

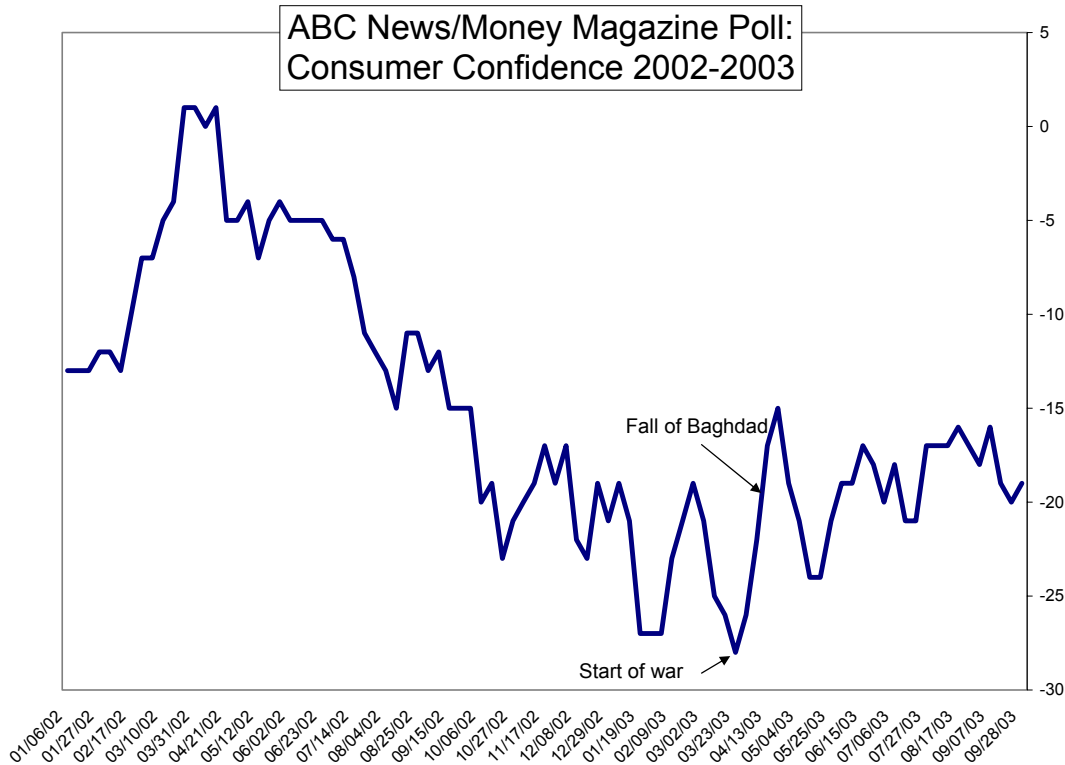
Confidence is Flat

Consumer confidence is starting the fall the same way it spent most of the summer – flat.

In its first reading of the new season, the ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index stands at -19 on its scale of +100 to -100, well off its career average of -9. The index has been between -16 and -21 for 19 weeks, a run that started in late spring.

