

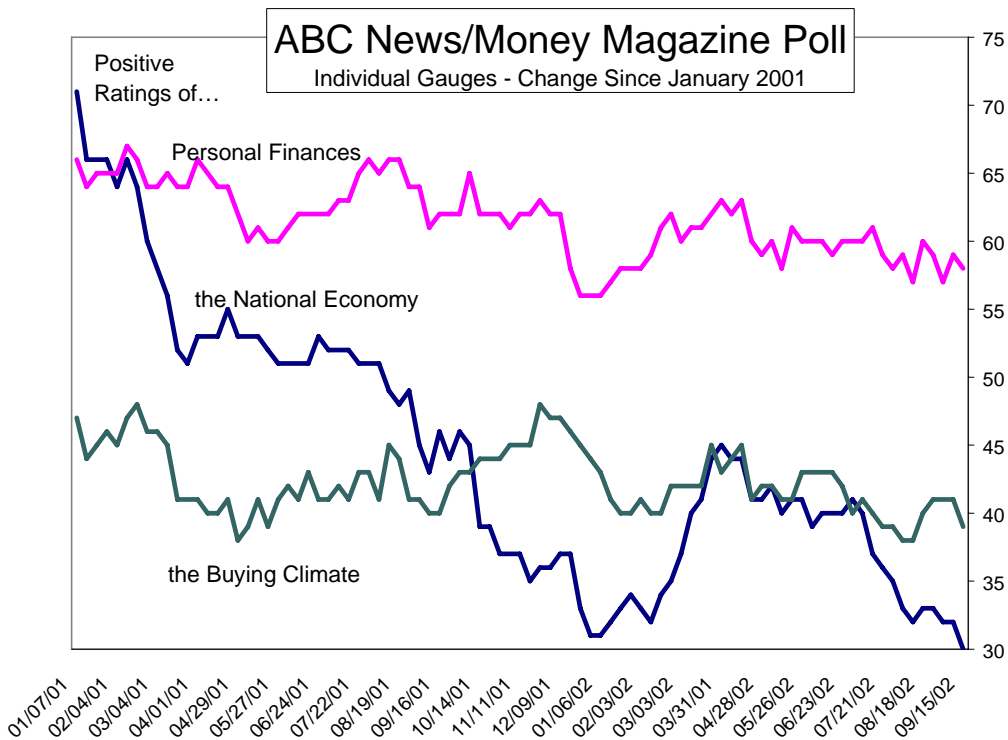
Economy Rating Drops; its Worst Since Oct. '94

Public ratings of the national economy slipped to their lowest this week in eight years, and overall consumer confidence dropped back to match its worst of 2002 – previously unseen since April 1996.

Just 30 percent of Americans now rate the national economy positively, the fewest since October 1994. Confidence in the economy has fallen by 15 points just since March. It peaked at 80 percent positive in the go-go days of January 2000.

Separately, 39 percent now call it a good time to buy things, down six points since April and just one point off its low for 2002. And 58 percent say their own finances are in good shape, just two points off its low this year, in January.

