

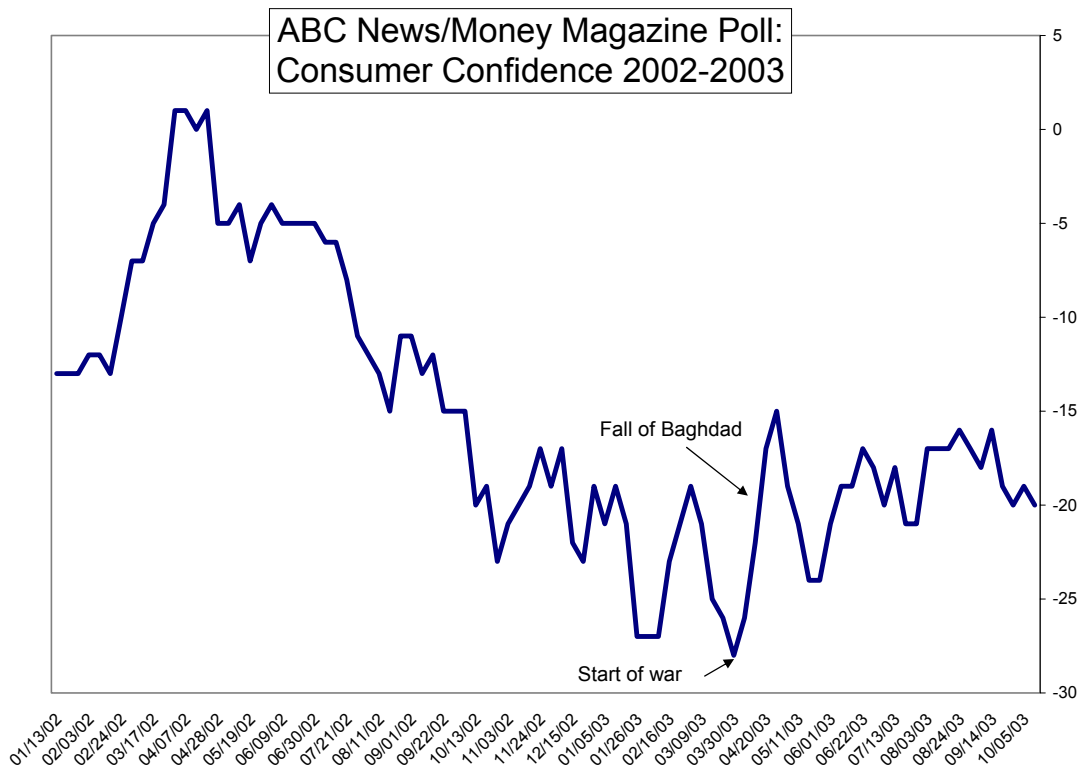
Confidence in a Lull

Consumer confidence stretched its lull into another week, stuck within a five-point band since late spring.

The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index stands at -20 on its scale of +100 to -100. It's the twentieth straight week the index – based on public ratings of the economy, buying climate and personal finances – has been between -16 and -21.