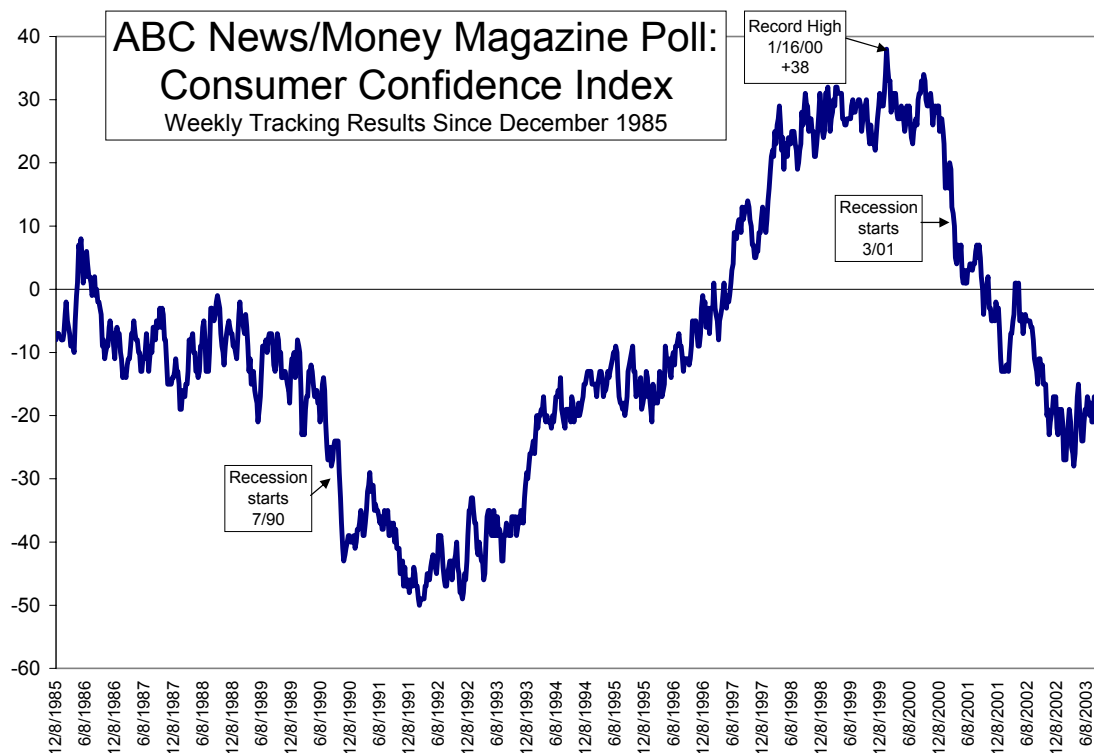
This week 38 percent of Americans call it a good time to buy things and 56 percent rate their finances positively, each near its 17-year average. But just 27 percent say the economy is in good shape – unchanged from last week and 14 points below average.

	ABC News/Money magazine poll				
Positive ratings of:	This week	Last week	2003 high	2003 low	17-yr. avg.
National economy	27%	27	31	21	41
Buying climate	38	38	41	32	39
Personal finances	56	55	60	52	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-19	-20	-15	-28	-9



TREND – The ABC/Money index has been as high as +38 in January 2000 and as low as -50 in February 1992. Its best one-year average was +29 in 2000; its worst, -44 in 1992. The index has averaged -21 so far this year, on track to be its worst year on average in a decade.

		ABC/Money Index	
Today		-19	
Last week		-20	
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 – Confidence, as usual, remains higher among better-off Americans. The index is +8 among people with the highest incomes and -53 among those with the lowest. It's -10 among college graduates while -31 among high-school dropouts, -15 among whites but -43 among blacks, and -12 among men while -25 among women. There's a partisan gap as well, with the index at +11 among Republicans, -17 among independents and -41 among Democrats.

The index is -13 in the Northeast, well above its 12-month average of -26. It's closer to average in the South (-15), the West (-23) and the Midwest (-24).

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

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

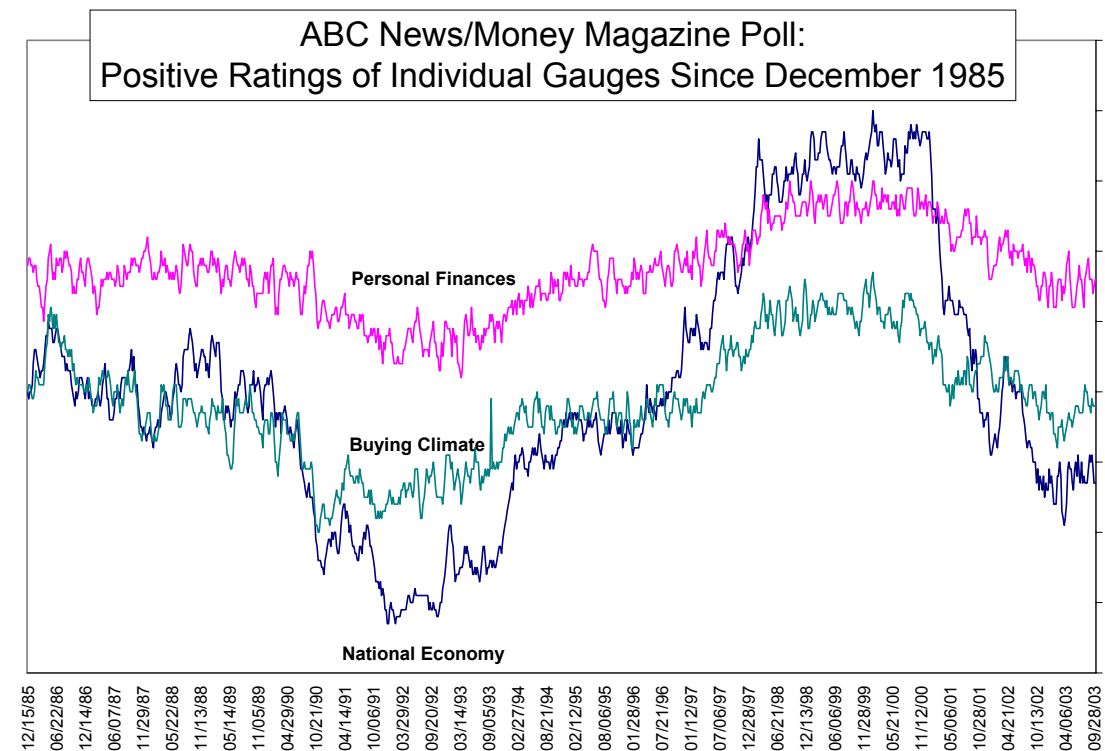
	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	27	1	26	73	42	31
Avg. since 12/85	41	4	37	59	40	20

