

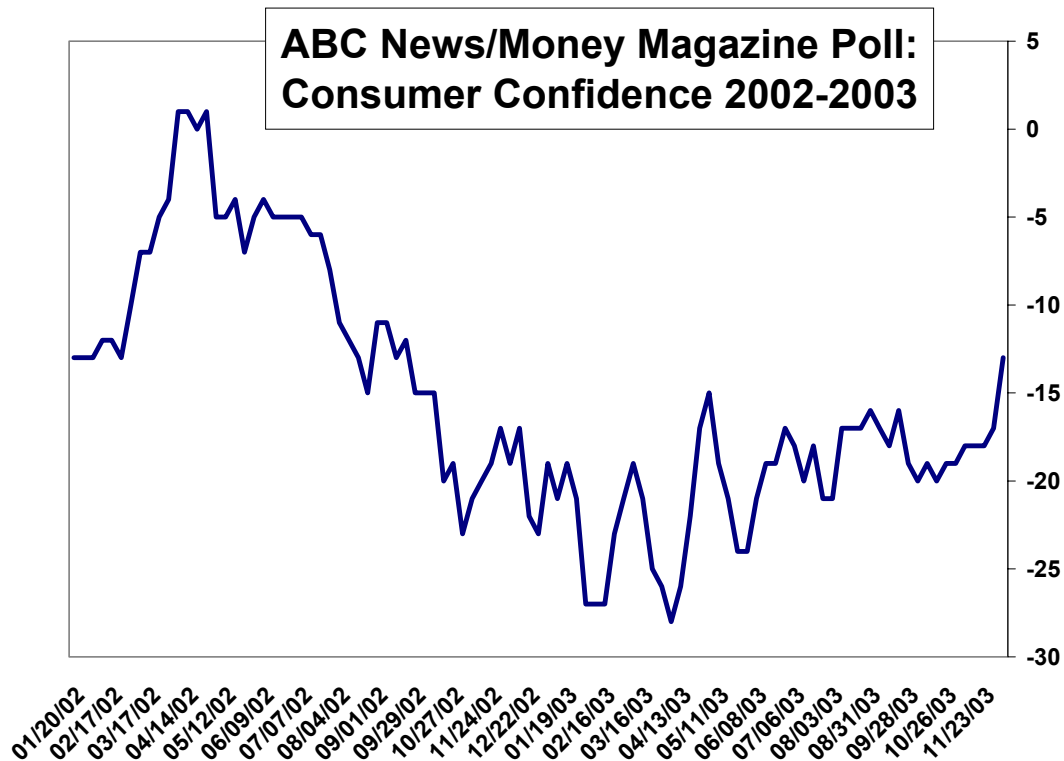
Consumer Confidence Jumps; Now Its Best in 14 Months

Consumer confidence jumped to its best level in more than 14 months this week, rising from a six-month lull just as the federal government announced a huge 8.2 percent spike in third-quarter GDP.

The jump in confidence suggests the economy's upswing could be making itself felt on Main Street, with potential benefits for holiday retailers – and, in an upcoming election year, for political incumbents as well.

The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index had been flat, between -16 and -21 on its scale of -100 to +100, for 26 weeks straight. This week, though, the index rose to -13, up four points to its best since Sept. 8, 2002.

Positive views of the national economy – long the weakest point of consumer confidence – fueled the advance. They're up nine points since mid-October, to 36 percent, the most since July 2002. The two other components of the ABC/Money index – ratings of personal finances and the buying climate – stayed relatively stable.

