

## PRESS RELEASE

“What Worries the World?”: COVID-19 is the biggest concern for the fifth successive month, with worries on the increase in a number of countries.

### These latest findings see COVID-19 mentioned as the single top concern in 14 of the 27 surveyed nations.

**London, 27/08/2020** – This marks a rise from the July survey, which saw COVID-19 listed as the most important concern in 11 out of 27 countries. Current levels of concern, while high, remain well down on a few months ago. Back in April, when coronavirus was first added to the survey questionnaire, 25 of the 27 surveyed markets had cited the pandemic as the greatest worry.

*What Worries the World* is a monthly online survey of adults aged under 75 in 27 countries comprising Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, France, Britain, Germany, Hungary, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Poland, Peru, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United States.

On average, 46% of respondents around the world now say COVID-19 is the top issue facing their country. This is a small increase from July, when 43% cited the pandemic as the greatest concern albeit rather lower than the high of 63% registered when coronavirus was first added to the survey in April.

The four major worries globally are currently: COVID-19, Unemployment, Poverty and Social Inequality Financial/Political Corruption and Crime and Violence. This is the same sequence as July.

- 1) **COVID-19 (46%)**: Included for the first time in April, COVID-19 is still the highest scoring global issue this month with a slight rise on July's levels. Japan (**70%**) and Australia (**67%**) are now the nations most worried about this issue with **61%** citing it among their main concerns from the 18 issues presented to them. Next are Malaysia (**61%**) Spain (**60%**) and Great Britain (**58%**). The pandemic is the *single* greatest concern for **14 of the 27 surveyed nations** and is a joint top worry for **Israel** alongside Healthcare. **The twelve “outliers”** are: **Argentina** (Unemployment), **Chile** (Poverty and Social Inequality), **Hungary** (Healthcare), **Italy** (Unemployment), **Mexico** (Crime and Violence), **Poland** (Healthcare) **Russia** (Poverty and Social Inequality), **South Africa** (Unemployment), **South Korea** (Unemployment), **Spain** (Unemployment), **Sweden** (Crime and Violence) and **Turkey** (Unemployment).
- 2) **Unemployment (40%)**: Concern about unemployment remains the same as last month. The highest levels of concern are seen in South Africa (**63%**) closely followed by Italy (**62%**) and Spain (**61%**).
- 3) **Poverty and Social Inequality (30%)**: The rise in concern about poverty and social inequality has eased, with mentions down very slightly (by **2 percentage points**) this month. Once more Russia (**scoring 57%**) has the highest levels of concern about this issue, followed by Chile (**54%**).
- 4) **Financial/Political Corruption (27%)**: Global worries about financial and political corruption are consistent with last month. South Africa (**62%**) is now the most concerned nation about this issue, ahead of Hungary (**53%**) and Russia (**52%**).



## PRESS RELEASE

**The study finds that most people across the 27 countries surveyed say that their country is on the wrong track.** Globally, 39% think their country is heading in the right direction while 61% say things are on the wrong track. This score is unchanged from last month; and rather lower than the score 3 months ago; back in May, 45% gave a positive score.

In the United States, just 26% are confident about the trajectory their country is heading. This score marks a 9-percentage point drop from two months ago and an 18-percentage fall since January, when the US's score placed it among the top 5 most positive nations in our 27-market survey.

Looking at how many say their nation is on the wrong track (**61% on average**), we find South Africa (**84%**), Belgium (**82%**), Chile (**76%**) and the US (**74%**) most worried about their country's direction of travel.

On the other hand, **ten nations** have seen an increase in national optimism from last month with **thirteen nations** showing a drop. The biggest changes are Russia (**+ 10 percentage points**) and Malaysia (**- 10 percentage points**).

### Technical Note

The survey was conducted in **27 countries** around the world via the Ipsos Online Panel system. The 27 countries included are Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, France, Great Britain, Germany, Hungary, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United States of America.

19,016 interviews were conducted between **July 24th, 2020 – August 7th, 2020** among adults aged 18-74 in the US, South Africa, Turkey, Israel and Canada and age 16-74 in all other countries. Data are weighted to match the profile of the population.

In 17 of the 27 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, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Great Britain and United States. The remaining 11 countries surveyed: Brazil, Chile, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Russia, Peru, 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.





## PRESS RELEASE

### About Ipsos

Ipsos is the world's third largest market research company, present in 90 markets and employing more than 18,000 people.

Our passionately curious research professionals, analysts and scientists have built unique multi-specialist capabilities that provide true understanding and powerful insights into the actions, opinions and motivations of citizens, consumers, patients, customers or employees. We serve more than 5000 clients across the world with 75 business solutions.

Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos is listed on the Euronext Paris since July 1st, 1999. The company is part of the SBF 120 and the Mid-60 index and is eligible for the Deferred Settlement Service (SRD).

ISIN code FR0000073298, Reuters ISOS.PA, Bloomberg IPS:FP [www.ipsos.com](http://www.ipsos.com)

