

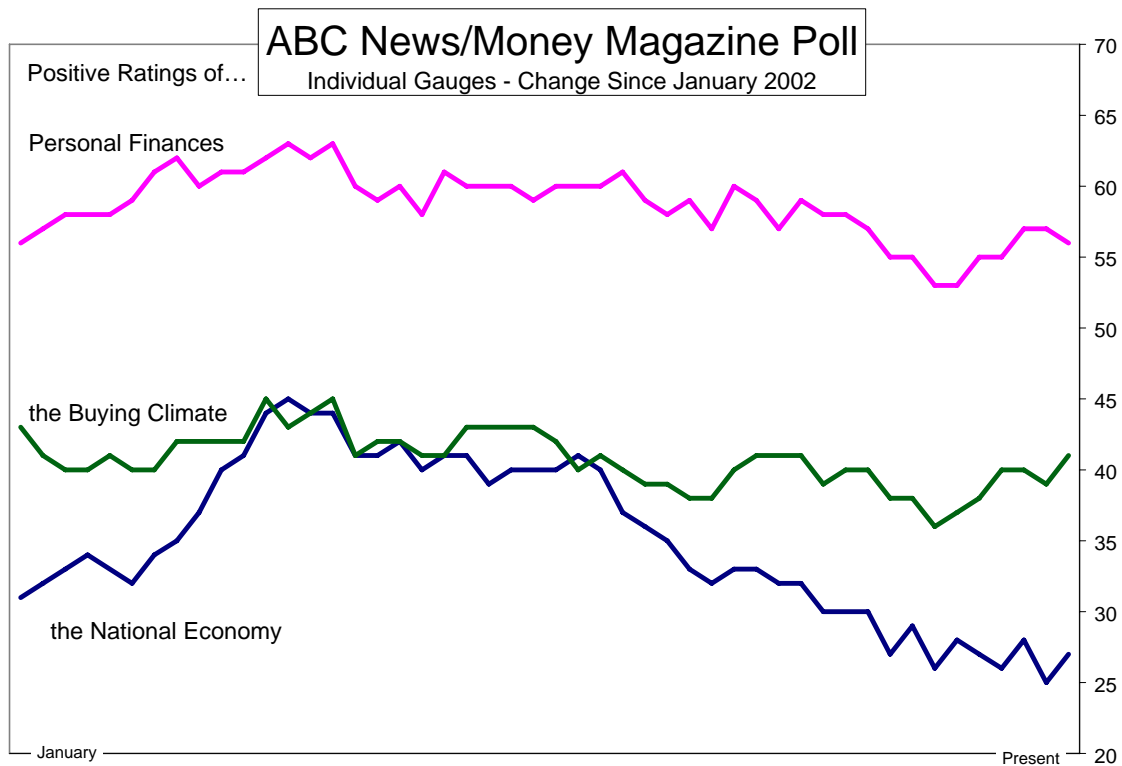
Ratings of Buying Climate Gain; Expectations Remain Off the Deck

Some holiday shoppers apparently like the prices they're seeing in stores this season: The number of Americans who call it a good time to buy things, while still not high, has inched up to its best since early September.

Forty-one percent call it a good time to shop, up five points since Oct. 20, when consumer confidence hit a more-than eight-year low. The buying climate's been brighter – it peaked at 57 percent positive in January 2000 – but also much worse (just 20 percent positive in 1990).

In another gauge, 56 percent say their own finances are in good shape, one point off the nearly 17-year average in the weekly ABC News/Money magazine poll. But far fewer, just 27 percent, rate the condition of the national economy positively.