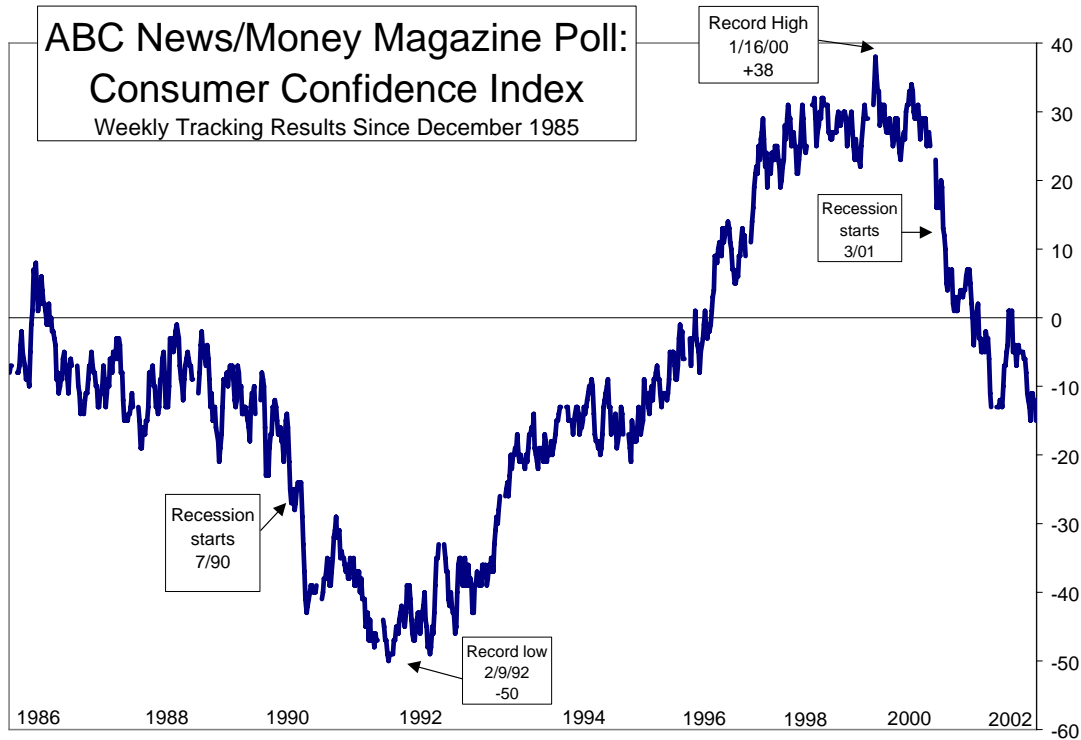
The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort index, based on these views, stands at -15 on its scale of +100 to -100. It was -12 last week, compared to a peak this year of +1 in April. The index's all-time high was +38 in January 2000; its record low, -50 in February 1992. Its lifetime average in weekly polls since December 1985 is -8.



| ABC News/Money magazine poll | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| Positive ratings of: | This week | 2002 High | 2002 Low | 16-yr. avg. |
| National economy | 30 | 45 | 30 | 41 |
| Buying climate | 39 | 45 | 38 | 39 |
| Personal finances | 58 | 63 | 56 | 57 |
| Consumer Comfort Index | -15 | +1 | -15 | -8 |

TREND – The ABC/Money index started the year at -13 and improved to +1 in March and mid-April. It slipped to -5 in late April and then held steady between -4 and -7 until July, when it headed down in the face of corporate scandals, the declining stock market and disappointing economic reports.

The index has lost nine points since July, reaching its 2002 low of -15 in early August and again this week. Last week, the Federal Reserve “Beige Book” report pointed to slowing economic growth, with disappointing retail sales and little or no employment gains in most areas.



| ABC/Money Index | | |
|---------------------|-----|-----------------|
| Today | -15 | |
| Last week | -12 | |
| Two weeks ago | -13 | |
| Two months ago | - 8 | |
| 2002 high | + 1 | |
| 2002 low | -15 | |
| 2002 average | - 8 | |
| 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 +11 among people in higher-income households compared to -49 in the lowest, -5 among college graduates while -58 among high-school dropouts, and -9 among whites but -39 among blacks. This week, however, it's almost the same among women (-16) and men (-14).

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, 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 | 30 | 1 | 29 | 70 | 50 | 20 |
| Avg. since 12/85 | 41 | 4 | 38 | 59 | 39 | 19 |

PERSONAL FINANCES – Fifty-eight 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 | 58 | 4 | 54 | 42 | 28 | 14 |
| Avg. since 12/85 | 57 | 5 | 53 | 43 | 30 | 12 |

BUYING CLIMATE – Thirty-nine percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need, down two points 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 | 39 | 1 | 38 | 61 | 43 | 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 1,016 interviews in the month ending September 15, 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 Julie Crandall.

