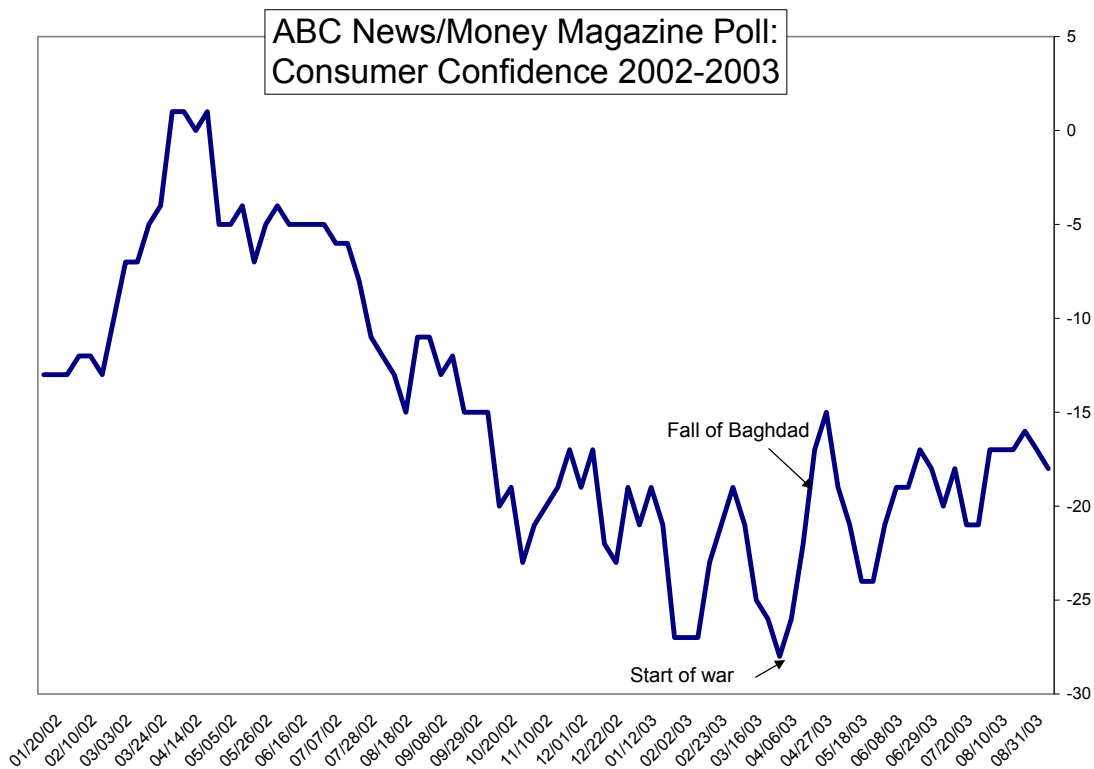


Consumer Confidence Stays Still, Despite Rising Gas Prices

Consumer confidence stayed flat this week, but above its average for the year and holding tough in the face of rapidly rising gasoline prices.

The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on ratings of current economic conditions, stands at -18 on its scale of +100 to -100. It's been essentially the same (-16 to -18) for six weeks, despite a 23-cent increase in the average price of a gallon of regular gas in the same period.