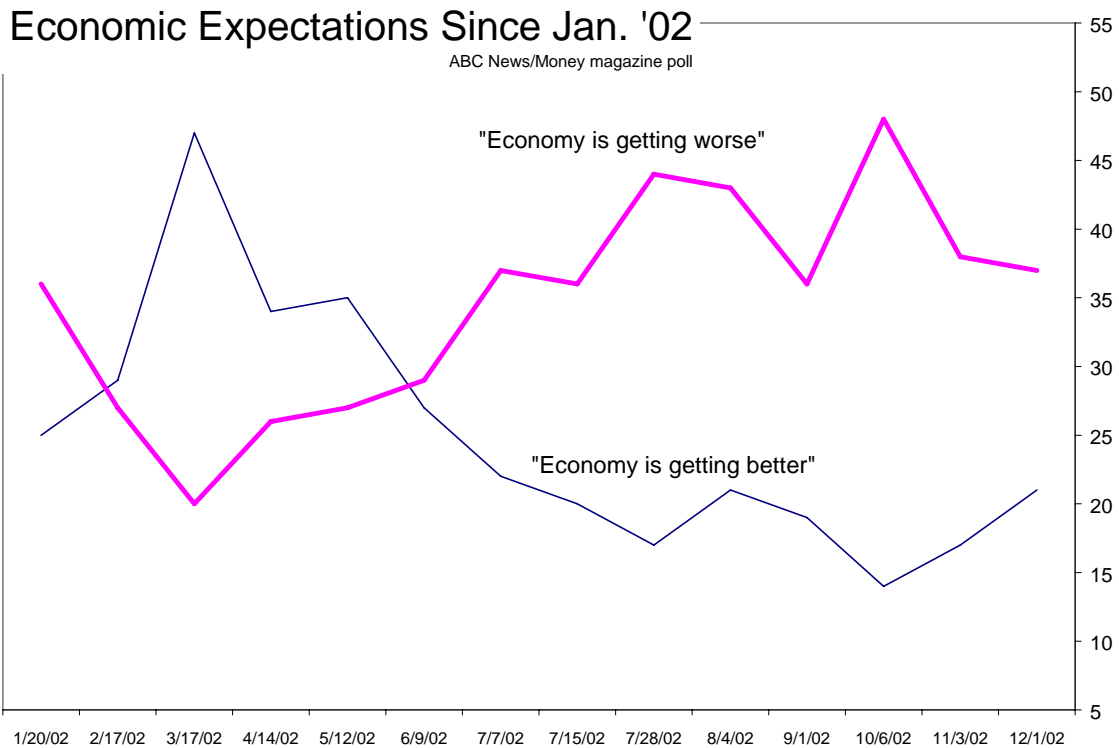
Based on these gauges the ABC/Money Consumer Confidence Index is now -17 on its scale of +100 to -100. The index has clawed up after falling to -23 on Oct. 20, its lowest since January 1994.



ABC News/Money magazine poll				
Positive ratings of:	This week	Oct. 20	2002 high	16-yr. avg.
National economy	27%	26	45	41
Buying climate	41	36	45	39
Personal finances	56	53	63	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-17	-23	+1	-8

EXPECTATIONS – Expectations for the economy’s future, measured separately in the ABC/Money poll, also remain off the deck. Last Oct. 6, 48 percent said the economy was getting worse, the most of the year. That’s dropped by 11 points, while the number who say the economy is improving has gained seven points, albeit to only 21 percent.

	Economy is...		
	Getting better	Getting worse	Staying the same
12/1/02	21%	37	42
11/3/02	17	38	44
10/6/02	14	48	37

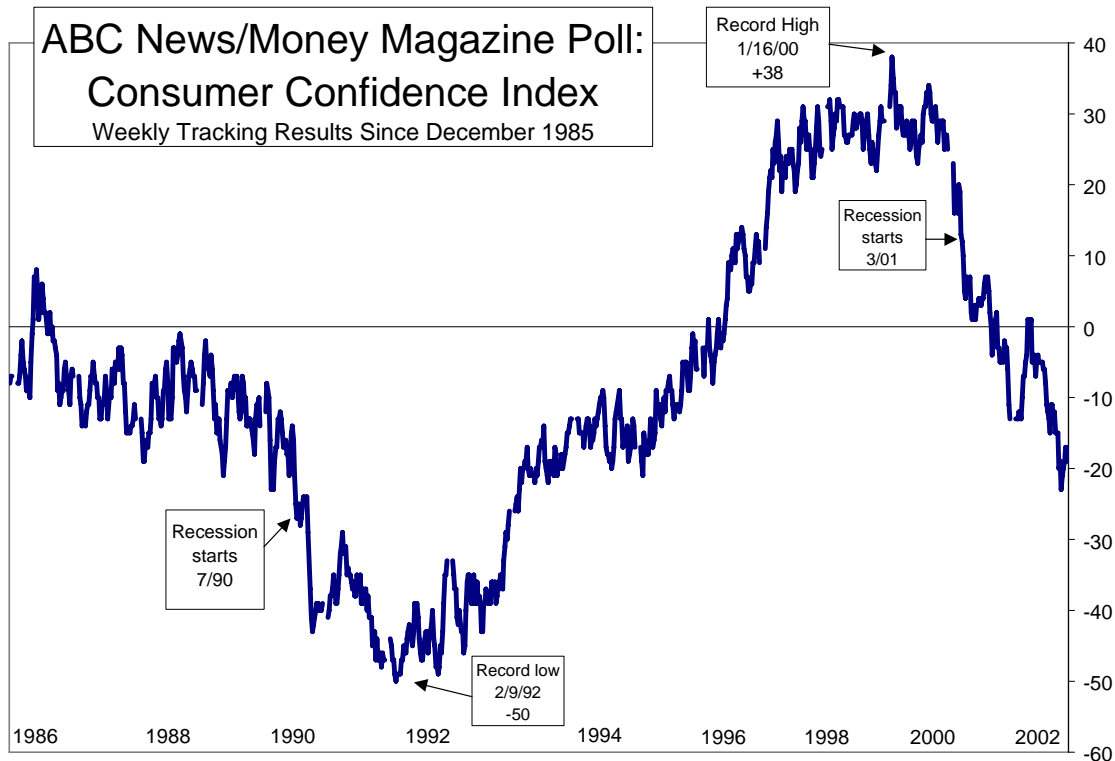


TREND – The ABC/Money index started in December 1985 and hit an all-time low of -50 in February 1992. Its record high was +38 in January 2000.

