

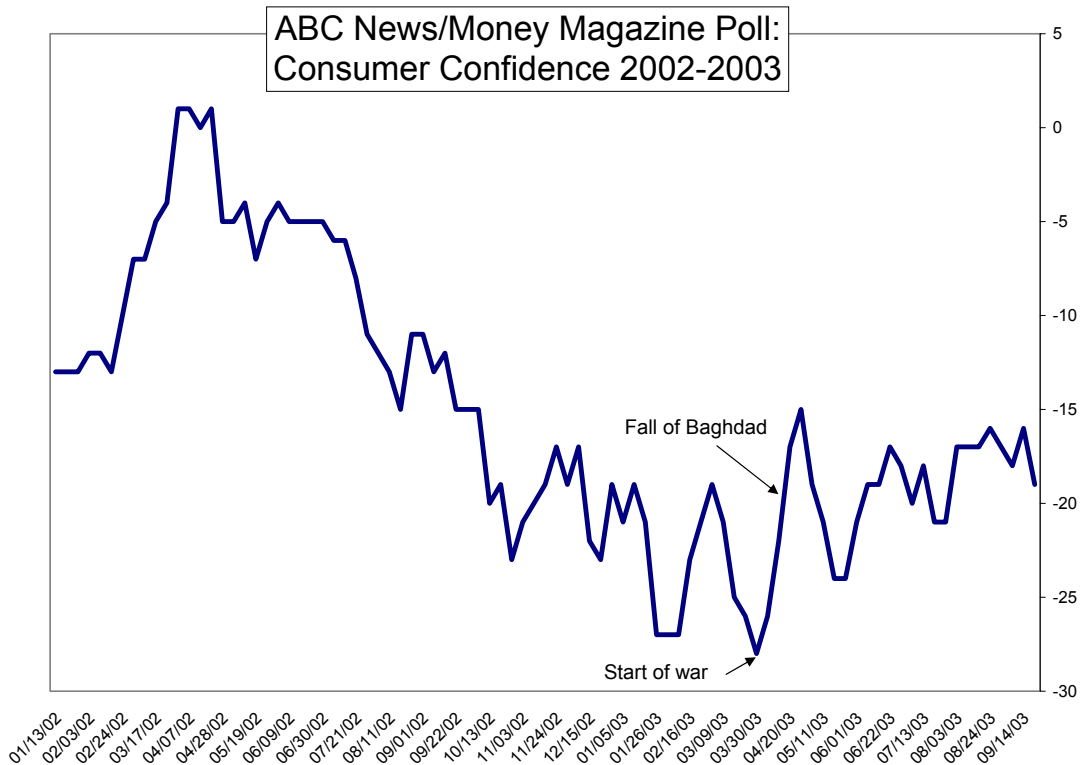
Confidence Reaches Eight-Week Low

Consumer confidence scraped against the low end of its recent trough this week, but still is holding well above its worst levels of the year, set early last spring.

The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on views of current economic conditions, is -19 on its scale of +100 to -100; it'd been between -16 and -18 the previous seven weeks. Its best this year was -15 in late April; its worst, -28 in March.

