



PRESS RELEASE

Global survey finds widespread broken-system sentiment accompanied with populist, anti-elites, and nativist views

“System Is Broken” Index highly correlated with outcomes-based metrics indicative of social progress

New York, NY, July 28, 2021 — Majorities of citizens in most of 25 countries surveyed by Ipsos express feelings of alienation when thinking about their country. The survey of more than 19,000 adults finds perceptions of a broken political and economic system prevailing in most countries, often accompanied by populist and anti-elite sentiment and nativist views.

Broken-System Sentiment

On average, 56% agree their country’s society is broken and 57% agree that their country is in decline. To fully grasp the prevalence of social and political disaffection, Ipsos designed the “System Is Broken” Index, based on the level of agreement with five statements:

- “The economy is rigged to favor the rich and powerful” (averaging 71% agree in the 25 countries surveyed)
- “Traditional parties and politicians don’t care about people ‘like me’” (68%),
- “Local experts don’t understand the lives of people ‘like me’” (65%),
- The country “needs a strong leader to take the country back from the rich and powerful” (64%), and
- “To fix” the country, “we need a strong leader willing to break rules” (44%).

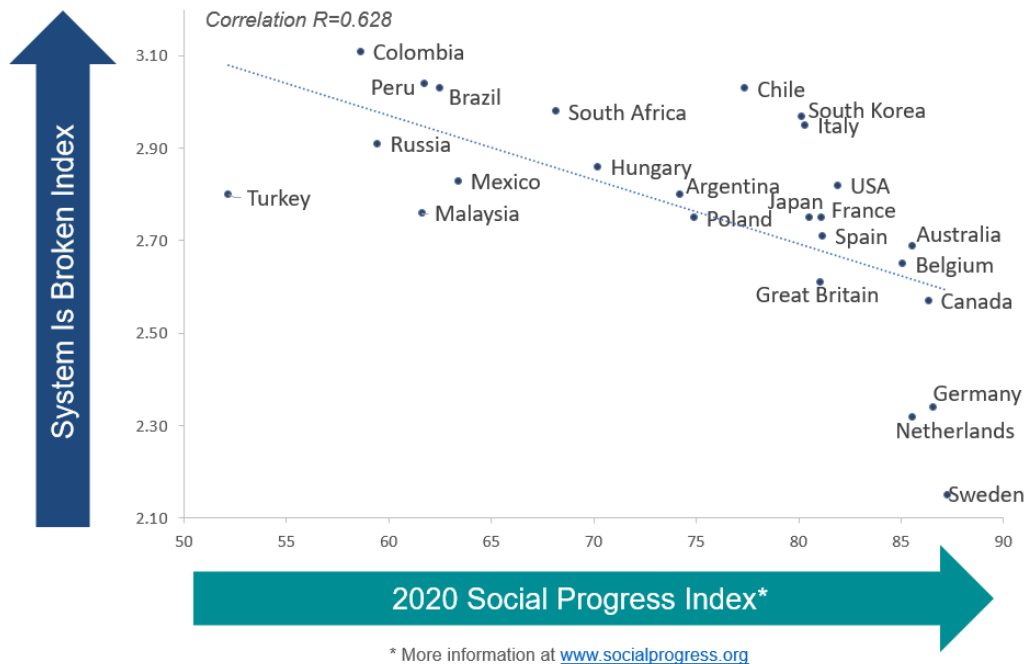
The four countries with the highest levels of alienation are all in Latin America – Colombia, Peru, Brazil, and Chile.

Since 2016, broken-system sentiment has gained ground most in Japan, South Africa, Sweden, the United States, and Argentina; it has receded most in Spain, Mexico, and France. Compared to 2019, months before the pandemic, it has increased most in Malaysia and decreased most in Great Britain.

Broken-system sentiment is highly linked to populist sentiment, resentment of elites, and natives-first/anti-immigration views. Ipsos also found that its System Is Broken Index is highly correlated with both the Social Progress Imperative’s *Social Progress Index*, an outcomes-based indicator of how well citizens’ social and environmental needs are met, and Transparency International’s *Corruption Perceptions Index*. Countries with higher levels of wellness, equality, inclusion, sustainability, personal freedom, and safety and those with lower levels of perceive public-sector corruption tend to show lower levels of broken-system sentiment.

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“System Is Broken” Index vs. Social Progress Index



Populism and Resentment of Elites

On average across the 25 countries:

- 81% agree that politicians always end up finding ways to protect their privileges,
- 72% say the political and economic elite don't care about hard-working people,
- 70% think the main divide in our society is between ordinary citizens and the political and economic elite,
- 62% agree politicians should be able to say what's on their minds regardless of what anyone else thinks, and
- 60% say the most important political issues should be decided directly by the people through referendums, not by the elected officials.

Populist/anti-elite sentiment is strongly correlated with broken-system sentiment; it is most prevalent in Chile, Hungary, Colombia, Peru, and Russia.