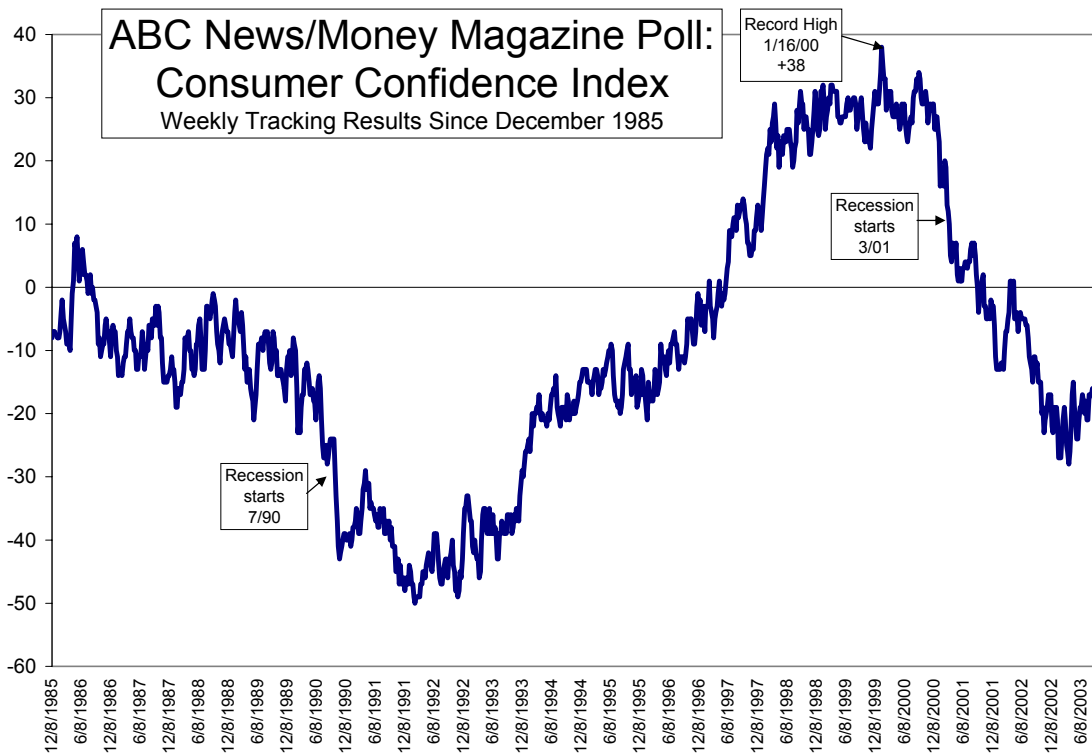
Today 36 percent call it a good time to buy things – the fewest since mid-May – and fewer, 28 percent, give the economy a positive rating. Ratings of personal finances are better, at 56 percent positive.

	ABC News/Money magazine poll				
Positive ratings of:	This week	Last week	2003 high	2003 low	17-yr. avg.
National economy	28%	27	31	21	41
Buying climate	36	38	41	32	39
Personal finances	56	56	60	52	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-20	-19	-15	-28	-9



TREND – The ABC/Money index has averaged -21 so far this year, well below its career average, -9. It peaked at +38 in January 2000 and bottomed out at -50 in February 1992. Its best one-year average was +29 in 2000; its worst, -44 in 1992.

		ABC/Money Index	
Today		-20	
Last week		-19	
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, is higher among better-off Americans. The index is +6 among higher-income Americans and -56 among lower-income people. It's -14 among college graduates while -45 among high-school dropouts, -18 among whites but -34 among blacks, and -12 among men while -26 among women. There's a partisan gap, with the index +9 among Republicans, -22 among independents and -37 among Democrats.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Twenty-eight percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good; it was 27 percent last week. The highest was 80 percent Jan. 16, 2000. The lowest was seven percent in late 1991 and early 1992.

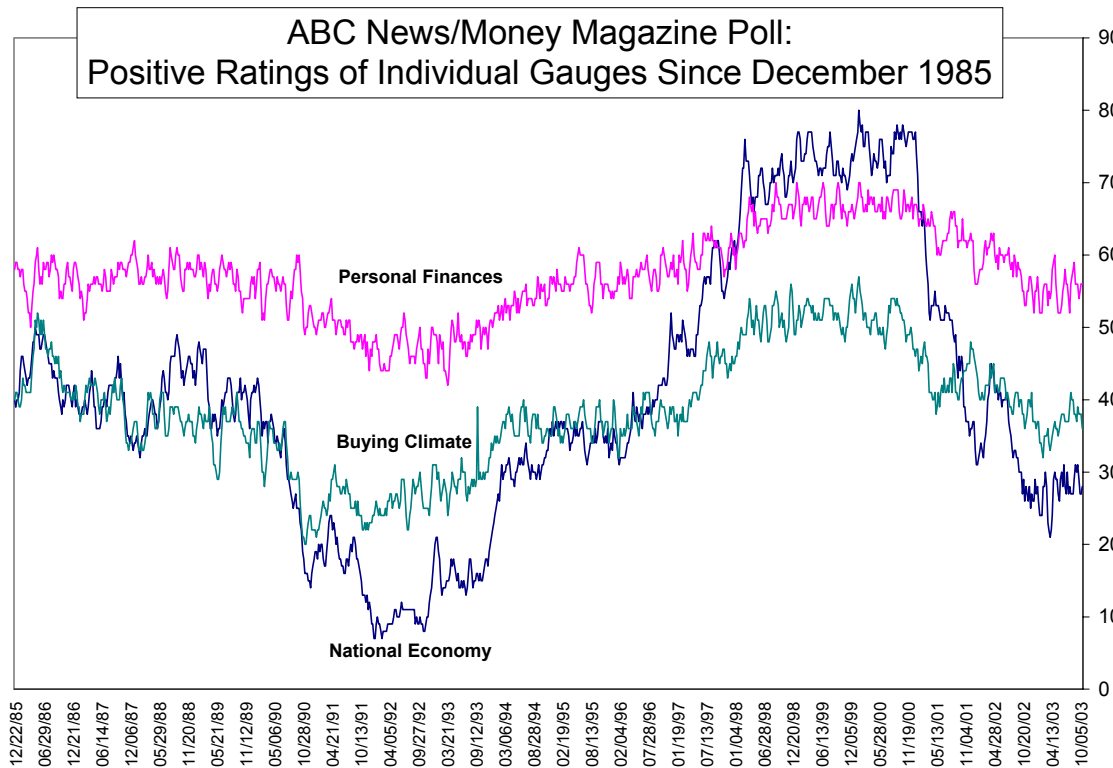
	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	28	1	27	72	44	28
Avg. since 12/85	41	4	37	59	40	20