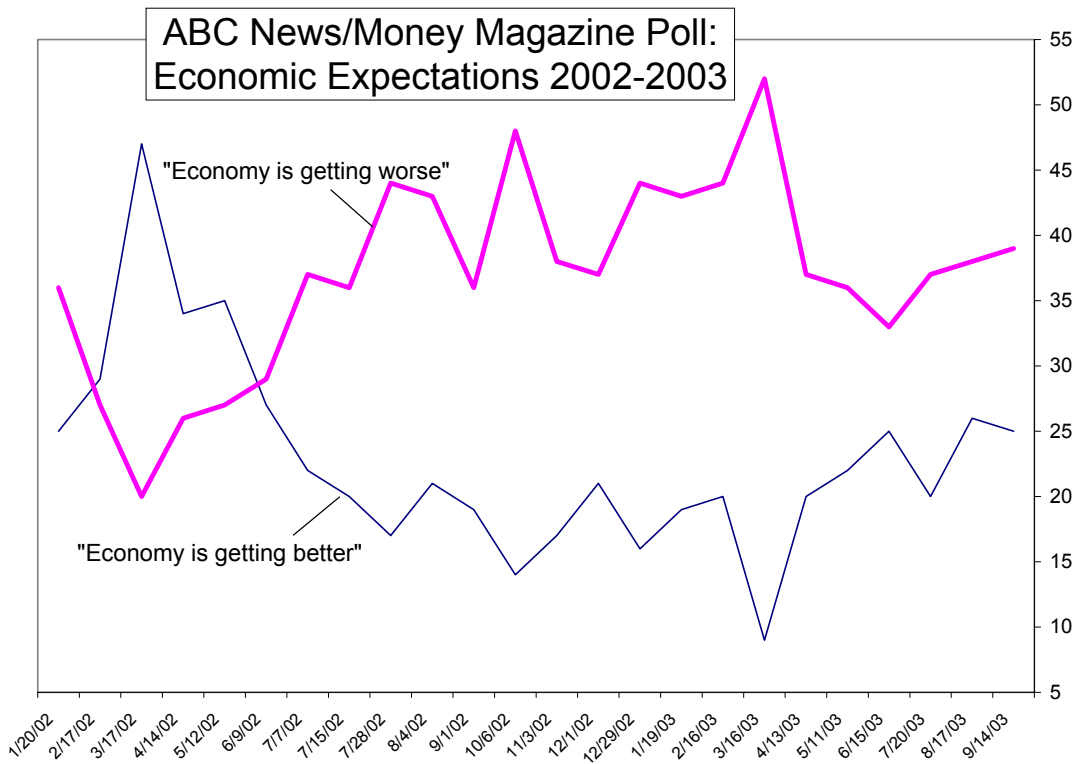
The index is composed of ratings of the national economy, personal finances and the buying climate. Just 29 percent rate the economy positively and 38 percent call it a good time to buy things. More, 54 percent, say their personal finances are OK, but that's the fewest in eight weeks.

Positive ratings of:	ABC News/Money magazine poll				
	This week	Last week	2003 high	2003 low	17-yr. avg.
National economy	29%	31	31	21	41
Buying climate	38	39	41	32	39
Personal finances	54	56	60	52	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-19	-16	-15	-28	-9



EXPECTATIONS – Expectations for the future direction of the economy, measured separately, are stable from last month. One in four Americans says the economy is getting better, but more, 39 percent, are pessimistic about where it's heading. Thirty-four percent think it's holding steady. The view, again, was decidedly more pessimistic last March.

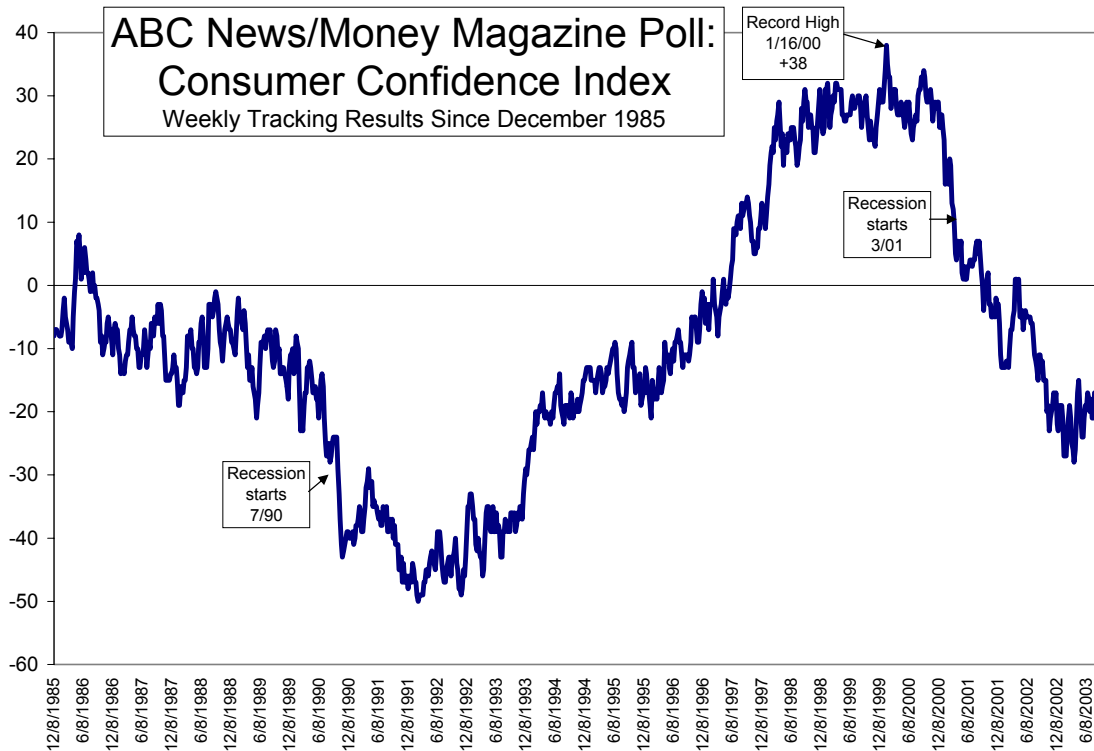
	Getting better	Getting worse	Staying the same	Difference (better-worse)
9/14/03	25	39	34	-14
8/17/03	26	38	36	-12
7/20/03	20	37	42	-17
6/15/03	25	33	43	- 8
5/11/03	22	36	41	-14
4/13/03	20	37	43	-17
3/16/03	9	52	39	-43