The “elite” is widely perceived across the world as a closely connected group making decisions based on their interest and ignoring the needs of others.



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On average, 15% of those surveyed identify in any way with their country's elite; Americans and Japanese are those least likely to do so.

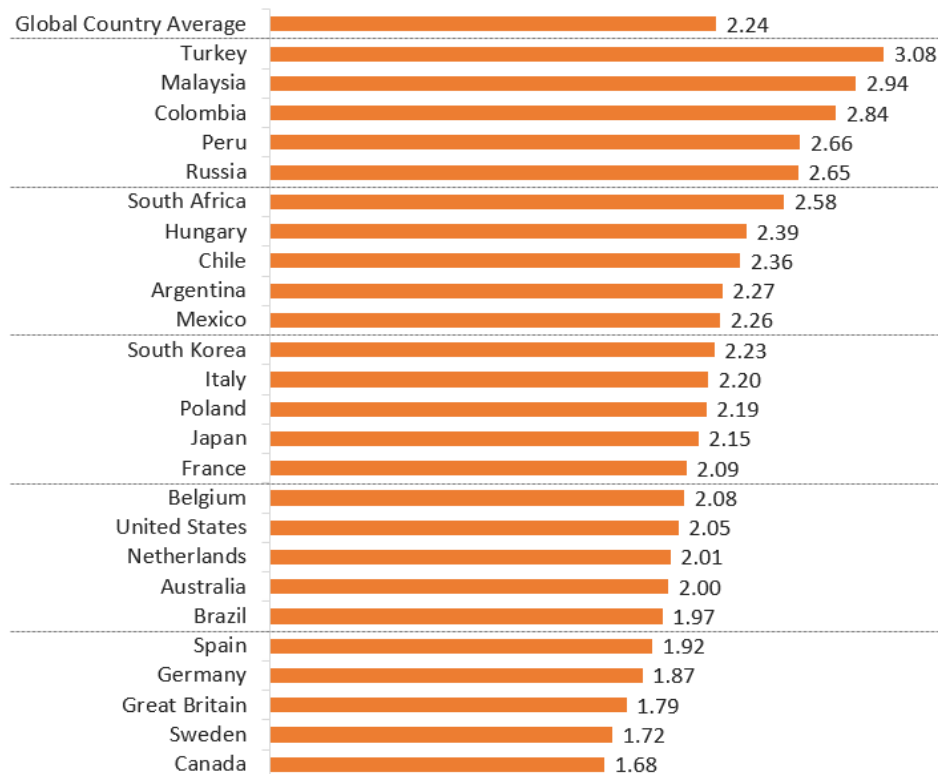
Nativist Views

The "average global citizen" is ambivalent about immigration, leaning toward a natives-first view:

- 57% say employers should favor natives over immigrants when jobs are scarce,
- 38% agree their country would be stronger if it stopped immigration (while 33% disagree), and
- 38% say immigrants take jobs away from their country's "real" nationals (while 35% disagree)

Ipsos designed a Nativism Index based on the level of agreement with these three statements. It shows nativist sentiment is most prevalent in Turkey, Malaysia, Colombia, Peru, and Russia and least so in Canada, Sweden, Great Britain, Germany, and Spain.

Nativism Index





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The Nativism Index is strongly correlated with the “System Is Broken” Index, indicating how much social and political alienation and anti-immigration views tend to go hand-in-hand.

Since 2016, nativist sentiment has grown most in Peru, Sweden (where it was marginal), Japan, South Africa, South Korea, and Turkey. Meanwhile, it has receded most in the U.S., Canada, Spain, Italy, and Hungary.

About the Study

These are the results of a 25-country survey conducted by Ipsos on its Global Advisor online platform. Ipsos interviewed a total of 19,017 adults aged 18-74 in the United States, Canada, Malaysia, South Africa, and Turkey, and 16-74 in 20 other markets between March 26 and April 9, 2021.

The sample consists of approximately 1,000 individuals in each of Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Spain, and the U.S., and 500 individuals in each of Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Hungary, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, and Turkey.

The samples in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, and the U.S. can be taken as representative of these countries’ general adult population under the age of 75.

The samples in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Russia, South Africa, and Turkey are more urban, more educated, and/or more affluent than the general population. The survey results for these countries should be viewed as reflecting the views of the more “connected” segment of their population.

The data is weighted so that each country’s sample composition best reflects the demographic profile of the adult population according to the most recent census data.

Where results do not sum to 100 or the ‘difference’ appears to be +/-1 more/less than the actual, this may be due to rounding, multiple responses, or the exclusion of don't know or not stated responses.

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 +/- 4.8 percentage points. For more information on Ipsos’s use of credibility intervals, please visit the Ipsos website.

The publication of these findings abides by local rules and regulations.



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About Ipsos

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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).

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