The index dropped as low as -13 in late 2001 and early 2002, then recovered to +1 last March and mid-April. But it slipped to -5 in late April and then fell further, to -15 in early August and mid-September, and -23 in October.

The index's 2002 average is -10; it hasn't had a yearlong average in the negatives since 1996. Its best one-year-average was +29 in 2000; its worst, -44 in 1992. Its lifetime average is -8.

ABC/Money Index		
Today	-17	
Last week	-19	
2002 high	+1	March, April
2002 low	-23	Oct. 20
2002 average	-10	
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 +8 among people in higher-income households compared to -46 in the lowest, -3 among college graduates while -51 among high-school dropouts, -15 among whites but -43 among blacks and -9 among men while -24 among women.

There also are sizable regional differences, with an index of -28 in the Northeast and -20 in the South, compared to -11 in the Midwest and -9 in the West.

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; it was 25 percent 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	27	1	26	73	50	23
Avg. since 12/85	41	4	38	59	39	19

PERSONAL FINANCES – Fifty-six percent rate their own finances as excellent or good, it was 57 percent last week. 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	56	5	51	44	33	11
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	53	43	30	12

BUYING CLIMATE – Forty-one percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need; it was 39 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	41	3	38	59	41	18
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 1,016 interviews in the month ending Dec. 1, 2002 and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points. The expectations question was conducted among 510 respondents Nov. 20-Dec. 1; that result has a 4.5-point error margin. 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 Gary Langer.

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.

12/01/02	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	-17	-19	-20	-13	-3	1	-23	-10
State of Economy	-46	-50	-46	-36	-28	-10	-50	-30
Personal Finances	12	14	10	14	24	26	6	17
Buying Climate	-18	-22	-24	-18	-6	-6	-28	-18

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

Sex:								
Men	-9	-11	-7	-6	4	9	-16	-2
Women	-24	-27	-31	-20	-10	-4	-31	-16
Age:								
18 - 34	-6	-8	-16	-1	2	10	-16	-3
35 - 44	-24	-20	-10	-28	-6	3	-28	-11
45 - 54	-14	-21	-29	-13	-10	6	-37	-11
55 - 64	-23	-26	-20	-17	4	20	-30	-10
65 +	-32	-33	-28	-19	-8	-5	-34	-19
Income:								
Under \$15K	-46	-48	-37	-38	-46	-26	-54	-44
\$15K To \$24.9K	-40	-40	-30	-32	-19	-19	-44	-30
\$25K To \$39.9K	-26	-23	-22	-31	-5	1	-34	-15
\$40K To \$49.9K	-15	-20	-13	-14	4	15	-25	-2
Over \$50K	8	3	-15	9	20	33	-15	12
Region:								
Northeast	-28	-32	-28	-22	-5	2	-32	-13
Midwest	-11	-14	-24	-10	-6	4	-27	-10
South	-20	-24	-23	-13	-3	4	-26	-10
West	-9	-6	-2	-9	1	9	-21	-6
Race:								
White	-15	-16	-15	-11	-2	7	-18	-5
Black	-43	-45	-40	-26	-23	-18	-51	-36
Politics:								
Republican	11	6	5	9	17	34	2	14
Democrat	-30	-34	-35	-28	-14	-12	-37	-23
Independent	-21	-22	-18	-12	-8	-2	-29	-12
Education:								
< High School	-51	-51	-29	-42	-25	-12	-58	-33
High Sch. Grad.	-20	-24	-25	-18	-10	-3	-29	-13
College +	-3	-5	-13	-1	7	13	-18	0
Home:								
Own	-12	-16	-19	-11	2	9	-21	-5
Rent	-29	-26	-23	-21	-16	-9	-29	-21
Marital Status:								
Single	-14	-14	-18	-2	-3	10	-19	-7
Married	-14	-17	-17	-14	2	11	-20	-5
Sep/Wid/Div	-30	-30	-28	-24	-25	-14	-42	-28
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-10	-13	-9	-4	3	12	-20	-1
Part-Time	-7	-9	-25	-21	-7	14	-25	-7
Not Employed	-30	-31	-32	-25	-12	-12	-32	-22

1. Do you think the nation's economy is getting better, getting worse or staying the same?

	Getting Better	Getting Worse	Staying the Same	No Opinion
12/1/02	21	37	42	1
11/3/02	17	38	44	0
10/6/02	14	48	37	1
9/1/02	19	36	44	1
8/4/02	21	43	34	0

7/28/02	17	44	39	1
7/15/02	20	36	43	2
7/7/02	22	37	41	0

Call for full trend.

END