In a separate ABC News/Washington Post poll this week, just over half of Americans, 52 percent, said they think most people are worse off financially now than they were when George W. Bush became president, while just nine percent said most people are better off. Three in 10 said they personally were worse off, and nearly half were worried about layoffs in their household in the next year, including 27 percent “very” worried.

TREND – The ABC/Money index has averaged -21 so far this year, on track to be its worst year on average since 1993. It’s been as high as +38 in January 2000 and as low as -50 in February 1992, averaging -9 since the weekly survey began in December 1985.

Today	-19	
Last week	-16	
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 – As usual, confidence is higher among better-off Americans. The index is +8 among people in higher-income households compared with -59 in the lowest, -6 among college graduates while -37 among high-school dropouts and -15 among whites but -53 among blacks. It's -8 among men while -28 among women, and +14 among Republicans, while -22 among independents and -43 among Democrats.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Twenty-nine percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good; it was 31 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	29	1	28	71	44	27

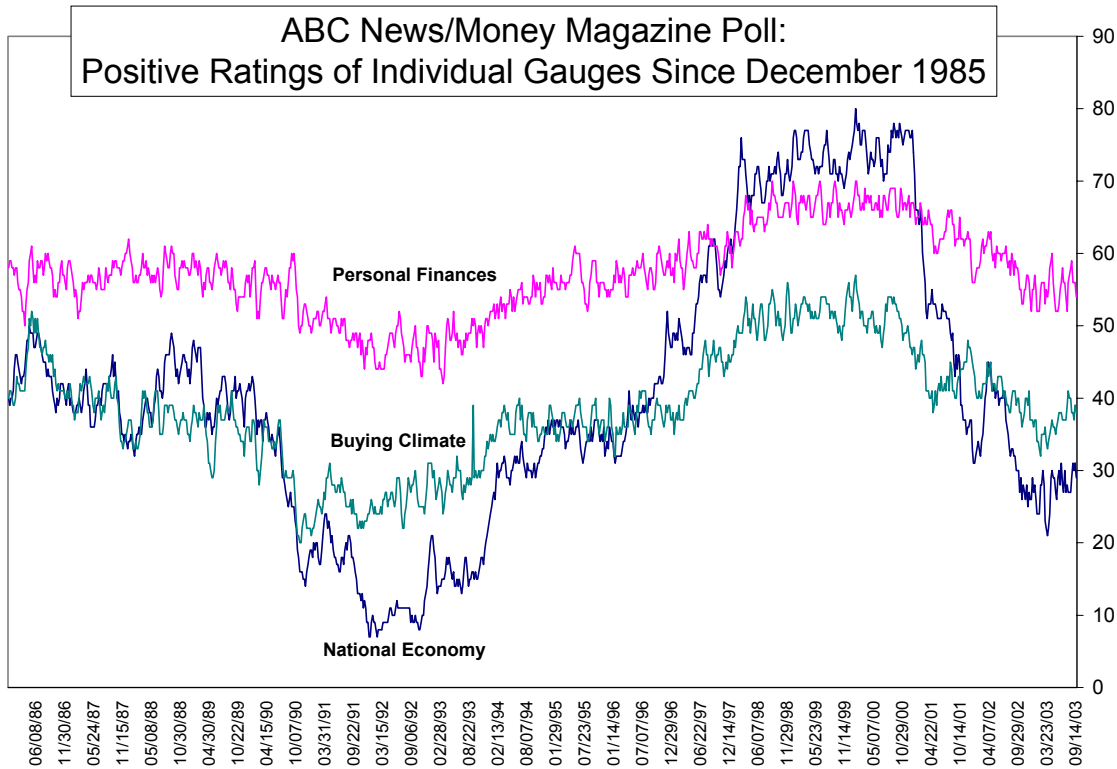
Avg. since 12/85 41 4 37 59 40 20

PERSONAL FINANCES – Fifty-four percent rate their own finances as excellent or good; it was 56 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	54	5	49	46	32	14
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; 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	38	3	35	62	44	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 1,005 interviews in the month ending Sept. 14, 2003, and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points. The expectations question was asked Sept. 3-14 among 502 respondents and has an error margin of 4.5 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>