PERSONAL FINANCES – Fifty-six percent rate their own finances as excellent or good; it was 55 percent 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	6	50	44	28	16
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	53	43	30	12

BUYING CLIMATE – Thirty-eight percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things, the same as the last two weeks. 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	38	3	35	62	43	19
Avg. since 12/85	39	3	36	61	41	20



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 1,003 interviews in the month ending Sept. 28, 2003, 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 by subtracting the negative response to each index question 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 David Morris.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet, at:

<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934 or Lisa Finkel, (212) 456-6190.

09/28/03	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	-19	-20	-18	-20	-15	-15	-28	-20
State of Economy	-46	-46	-40	-46	-40	-36	-58	-45
Personal Finances	12	10	12	12	14	20	4	10
Buying Climate	-24	-24	-26	-26	-20	-18	-36	-26

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-12	-10	-6	-10	-12	-3	-19	-11
Women	-25	-28	-28	-27	-18	-18	-38	-28
Age:								
18 - 34	-15	-18	-18	-15	-9	-4	-25	-14
35 - 44	-21	-21	-17	-24	-9	-9	-31	-19
45 - 54	-14	-16	-13	-15	-21	-8	-41	-24
55 - 64	-30	-27	-16	-25	-23	-8	-39	-23
65 +	-20	-18	-23	-15	-23	-15	-36	-26
Income:								
Under \$15K	-53	-53	-51	-64	-43	-37	-67	-51
\$15K To \$24.9K	-44	-35	-35	-41	-27	-27	-57	-42
\$25K To \$39.9K	-38	-43	-36	-29	-24	-16	-49	-32
\$40K To \$49.9K	-8	-14	8	-11	-16	20	-32	-14
Over \$50K	8	8	3	10	5	15	-15	4
Region:								
Northeast	-13	-12	-28	-23	-11	-11	-38	-26
Midwest	-24	-26	-20	-23	-11	-11	-34	-20

South	-15	-17	-10	-12	-22	-6	-29	-19
West	-23	-23	-17	-22	-12	4	-34	-17
Race:								
White	-15	-17	-14	-16	-13	-9	-23	-16
Black	-43	-44	-43	-30	-29	-23	-68	-45
Politics:								
Republican	11	10	13	9	7	19	-3	9
Democrat	-41	-42	-39	-25	-30	-25	-46	-38
Independent	-17	-21	-26	-26	-17	-13	-38	-25
Education:								
< High School	-31	-35	-54	-43	-44	-23	-59	-42
High Sch. Grad.	-25	-28	-25	-19	-14	-14	-40	-26
College +	-10	-9	-1	-11	-7	1	-18	-9
Home:								
Own	-11	-12	-10	-16	-12	-8	-24	-15
Rent	-38	-40	-38	-28	-24	-18	-43	-33
Marital Status:								
Single	-25	-26	-24	-25	-10	-7	-33	-20
Married	-7	-11	-10	-14	-12	-6	-27	-15
Sep/Wid/Div	-43	-38	-38	-30	-32	-21	-52	-37
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-11	-12	-7	-9	-11	-5	-20	-12
Part-Time	-18	-19	-19	-34	-11	-7	-40	-23
Not Employed	-29	-30	-29	-27	-22	-21	-40	-30

END