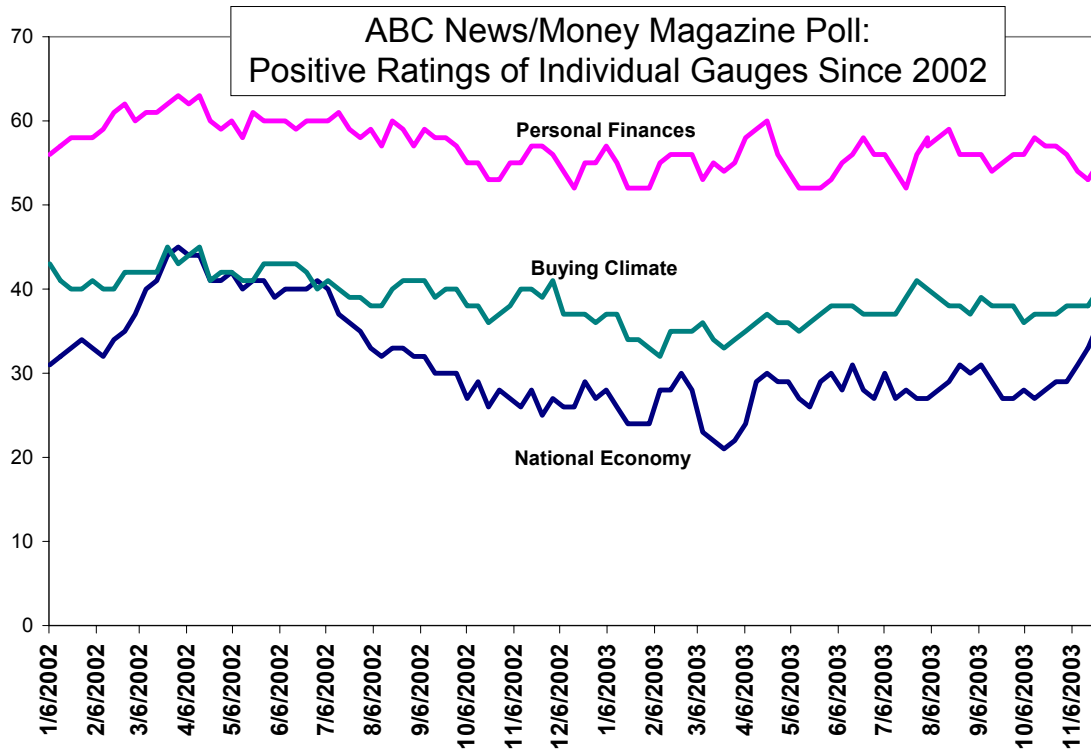


The advance in ratings of current economic conditions follows gains in expectations. In October the ABC/Money poll found economic expectations their best since May 2002; and last week it found more Americans optimistic than pessimistic about the economy's future – again, a first since mid-2002.

Neither retailers nor George W. Bush are on entirely safe economic ground in terms of public sentiment. The ABC/Money index remains below its lifetime average of -9, and far below its high point, +38 in January 2000. Nonetheless, this is the first sign that confidence in current conditions might be catching up with other evidence of recovery.

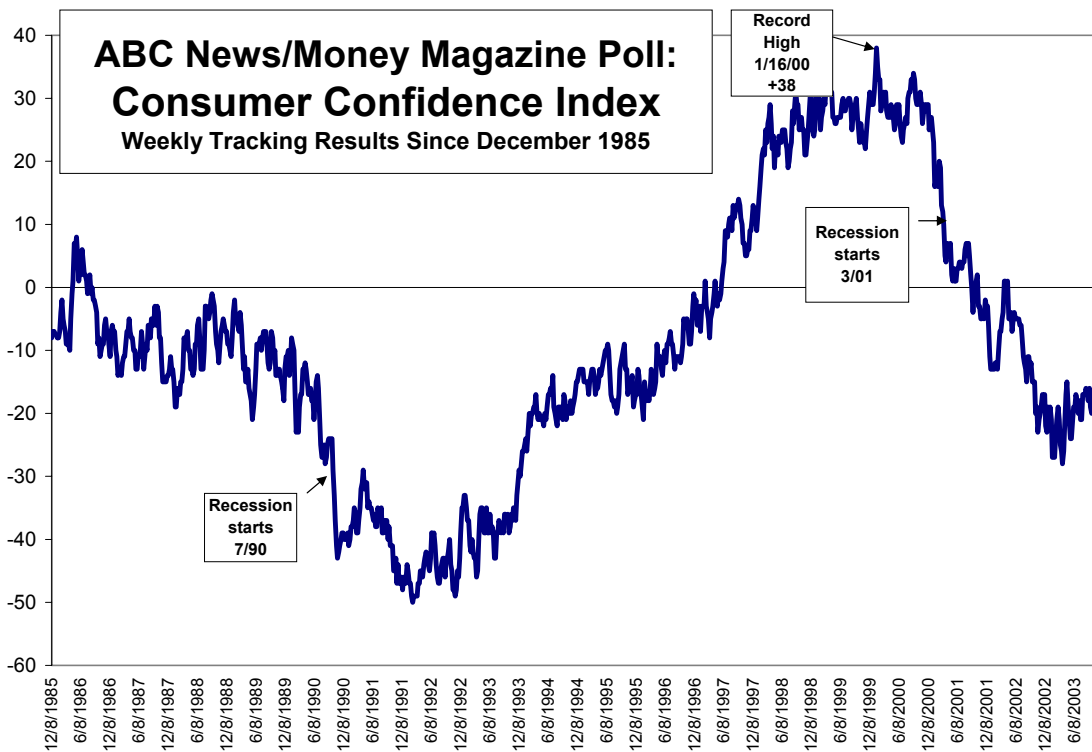
INDEX – Today 55 percent of Americans say their household finances are in good shape, very near the average, 57 percent, since this weekly poll began in December 1985. Forty percent call it a good time to buy things, also about average. As noted, today 36 percent rate the economy positively; the average is 41 percent since the index began.

