

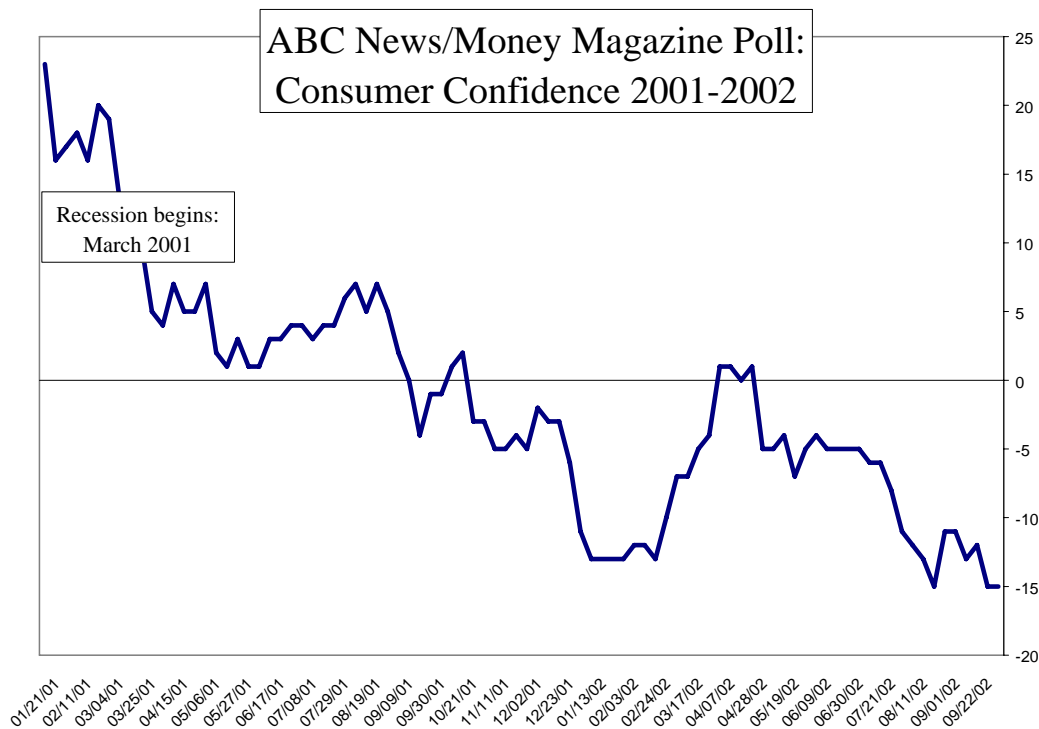
Economy Rating Holds At its Eight-Year Low

Public ratings of the economy held steady this week at their lowest in eight years, while overall consumer confidence was also flat, matching its worst of 2002.

Just 30 percent of Americans rate the national economy positively, same as last week at the fewest since October 1994 – down 10 points since July and down 50 points from the record high in January 2000. But it's been far worse – just seven percent rated the economy positively in late 1991 and early 1992.

Confidence in the buying climate remains virtually unchanged, with 40 percent calling it a good time to spend money, five points off its 2002 high. Fifty-eight percent say their own finances are O.K., only two points above its 2002 low.