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

09/14/03	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	-16	-16	-17	-15	-12	-28	-20
State of Economy	-42	-38	-42	-38	-40	-36	-58	-45
Personal Finances	8	12	18	12	16	20	4	11
Buying Climate	-24	-22	-24	-24	-22	-18	-36	-26

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-8	-3	-7	-8	-14	-3	-19	-12
Women	-28	-28	-23	-25	-16	-14	-38	-27
Age:								
18 - 34	-15	-11	-12	-14	-5	2	-25	-14
35 - 44	-20	-19	-15	-18	-18	-9	-31	-19
45 - 54	-18	-15	-8	-9	-24	-8	-41	-25
55 - 64	-27	-22	-18	-22	-17	-8	-39	-22
65 +	-18	-18	-27	-21	-18	-15	-36	-26
Income:								
Under \$15K	-59	-53	-45	-67	-49	-36	-67	-50
\$15K To \$24.9K	-31	-33	-46	-48	-32	-27	-57	-42
\$25K To \$39.9K	-41	-32	-31	-21	-27	-16	-49	-31
\$40K To \$49.9K	-7	4	6	-20	-18	20	-32	-15
Over \$50K	8	8	9	15	11	15	-15	4
Region:								
Northeast	-22	-18	-22	-28	-19	-11	-38	-26
Midwest	-22	-15	-16	-25	-9	-8	-34	-19
South	-15	-13	-9	-7	-16	-6	-29	-19
West	-17	-20	-20	-13	-14	4	-34	-16
Race:								
White	-15	-13	-11	-15	-9	-8	-23	-16
Black	-53	-45	-55	-35	-39	-21	-68	-44
Politics:								
Republican	14	14	19	15	7	19	-3	8
Democrat	-43	-41	-40	-31	-31	-23	-46	-37
Independent	-22	-20	-23	-24	-15	-13	-38	-25

Education:								
< High School	-37	-45	-50	-39	-58	-23	-59	-43
High Sch. Grad.	-30	-27	-23	-20	-11	-11	-40	-25
College +	-6	0	1	-7	-5	1	-18	-8
Home:								
Own	-10	-8	-8	-12	-10	-8	-24	-15
Rent	-42	-36	-35	-31	-29	-18	-43	-32
Marital Status:								
Single	-24	-19	-23	-18	-3	1	-33	-19
Married	-9	-10	-6	-9	-15	-6	-27	-15
Sep/Wid/Div	-40	-35	-42	-39	-27	-21	-52	-37
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-8	-6	-5	-6	-9	-5	-20	-12
Part-Time	-11	-17	-17	-29	13	3	-40	-22
Not Employed	-34	-28	-29	-24	-24	-21	-40	-30

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
9/14/03	25	39	34	2
8/17/03	26	38	36	1
7/20/03	20	37	42	1
6/15/03	25	33	43	0
5/11/03	22	36	41	0
4/13/03	20	37	43	0
3/16/03	9	52	39	0
2/16/03	20	44	36	0
1/19/03	19	43	37	0
12/29/02	16	44	39	1
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

Call for full trend.

END