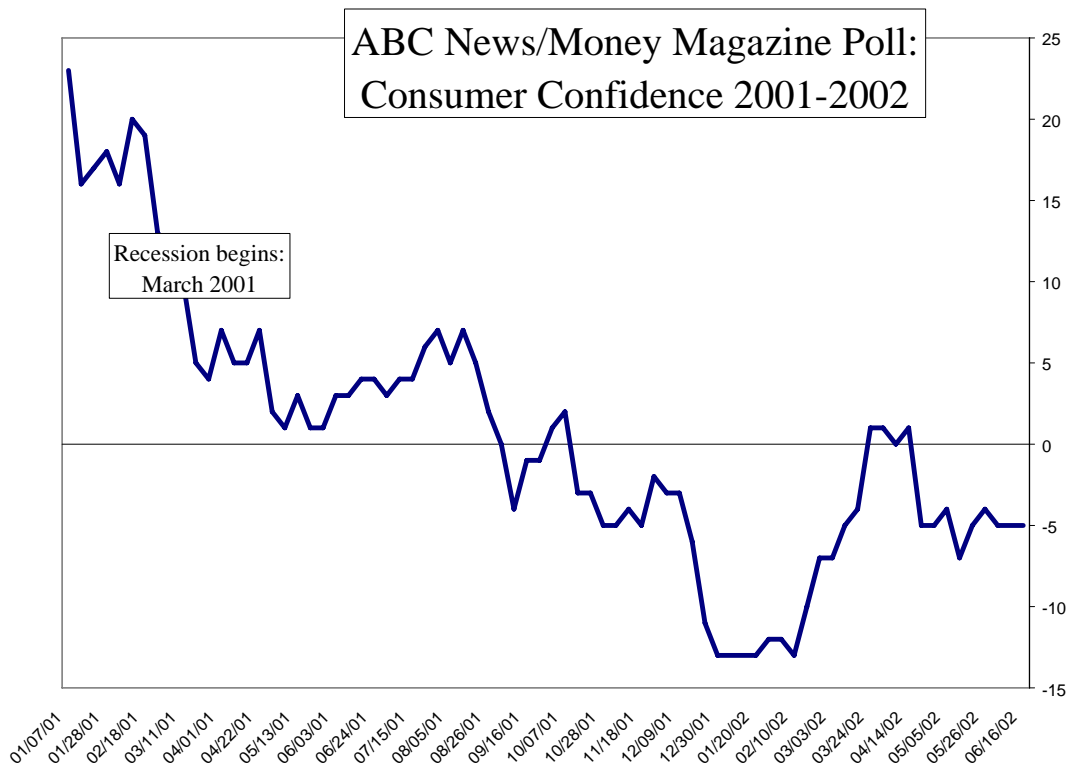
## Confidence Stays Steady

Consumer confidence stayed put this week, hovering pretty much where it's been for the last two months – worse than its high point this year, but also better than its lows.

The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on public assessments of current economic conditions, stands at -5 on its scale of +100 to -100. The index rose steeply from -13 in February to +1 in March, then stumbled. It's been -4 to -7 for the last nine weeks straight.

While current views have held steady, last week's ABC/Money poll found a decline in consumer expectations, with consumer optimism dropping to its lowest since January.

The ABC/Money index is based on ratings of the current economy, buying climate and personal finances. Forty percent of Americans say the economy's in good shape and 43 percent call it a good time to spend money, both the same as last week. Positive ratings of personal finances remain stronger; 59 percent say their own finances are in good shape.



	ABC News/Money magazine poll			
Positive ratings of:	6/16	4/14	2/10	16-yr. avg.
National economy	40%	44	32	42
Buying climate	43	45	40	39
Personal finances	59	63	59	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-5	+1	-13	-8

Two government reports out today showed some positive signs for the economy. The Commerce Department reported that housing starts were up 11.6 percent in May, and the Labor Department reported that the Consumer Price Index, a gauge of inflation, was flat in May.

**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 to -5 the week of April 21 – its steepest decline since just before the start of the recession.

	ABC/Money Index	
Today	- 5	
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 +27 in higher-income households compared to -43 in the lowest, +9 among college graduates while -36 among high-school dropouts, -1 among whites but -42 among blacks and +4 among men while -13 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, unchanged from last week. The best was 80 percent Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was seven percent in late 1991 and early 1992.