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

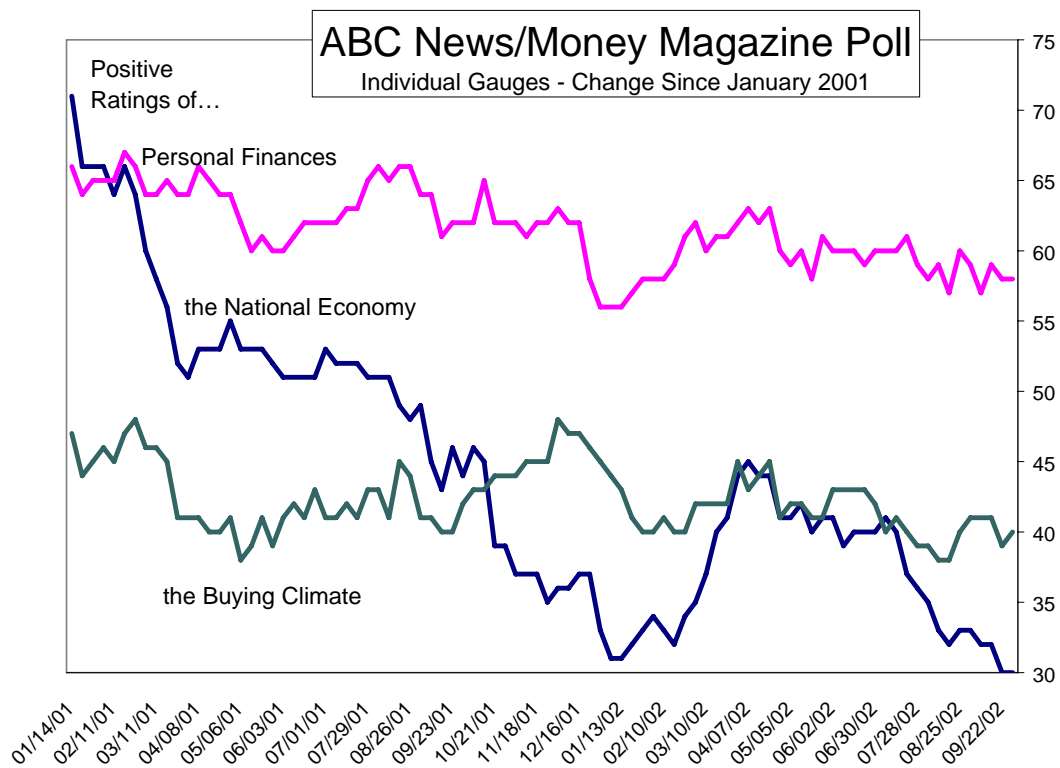


ABC News/Money magazine poll				
Positive ratings of:	This week	2002 High	2002 Low	16-yr. avg.
National economy	30	45	30	41
Buying climate	40	45	38	39
Personal finances	58	63	56	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-15	+1	-15	-8

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 in September.

The Federal Reserve today kept interest rates at 1.75 percent, its lowest in four decades, saying “risks are weighted mainly toward conditions that may generate economic weakness.”



ABC/Money Index	
Today	-15
Last week	-15
Two weeks ago	-12
Two months ago	-11
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 +6 among people in higher-income households compared to -41 in the lowest, -7 among college graduates while -46 among high-school dropouts and -13 among whites but -21 among blacks. Again this week, however, it's almost the same among women (-15) and men (-13).

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, 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	30	1	29	70	51	19
Avg. since 12/85	41	4	38	59	39	19

PERSONAL FINANCES – Fifty-eight percent rate their own finances as excellent or good, also unchanged. 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	58	3	55	42	30	12
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	53	43	30	12

BUYING CLIMATE – Forty percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need, up one point 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	40	2	38	60	43	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 1,018 interviews in the month ending Sept. 22, 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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09/22/02	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	-15	-15	-11	-5	-1	2	-15	-7
State of Economy	-40	-40	-34	-20	-12	-8	-40	-25
Personal Finances	16	16	18	20	24	30	12	20
Buying Climate	-20	-22	-18	-16	-16	-4	-24	-16

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-13	-14	-2	1	4	10	-14	0
Women	-15	-16	-21	-11	-5	-3	-23	-13
Age:								
18 - 34	-7	-5	-4	-3	4	10	-12	0
35 - 44	-11	-18	-24	-4	9	9	-28	-8
45 - 54	-22	-24	-2	1	-3	6	-24	-8
55 - 64	-21	-17	-12	-6	1	20	-30	-6
65 +	-17	-18	-21	-16	-20	0	-23	-15
Income:								
Under \$15K	-41	-49	-27	-40	-36	-23	-54	-41
\$15K To \$24.9K	-29	-32	-28	-33	-25	-14	-44	-27
\$25K To \$39.9K	-24	-27	-22	-20	-11	6	-31	-12
\$40K To \$49.9K	-23	-18	-8	4	14	15	-23	1
Over \$50K	6	11	7	25	22	33	0	16
Region:								
Northeast	-13	-19	-17	-5	1	2	-24	-9
Midwest	-14	-9	-7	-11	-1	4	-18	-7
South	-17	-16	-17	-3	-1	7	-24	-6
West	-11	-14	-4	-3	-1	9	-21	-6
Race:								
White	-13	-9	-9	-1	5	8	-13	-2
Black	-21	-39	-29	-40	-34	-8	-51	-34
Politics:								
Republican	7	7	9	15	22	34	5	16
Democrat	-26	-31	-25	-18	-13	-12	-32	-20
Independent	-18	-15	-9	-10	-3	1	-19	-9
Education:								
< High School	-46	-58	-31	-38	-39	-12	-58	-32
High Sch. Grad.	-11	-11	-19	-11	-3	-3	-22	-11
College +	-7	-5	-1	9	13	13	-7	4
Home:								
Own	-10	-10	-11	0	4	9	-14	-2
Rent	-24	-29	-12	-19	-13	-8	-29	-19
Marital Status:								
Single	-6	-3	-2	-11	4	10	-19	-5
Married	-14	-15	-12	2	4	11	-15	-2
Sep/Wid/Div	-24	-27	-23	-21	-20	-14	-42	-26
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-8	-9	-4	3	11	12	-9	2
Part-Time	-14	-13	-20	-6	-9	14	-21	-6

Not Employed	-22	-24	-21	-19	-15	-8	-28	-19
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