



Pessimism Grows in America While It Recedes Globally

The world worries most about unemployment, corruption, and poverty; Americans are most concerned about healthcare, terrorism and crime

Washington DC, November 29, 2017 — Among nearly 19,000 adults surveyed by Ipsos in 26 nations, 58% say their country is on the wrong track. However, this is the lowest percentage in seven years, down five points from 12 months ago. Pessimism is slightly more prevalent in the United States as 62% of Americans think “things in this country are off on the wrong track”, a higher proportion than at any time since the inauguration of President Donald Trump.

The top global concerns are unemployment (cited by 35% across the 26 countries surveyed as one of the three most worrying issues), financial and political corruption (33%) and poverty and social inequality (32%). In contrast, the top concerns in the U.S. are healthcare (cited by 39% of Americans surveyed), terrorism (34%) and crime and violence (33%).

These are some of the findings of the November 2017 wave of *What Worries the World*, a survey conducted every month since 2010 among adults aged under 65, in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Britain, Germany, Hungary, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Peru, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the United States with Ipsos’s Global Advisor platform.

The mood ranges from widespread optimism in China, Saudi Arabia, and India to sweeping gloom in South Africa, Brazil, and Mexico

- China, India, and Saudi Arabia continue showing the highest levels of optimism reported by their citizens with respectively 93%, 72% and 65% agreeing things in their country are going in the right direction. Only 7%, 28%, and 35%, respectively, agree their country is off on the wrong track. (The survey forces respondents to choose one of the two options.)
- At the other end of the spectrum, South Africans—for the third consecutive month—are the least enthusiastic of all about the path taken by their country with only 9% saying their country is going in on the right track. They are followed by the people of Brazil (11%), and of Mexico (12%).
- In the United States, 38% think the country is going in the right direction—down 5 points since October and down 11 points since March.

The three major worries for global citizens all remain in line with the previous month:

- Unemployment is still the #1 global worry (35%), but it has been declining steadily over the past five years. Unemployment is selected as a key worry by three out of five adults surveyed in Italy, Spain, South Korean and Serbia. It ranks as the #1 worry in Serbia, Saudi Arabia, France, India, and Australia. However, it is a major concern for only 13% of Americans. Great Britain and Germany show similarly low levels of concern for unemployment.
- Financial and political corruption is the second most prevalent concern globally (33%), but the most prevalent one in South Africa (71%), Brazil (55%), and Israel (43%). It is cited by over 45% of all those surveyed in five other countries. While it is

Address: 2020 K Street NW, Suite 410
Washington, DC 20006
Tel: +1 202 463-7300

Contact: **Chris Jackson**
Vice President, U.S., Ipsos Public Affairs
Email: chris.jackson@ipsos.com
Tel: +1 202 420-2025



mentioned by only 25% in the U.S., that is a higher proportion than in most economically advanced democracies including Sweden (6%), Germany (7%), and Great Britain (10%).

- Poverty/social inequality is the third most common worry globally (32%), with particularly high mentions in Hungary (57%) and Russia (55%). It is also the #1 worry in Germany (43%) and Japan (37%)—two large affluent countries that are more equalitarian than most. Among all countries surveyed, the U.S. shows the lowest level of concern for it (15%).

What worries Americans

- Healthcare is the leading national issue in the American public’s mind with 39% citing it as one of the country’s most worrying problems. The U.S. is one of only five countries where healthcare is the #1 concern, the other being Hungary (69%), Poland (53%), Great Britain (40%), and Canada (35%). Concern about healthcare in the U.S. has increased by two percentage points since October 2017, but it is still below the March 2011 peak of 44%. Countries least worried by healthcare relative to other issues are Turkey (2%), South Korea (6%), and Mexico (7%).
- Terrorism is the second highest worry in the U.S. (34%) albeit at a lower level than in December 2015 (42%) following the attacks in Paris and San Bernardino. Terrorism is the #1 issue in Turkey (71%) and Belgium (36%) and cited by 40% or more in France, Israel and Germany. In contrast, it barely registers in South Africa and Argentina (1% each), Brazil and Hungary (2% each), and Mexico (3%).
- The third most worrying topic for Americans is crime and violence (33%) although to a lesser extent than in eight other countries led by South Africa (70%), Peru (67%), and Mexico (61%). Countries where crime and violence is least prevalent as a major concern are Hungary, Saudi Arabia, and Spain (10% each).

	Wrong Track	Right Direction		Wrong Track	Right Direction
World	58%	42%			
China	7%	93%	Germany	60%	40%
Saudi Arabia	28%	72%	Poland	60%	40%
India	35%	65%	United States	62%	38%
Argentina	38%	62%	Turkey	65%	35%
Russia	38%	62%	Great Britain	68%	32%
South Korea	38%	62%	France	69%	31%
Canada	43%	57%	Spain	69%	31%
Serbia	48%	52%	Peru	73%	27%
Australia	56%	44%	Hungary	74%	26%
Israel	57%	43%	Italy	84%	16%
Belgium	58%	42%	Mexico	88%	12%
Japan	58%	42%	Brazil	89%	11%
Sweden	59%	41%	South Africa	91%	9%

Top 5 global issues

- 1) Unemployment (**35%**)
- 2) Financial/Political Corruption (**33%**)
- 3) Poverty/Social Inequality (**32%**)
- 4) Crime & Violence (**31%**)
- 5) Healthcare (**24%**)

Top 5 issues in the U.S.

- 1) Healthcare (**39%**)
- 2) Terrorism (**34%**)
- 3) Crime & violence (**33%**)
- 4) Financial / Political corruption (**25%**)
- 5) Moral decline (**23%**)

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Vice President, U.S., Ipsos Public Affairs
Email: chris.jackson@ipsos.com
Tel: +1 202 420-2025



About the Study

The survey was conducted in 26 countries around the world via the Ipsos Online Panel system. The countries included are Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Great Britain, Germany, Hungary, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United States of America. 18,940 interviews were conducted between October 20 - November 3, 2017 among adults aged 18-64 in the US, Israel and Canada, and adults aged 16-64 in all other countries. Data are weighted to match the profile of the population.

In 16 of the 26 countries surveyed internet penetration is sufficiently high to think of the samples as representative of the wider population within the age ranges covered: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Poland, Serbia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Great Britain and United States. Brazil, China, India, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Turkey have lower levels of internet penetration and so these samples should instead be considered to represent a more affluent, connected population. These are still a vital social group to understand in these countries, representing an important and emerging middle class.

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For more information on this news release, please contact:

Nicolas Boyon
Senior Vice President, U.S.
Ipsos Public Affairs
+1 646 309 4879
nicolas.boyon@ipsos.com

Chris Jackson
Vice President, U.S.
Ipsos Public Affairs
+1 202 420 2025
chris.jackson@ipsos.com

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Tel: +1 202 420-2025



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www.ipsos.com

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