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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09/15/02

This Last 4 Wks 3 Mo. 1 Yr. 12 Mo 12 Mo 12 Mo
 Week Week Ago Ago Ago High Low Avg

Group

GENERAL POPULATION:

| Group | This Week | Last Week | 4 Wks Ago | 3 Mo. Ago | 1 Yr. Ago | 12 Mo High | 12 Mo Low | 12 Mo Avg |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Overall Index | -15 | -12 | -11 | -5 | -1 | 2 | -15 | -7 |
| State of Economy | -40 | -36 | -34 | -20 | -8 | -8 | -40 | -25 |
| Personal Finances | 16 | 18 | 20 | 18 | 24 | 30 | 12 | 20 |
| Buying Climate | -22 | -18 | -20 | -14 | -20 | -4 | -24 | -16 |

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

Sex:

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|-----|-----|
| Men | -14 | -9 | -2 | 4 | 2 | 10 | -14 | 0 |
| Women | -16 | -14 | -21 | -13 | -4 | -3 | -23 | -13 |

Age:

| | | | | | | | | |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|
| 18 - 34 | -5 | 2 | -9 | -2 | 5 | 10 | -12 | 0 |
| 35 - 44 | -18 | -22 | -18 | -6 | 6 | 9 | -28 | -8 |
| 45 - 54 | -24 | -13 | 0 | 6 | -6 | 6 | -24 | -7 |
| 55 - 64 | -17 | -22 | -14 | -12 | -3 | 20 | -30 | -6 |
| 65 + | -18 | -20 | -17 | -16 | -19 | 0 | -23 | -15 |

Income:

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Under \$15K | -49 | -36 | -26 | -43 | -36 | -23 | -54 | -41 |
| \$15K To \$24.9K | -32 | -35 | -24 | -42 | -21 | -14 | -44 | -27 |
| \$25K To \$39.9K | -27 | -20 | -21 | -18 | -13 | 6 | -31 | -12 |
| \$40K To \$49.9K | -18 | -12 | -15 | 5 | 9 | 15 | -18 | 1 |
| Over \$50K | 11 | 10 | 3 | 27 | 22 | 33 | 0 | 16 |

Region:

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----|----|----|---|-----|----|
| Northeast | -19 | -24 | -19 | -9 | -1 | 2 | -24 | -9 |
| Midwest | -9 | -8 | -6 | -4 | 1 | 4 | -18 | -6 |
| South | -16 | -10 | -19 | -2 | -4 | 7 | -24 | -5 |
| West | -14 | -7 | -1 | -7 | -1 | 9 | -21 | -6 |

Race:

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|
| White | -9 | -8 | -9 | -1 | 2 | 8 | -12 | -2 |
| Black | -39 | -27 | -24 | -42 | -24 | -8 | -51 | -35 |

Politics:

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Republican | 7 | 9 | 5 | 16 | 19 | 34 | 5 | 16 |
| Democrat | -31 | -23 | -24 | -19 | -13 | -12 | -32 | -20 |
| Independent | -15 | -14 | -11 | -8 | -2 | 1 | -19 | -9 |

Education:

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| < High School | -58 | -42 | -21 | -36 | -37 | -12 | -58 | -32 |
| High Sch. Grad. | -11 | -14 | -19 | -11 | -8 | -3 | -22 | -10 |
| College + | -5 | -1 | -4 | 9 | 13 | 13 | -5 | 4 |

Home:

| | | | | | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|
| Own | -10 | -9 | -12 | 2 | 3 | 9 | -14 | -2 |
| Rent | -29 | -20 | -9 | -23 | -12 | -8 | -29 | -19 |

Marital Status:

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Single | -3 | 1 | -3 | -1 | -1 | 10 | -19 | -5 |
| Married | -15 | -11 | -9 | -1 | 4 | 11 | -15 | -2 |
| Sep/Wid/Div | -27 | -27 | -24 | -26 | -24 | -14 | -42 | -26 |

Employ. Status:

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|
| Full-Time | -9 | -6 | -5 | 4 | 11 | 12 | -9 | 2 |
| Part-Time | -13 | 3 | -17 | -9 | -13 | 14 | -21 | -6 |
| Not Employed | -24 | -25 | -20 | -17 | -14 | -8 | -28 | -19 |

END