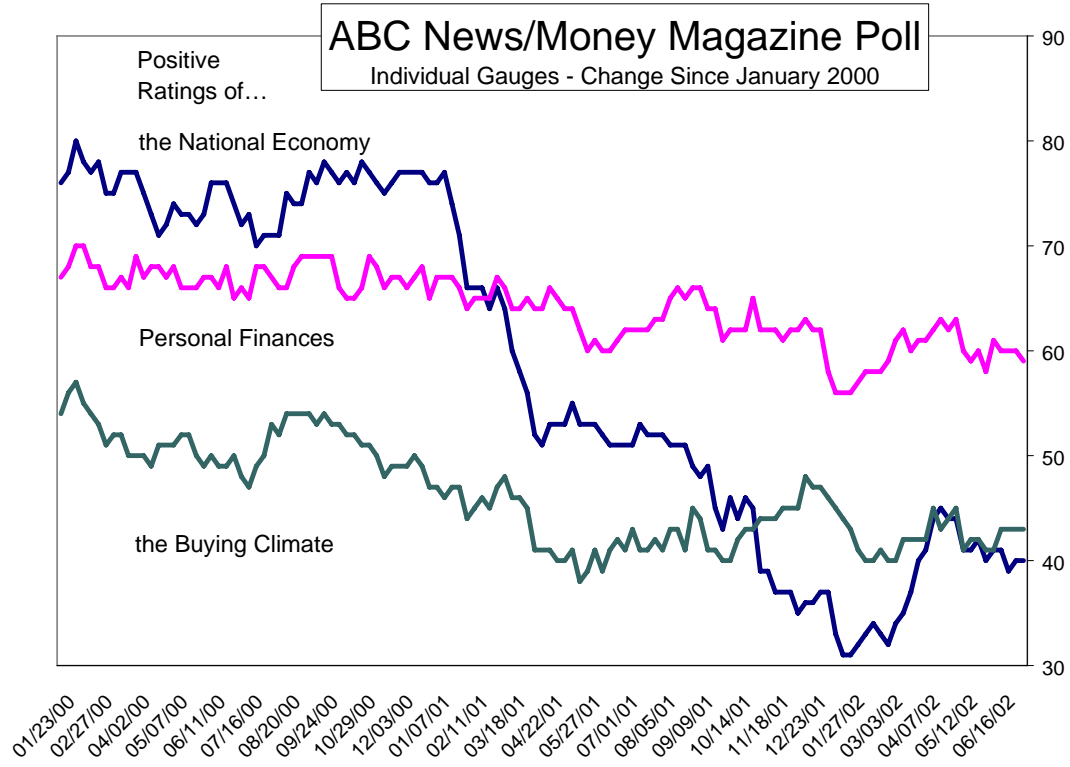
	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	40	1	39	60	47	13
Avg. since 12/85	42	4	38	58	39	19

**PERSONAL FINANCES** – Fifty-nine 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	59	6	53	41	30	11
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, unchanged 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	43	3	40	57	42	15
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 1,021 interviews in the month ending June 16, 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 Daniel Merkle.

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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06/16/02	This Week	Last Week	4 Wks Ago	3 Mo. Ago	1 Yr. Ago	12 Mo High	12 Mo Low	12 Mo Avg
Group								
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GENERAL POPULATION:								
Overall Index	-5	-5	-5	-4	4	7	-13	-3
State of Economy	-20	-20	-18	-18	2	6	-38	-18
Personal Finances	18	20	22	22	24	32	12	22
Buying Climate	-14	-14	-18	-16	-14	-4	-20	-14
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OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	4	5	1	6	13	13	-6	4
Women	-13	-13	-9	-12	-4	6	-21	-9
Age:								
18 - 34	-2	1	5	-5	10	21	-8	4
35 - 44	-6	-2	-2	-1	0	9	-17	-4
45 - 54	6	2	-9	-3	-3	6	-22	-6
55 - 64	-12	-9	-1	3	1	20	-30	-4
65 +	-16	-20	-22	-9	8	9	-23	-11
Income:								
Under \$15K	-43	-54	-43	-41	-51	-23	-54	-42
\$15K To \$24.9K	-42	-40	-31	-19	-25	-14	-44	-26
\$25K To \$39.9K	-18	-11	-13	-17	-17	11	-24	-9
\$40K To \$49.9K	5	4	4	5	10	15	-14	2
Over \$50K	27	28	22	25	37	39	3	22
Region:								
Northeast	-9	-14	-16	-9	5	9	-18	-4
Midwest	-4	2	3	-5	9	13	-15	-2
South	-2	-2	-4	-1	5	8	-13	-2
West	-7	-6	-3	-2	-2	8	-21	-5
Race:								
White	-1	-1	1	4	10	12	-8	2
Black	-42	-35	-38	-51	-26	-8	-51	-32
Politics:								
Republican	16	16	19	17	23	34	5	20
Democrat	-19	-22	-18	-19	-5	2	-29	-15
Independent	-8	-6	-9	-2	-5	4	-19	-7
Education:								
< High School	-36	-35	-33	-31	-38	-12	-49	-32
High Sch. Grad.	-11	-11	-5	-11	-10	6	-18	-8
College +	9	11	5	10	26	26	-5	9
Home:								
Own	2	3	2	4	12	16	-10	3
Rent	-23	-25	-20	-23	-17	-6	-28	-18
Marital Status:								
Single	-1	2	0	-8	-1	15	-19	-1
Married	-1	0	-1	3	12	12	-7	2
Sep/Wid/Div	-26	-25	-21	-29	-26	-10	-42	-24
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	4	7	6	6	11	19	-4	7
Part-Time	-9	-5	7	9	2	14	-15	-4
Not Employed	-17	-20	-22	-21	-5	-5	-28	-16

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