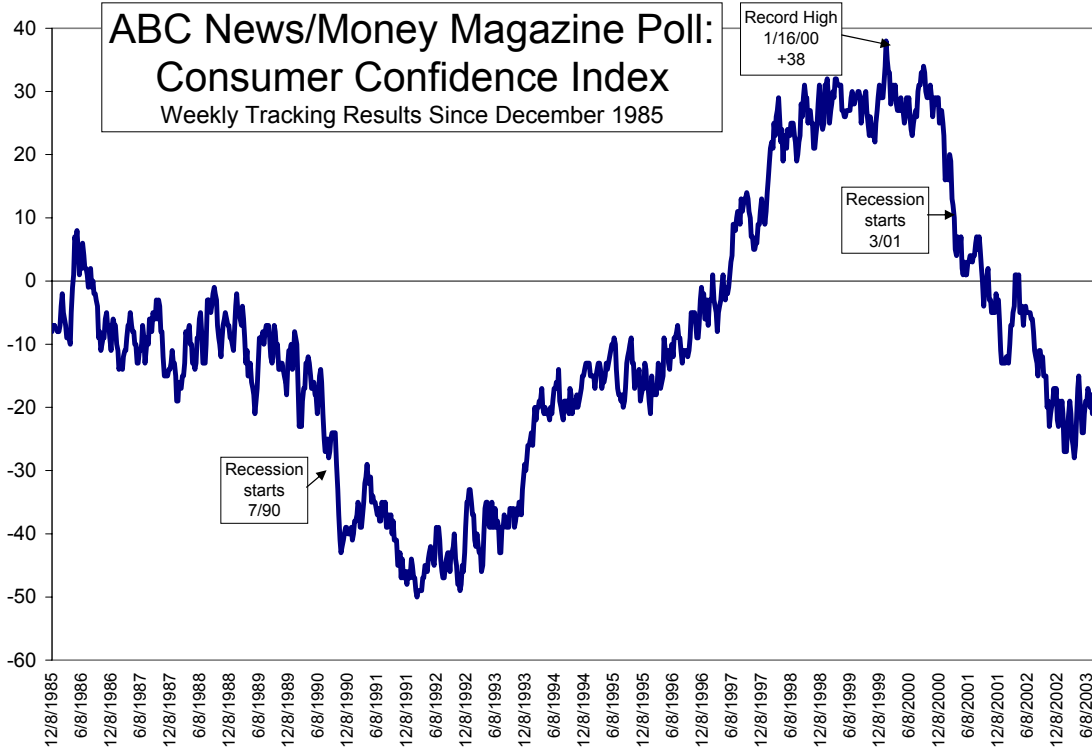
Despite that jump at the pump, 37 percent of Americans say it's a good time to buy things – about average for the year (36 percent) and nearly matching this poll's 17-year average, 39 percent. That's not always the case; in early 2001, for instance, as gas prices gained 18 cents, ratings of the buying climate worsened by 10 points.



In addition to the buying climate, the index is based on public ratings of the national economy (30 percent rate it positively, a point off its 2003 high but 11 points below average) and personal finances (56 percent rate theirs positively, just a point off average).

ABC News/Money magazine poll					
Positive ratings of:	This week	Last week	2003 high	2003 low	17-yr. avg.
National economy	30%	31	31	21	41
Buying climate	37	38	41	32	39
Personal finances	56	56	60	52	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-18	-17	-15	-28	-9

TREND – The index, which began in December 1985, has a lifetime average of -9. It peaked at +38 in January 2000 and bottomed out at -50 in February 1992. It's averaged -21 so far this year.



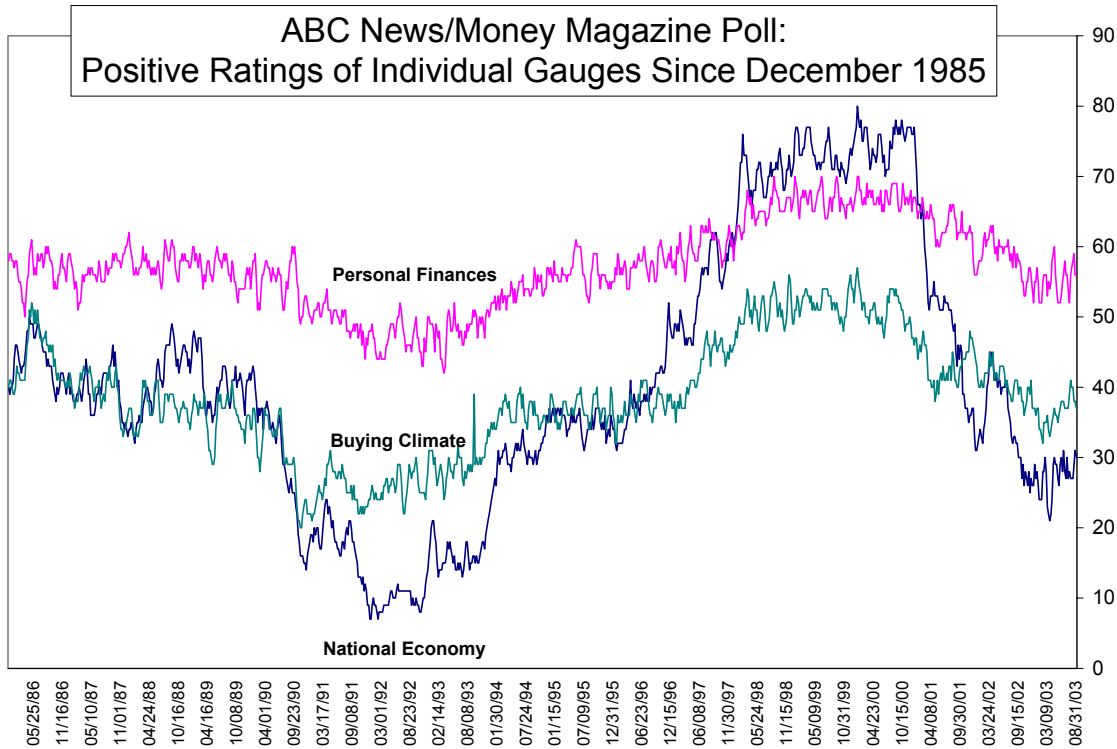
ABC/Money Index	
Today	-18
Last week	-17
Recent low	-28 March 2003
Recent high	+1 March, April 2002
2003 average	-21 To date
2002 average	-11
2001 average	+4
2000 average	+29 Best full year
1992 average	-44 Worst full year
Jan. 16, 2000	+38 Record high
Feb. 9, 1992	-50 Record low
Average since 12/85	-9

