

Religion Is More Valued in the U.S. than in Most of the 23 Countries Surveyed by Ipsos

- **Globally, people are divided on religion's impact on the world and on its importance to them and to society, but most say they are tolerant of people with beliefs different from theirs.**
- **Americans tend to have more positive views of religion and are more likely to consider that it defines who they are.**

Half (49%) of all adults across 23 countries agree that religion does more harm than good in the world; the other half (51%) disagree. However, views vary greatly from one country to the next. In the United States, only 39% agree and 61% disagree. The survey was conducted by Ipsos Global @dvisor among 17,401 adults aged under 65 interviewed online.

Countries which are most likely to believe that religion does more harm than good tend to be in Western Europe and also include Australia, Canada and India. Chief among them is Belgium where two in three (68%) agree, followed by Germany, Spain and Australia (each with 63%). Japan is least likely to think that religion has done more harm than good – one in four (26%) agree, preceded by Russia and South Korea (both with 36%).

Two in five people (38%) globally and half (49%) in the U.S. consider that religion defines them as a person. Religion is most seen as core to one's identity in India (70%) and South Africa (66%), least so in Japan (14%), Sweden (17%), France and Great Britain (23% each).

Globally, people are split down the middle when it comes to religion's importance to their country's moral life. Half (50% on average across the 23 countries) agree that religious practices are an important factor in the moral life of their country's citizens while half (50%) disagree. In the U.S., twice as many agree (66%) than disagree (34%). Agreement is highest in India and South Africa (78% and 76% respectively) and lowest in Japan (15%), Sweden (31%), Belgium (33%) and France (34%).

Only one third (32%) of people surveyed across the 23 countries, but nearly half (45%) in the U.S. think that religious people make better citizens. This view is most common in India (62%), South Africa and Brazil (both 54%), and least so in Japan (11%), Sweden (13%) and France (16%).

Despite a global split on the role of religion, a majority of people in each one of the 23 countries say they are "completely comfortable" being around people who have different religious beliefs than their own. South Africa (90%), Serbia (89%) and the U.S. (88%) are the countries with the highest proportions saying they are comfortable being around people with different religions, vastly exceeding the global average of 74%. Countries with lowest level of agreement are Japan (58%), Belgium (62%), France (63%) and Germany (64%).

Only one in six (16%) people worldwide agree that they lose respect for other people when they find out that they are not religious. India is the only country surveyed where close to a majority (46%) say so. Elsewhere, no more than one quarter agree. Intolerance toward non-religious people is more

common in Turkey (24%), South Africa (21%), Brazil (20%) and the U.S. (19%), and least so in Hungary (6%), Sweden (7%), Serbia (9%) and France (9%).

Commenting on the findings, Nicolas Boyon, Senior Vice President at Ipsos Public Affairs said: “Despite a decline in religious practice and affiliation in the U.S., religion still serves as a moral compass and a marker of identity a lot more than it does in any other Western country.”

Notes to editors

- The data will be available at www.ipsos.com/en-us on October 11, 2017 8pm ET
- For media enquiries and requests for interviews, please contact Erin Morris at (202) 394-0923
- In total 17,401 interviews were conducted between June 24 and July 8, 2017 among adults aged 18-64 in the US and Canada, and adults aged 16-64 in all other countries.
- The survey was conducted in 23 countries around the world via the Ipsos Online Panel system. The countries reporting herein are: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, U.S., Serbia and Peru.
- Between 500 and 1000+ individuals participated on a country by country basis via the Ipsos Online Panel. The sample was 1000+ in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Spain and the U.S. In all other countries, the sample was 500+. The precision of Ipsos online polls is calculated using a credibility interval with a poll of 1,000 accurate to +/- 3.5 percentage points and of 500 accurate to +/- 5.0 percentage points. For more information on Ipsos’ use of credibility intervals, please visit the Ipsos website.
- In countries where internet penetration is approximately 60% or higher, the data output generally reflects the overall population. Of the 23 countries surveyed online, 17 yielded results that are balanced to reflect the general population: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Poland, South Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Great Britain and the U.S. The five remaining countries surveyed – Brazil (58%), India (19%), Mexico (44%), South Africa (49%) and Turkey (51%) - have lower levels of internet connectivity and reflect online populations that tend to be more urban and have higher education/income than the general population.
- Where results do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, multiple responses or the exclusion of don't knows or not stated responses.
- Data is weighted to match the profile of the population.