ABC News/Money magazine poll					
Positive ratings of:	This week	Last week	2003 high	2003 low	17-yr. avg.
National economy	36%	33	36	21	41
Buying climate	40	38	41	32	39
Personal finances	55	53	60	52	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-13	-17	-13	-28	-9



TREND – At -20 so far this year, the index remains on pace for its worst annual average in a decade. The best one-year average was +29 in 2000; the worst, -44 in 1992. The index has been as high as +38 in January 2000 and as low as -50 in February 1992.

ABC/Money Index		
Today	-13	
Last week	-17	
Recent low	-28	March 2003
Recent high	+1	March, April 2002
2003 average to date	-20	
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, usually higher among better-off Americans, is at 12-month peaks for those earning more than \$50,000 a year (+17), those who attended college (+6), whites (-7) and men (-3). The index remains much lower for those earning the least (-51), high school dropouts (-40), blacks (-44) and women (-21).

Partisan and regional differences also persist. The index is +17 among Republicans, -19 among independents and -30 among Democrats. It's improved sharply in the West, from -24 four weeks ago to -1 now, a 12-month high. It's also at a 12-month high in the Midwest, -8, but worse, -19, in the Northeast and South.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Thirty-six percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good; it was 33 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	36	1	35	64	41	23
Avg. since 12/85	41	4	37	59	40	20

PERSONAL FINANCES – Fifty-five percent rate their own finances as excellent or good; it was 53 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	55	5	50	45	31	14
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	52	43	30	12

BUYING CLIMATE – Forty percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things. Last week it was 38 percent. 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	40	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 1,001 interviews in the month ending Nov. 23, 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.

11/23/03

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	-13	-17	-18	-17	-19	-13	-28	-20
State of Economy	-28	-34	-42	-38	-50	-28	-58	-45
Personal Finances	10	6	14	12	14	20	4	11
Buying Climate	-20	-24	-26	-24	-22	-18	-36	-26

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

Sex:

Men	-3	-10	-8	-5	-11	-3	-19	-11
Women	-21	-23	-28	-26	-27	-20	-38	-28

Age:

18 - 34	-13	-17	-18	-14	-8	-4	-25	-16
35 - 44	-14	-9	-10	-18	-20	-8	-31	-19
45 - 54	-14	-24	-20	-9	-21	-8	-41	-23
55 - 64	-8	-19	-27	-20	-26	-8	-39	-23
65+	-12	-17	-18	-24	-33	-12	-36	-25

Income:

Under \$15K	-51	-52	-52	-47	-48	-42	-67	-53
\$15K To \$24.9K	-49	-41	-43	-41	-40	-29	-57	-44
\$25K To \$39.9K	-11	-12	-28	-33	-23	-11	-49	-32
\$40K To \$49.9K	-7	-16	-2	20	-20	20	-32	-13
Over \$50K	17	7	5	2	3	17	-8	6

Region:

Northeast	-19	-23	-19	-31	-32	-12	-38	-25
Midwest	-8	-10	-9	-15	-14	-8	-34	-19
South	-19	-24	-19	-6	-24	-6	-29	-18
West	-1	-7	-24	-20	-6	-1	-34	-18

Race:

White	-7	-12	-17	-12	-16	-7	-23	-16
Black	-44	-54	-37	-54	-45	-23	-68	-46

Politics:

Republican	17	10	13	17	6	19	-3	9
Democrat	-30	-38	-37	-39	-34	-25	-46	-38
Independent	-19	-20	-24	-24	-22	-13	-38	-25

Education:

< High School	-40	-44	-43	-53	-51	-23	-59	-43
High Sch. Grad.	-25	-25	-13	-23	-24	-13	-40	-25
College +	6	-2	-14	-1	-5	6	-17	-8

Home:

Own	-2	-9	-6	-8	-16	-2	-24	-14
Rent	-37	-37	-43	-38	-26	-25	-43	-35

Marital Status:

Single	-25	-27	-35	-22	-14	-11	-37	-23
Married	3	-1	-3	-8	-17	3	-27	-13
Sep/Wid/Div	-41	-46	-34	-38	-30	-21	-52	-38

Employ. Status:

Full-Time	-6	-7	-8	-6	-13	-4	-20	-11
Part-Time	-21	-28	-20	-14	-9	-7	-40	-24
Not Employed	-19	-26	-31	-29	-31	-19	-40	-30

END