GROUPS – As usual, confidence is higher among better-off Americans. The index is +3 among people in higher-income households, compared with -51 in the lowest; -1 among

college graduates while -54 among high-school dropouts; and -14 among whites but -43 among blacks. It's -6 among men while -28 among women, and +13 among Republicans, while -26 among independents and -39 among Democrats.

The index in the South, -10, continues above its 12-month average of -19. Last week it was -6, a 12-month high for that region. In the West (-17), Midwest (-20) and Northeast (-28), the index remains close to the 12-month averages.

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



NATIONAL ECONOMY – Thirty percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good; it was 31 percent last week, matching its high for the year. The highest was 80 percent Jan. 16, 2000. The lowest was seven percent in late 1991 and early 1992.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	30	2	28	70	44	26
Avg. since 12/85	41	4	37	59	40	20

PERSONAL FINANCES – Fifty-six percent rate their own finances as excellent or good, the same as last week. The best was 70 percent Aug. 30, 1998, and matched in January 2000. The worst was 42 percent March 14, 1993.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	56	5	51	44	29	15
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	53	43	30	12

Under \$15K	-51	-47	-45	-61	-38	-36	-67	-50
\$15K To \$24.9K	-35	-41	-57	-34	-32	-27	-57	-42
\$25K To \$39.9K	-36	-33	-33	-48	-31	-16	-49	-31
\$40K To \$49.9K	8	20	-6	-29	-14	20	-32	-15
Over \$50K	3	2	9	8	9	15	-15	4
Region:								
Northeast	-28	-31	-27	-32	-22	-11	-38	-26
Midwest	-20	-15	-15	-13	-10	-8	-34	-19
South	-10	-6	-11	-12	-13	-6	-29	-19
West	-17	-20	-18	-28	-9	4	-34	-16
Race:								
White	-14	-12	-11	-16	-11	-8	-23	-16
Black	-43	-54	-68	-50	-26	-21	-68	-44
Politics:								
Republican	13	17	18	7	9	19	-3	8
Democrat	-39	-39	-40	-46	-28	-23	-46	-36
Independent	-26	-24	-23	-21	-12	-12	-38	-24
Education:								
< High School	-54	-53	-42	-50	-42	-23	-59	-43
High Sch. Grad.	-25	-23	-20	-18	-18	-11	-40	-25
College +	-1	-1	-7	-11	-1	1	-18	-8
Home:								
Own	-10	-8	-9	-16	-11	-8	-24	-15
Rent	-38	-38	-38	-31	-21	-18	-43	-32
Marital Status:								
Single	-24	-22	-26	-25	-2	1	-33	-18
Married	-10	-8	-8	-11	-14	-6	-27	-15
Sep/Wid/Div	-38	-38	-42	-50	-24	-21	-52	-36
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-7	-6	-6	-15	-4	-4	-20	-12
Part-Time	-19	-14	-22	-16	-21	3	-40	-23
Not Employed	-29	-29	-31	-26	-25	-21	-40	-30

END