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	7	49	44	27	17
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	53	43	30	12

BUYING CLIMATE – Thirty-six percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things; it was 38 percent 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	36	3	33	64	44	20
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 Oct. 5, 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 Dalia Sussman.

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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10/05/03

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	-20	-19	-16	-18	-20	-15	-28	-20
State of Economy	-44	-46	-38	-40	-46	-38	-58	-46
Personal Finances	12	12	12	12	10	20	4	10
Buying Climate	-28	-24	-22	-26	-24	-18	-36	-26

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

Sex:

Men	-12	-12	-3	-9	-16	-3	-19	-11
Women	-26	-25	-28	-26	-22	-20	-38	-28

Age:

18 - 34	-19	-15	-11	-12	-9	-4	-25	-15
35 - 44	-16	-21	-19	-24	-10	-9	-31	-19
45 - 54	-16	-14	-15	-16	-34	-8	-41	-24
55 - 64	-36	-30	-22	-19	-25	-8	-39	-23
65+	-16	-20	-18	-22	-27	-15	-36	-26

Income:

Under \$15K	-56	-53	-53	-58	-45	-37	-67	-51
\$15K To \$24.9K	-42	-44	-33	-29	-34	-27	-57	-42
\$25K To \$39.9K	-42	-38	-32	-37	-34	-16	-49	-33
\$40K To \$49.9K	-1	-8	4	-15	-25	20	-32	-14
Over \$50K	6	8	8	10	3	15	-15	4

Region:

Northeast	-24	-13	-18	-23	-17	-12	-38	-26
Midwest	-22	-24	-15	-20	-17	-11	-34	-20
South	-13	-15	-13	-16	-26	-6	-29	-19
West	-22	-23	-20	-15	-13	4	-34	-17

Race:

White	-18	-15	-13	-13	-18	-9	-23	-17
Black	-34	-43	-45	-43	-28	-23	-68	-45

Politics:

Republican	9	11	14	7	5	19	-3	9
Democrat	-37	-41	-41	-28	-34	-25	-46	-38
Independent	-22	-17	-20	-21	-23	-13	-38	-25

Education:

< High School	-45	-31	-45	-49	-41	-23	-59	-42
High Sch. Grad.	-15	-25	-27	-15	-20	-15	-40	-26
College +	-14	-10	0	-10	-12	1	-18	-9

Home:

Own	-11	-11	-8	-14	-16	-8	-24	-15
Rent	-42	-38	-36	-30	-27	-18	-43	-33

Marital Status:

Single	-31	-25	-19	-33	-11	-7	-33	-20
Married	-5	-7	-10	-13	-17	-5	-27	-15
Sep/Wid/Div	-41	-43	-35	-22	-38	-21	-52	-38

Employ. Status:

Full-Time	-12	-11	-6	-9	-16	-5	-20	-12
Part-Time	-20	-18	-17	-35	-15	-7	-40	-23
Not Employed	-28	-29	-28	-26	-26	-21	-40	-30

END