



## PRESS RELEASE

“What Worries the World?”: COVID-19 is the biggest concern for the eighth successive month.

**November’s findings show COVID-19 is the top concern in 13 of the 27 surveyed nations, the same figure as last month.**

**London, 26 /11/2020** - On average, 47% of people around the world now say COVID-19 is the top issue facing their country. This is a slight increase on October's figures, which saw 44% placing the pandemic on their list of main concerns.

*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.

The five major worries globally are currently the same sequence as last month:

- 1) COVID-19 (47%):** Included for the first time in April, COVID-19 is still the highest scoring global issue this month. Malaysia (**where it is mentioned by 76%**), Great Britain (**64%**), Spain (**64%**) and Canada (**57%**) are currently the nations most worried about this issue. The pandemic is the *single* greatest concern for **13 of the 27 surveyed nations** and additionally is the joint top worry for Israel (alongside Unemployment).

The thirteen countries which do not mention coronavirus as their number one issue are: Argentina (Crime/violence and Inflation), Australia (Unemployment), Brazil (Healthcare), Chile (Poverty/social inequality), Hungary (Healthcare), Italy (Unemployment), Mexico (Crime/violence), Peru (Crime/violence), Russia (Poverty/social inequality), South Africa (Financial/political corruption), South Korea (Unemployment), Sweden Crime/violence and Turkey (Unemployment).

Despite the resurgence of the virus in many parts of the world, current levels of concern are still some way below the peak of 63% which we recorded when coronavirus was first introduced to the list of topics in April. That survey saw COVID-19 stand out as the single most important concern in 25 out of 27 countries.

- 2) Unemployment (38%):** Overall, the levels of concern about unemployment remain the same as last month. The highest levels of worry are seen in South Africa (**65%**) followed by Spain (**60%**) and Italy (**58%**).
- 3) Poverty/social inequality (29%):** Concern about Poverty/Social inequality is in line with October; once again Russia (**scoring 56%**) has the highest levels of concern about this issue, followed by Chile (**48%**) and Hungary (**41%**).



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- 4) **Financial/political corruption (27%)**: The proportion citing this issue is in line with last month. South Africa (**66%**) is again the nation most concerned about this issue, ahead of Russia (**48%**) and Malaysia and Peru (both **45%**).
- 5) **Crime and violence (26%)**: The figure recorded for this worry is equal to last month. South Africa (**59%**) is the nation most troubled about this issue, ahead of Sweden (**57%**).

### The study finds that most people across the 27 countries surveyed say that their country is on the wrong track.

Globally, 36% think their country is heading in the right direction while 64% say things are on the wrong track. Generally speaking, people are less positive about the immediate outlook than a few months ago. The recent peak was in May when we recorded 45% saying their nation was heading in the right track. That said, there are noticeable disparities by country when we look at how national sentiment has changed over the past six months.

This month, the biggest fall recorded when it comes to positive direction of travel is in Poland, where there has been a 13-point drop from last month to 13% today. Looking at how many say their nation is on the wrong track (**64% on average**), we find that Poland (**87%**), South Africa and France (**both 80%**) and Belgium (**79%**) are most worried about their country's direction of travel.

At the other end of the spectrum, **ten nations** have seen an increase in national optimism from last month with **seventeen countries** showing a drop. The biggest falls since last time are observed in Poland (currently registering **13% saying the country is on the right track**) (-13pts) and, at the other end of the scale, Saudi Arabia, currently on **82%** (which is -6pts on the last measure). Meanwhile, most marked increases come from South Korea (now on **47% "right track"**; +5pts) and Chile (**36%** are currently optimistic, also +5pts).

### 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.

20,006 interviews were conducted between **October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020 and November 6th 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 16 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.





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Full results available from [www.ipsos.com/en/what-worries-world-november-2020](http://www.ipsos.com/en/what-worries-world-november-2020).

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