


# MENTAL HEALTH AND THE PANDEMIC

A large crowd of diverse people, including men, women, and children of various ages and ethnicities, are arranged to form the shape of a human brain. The people are wearing colorful clothing and some are wearing face masks, suggesting a pandemic context. The brain shape is positioned on the right side of the slide, with the title text overlaid on its upper portion.

## A Look at the State of Mental Health Among Canadians

September 2021

# WHAT THIS IS AND KEY OBSERVATIONS

## What this is

- A myriad of studies noted that mental health was becoming an increasing challenge before the pandemic hit.
- And there has been lots of talk about the impact of the pandemic on mental health as the situation has evolved.
- Ipsos has been tracking the mental health of Canadians since 2015.
- So, leading into World Mental Health Day this year (Oct 10 2021) we updated our tracking as part of a broader 30 country study:
  - N=1000 Canada, online, field Sept 1-7 2021 (n=1000, credibility interval +/-3.5%, 95% of the time) (N=21,000+ globally).

## Key Observations

- Fully half of Canadians are at “high risk” on their mental health. This is up a full 14 percentage points from 5 years ago (2016). High risk means that they say they have experienced several things from among:
  - Felt stressed to the point where it had an impact on how you live your daily life
  - Felt stressed to the point where you felt like you could not cope with things

- Felt depressed to the point that you felt sad or hopeless almost every day for a couple of weeks or more
  - Seriously considered suicide or self-hurt
- Importantly all demographics and regions are experiencing mental health challenges. But those most challenged currently are women, those with lower income, Millennials and especially Gen Z and residents in Alberta and Ontario.

While all countries are faced with significant challenges with respect to mental health among their citizens:

- Turkey and Brazil top the list of “high risk,”
- France and the Netherlands are the lowest.

Canada ranks in the middle of countries, notably above (worse than) the US.

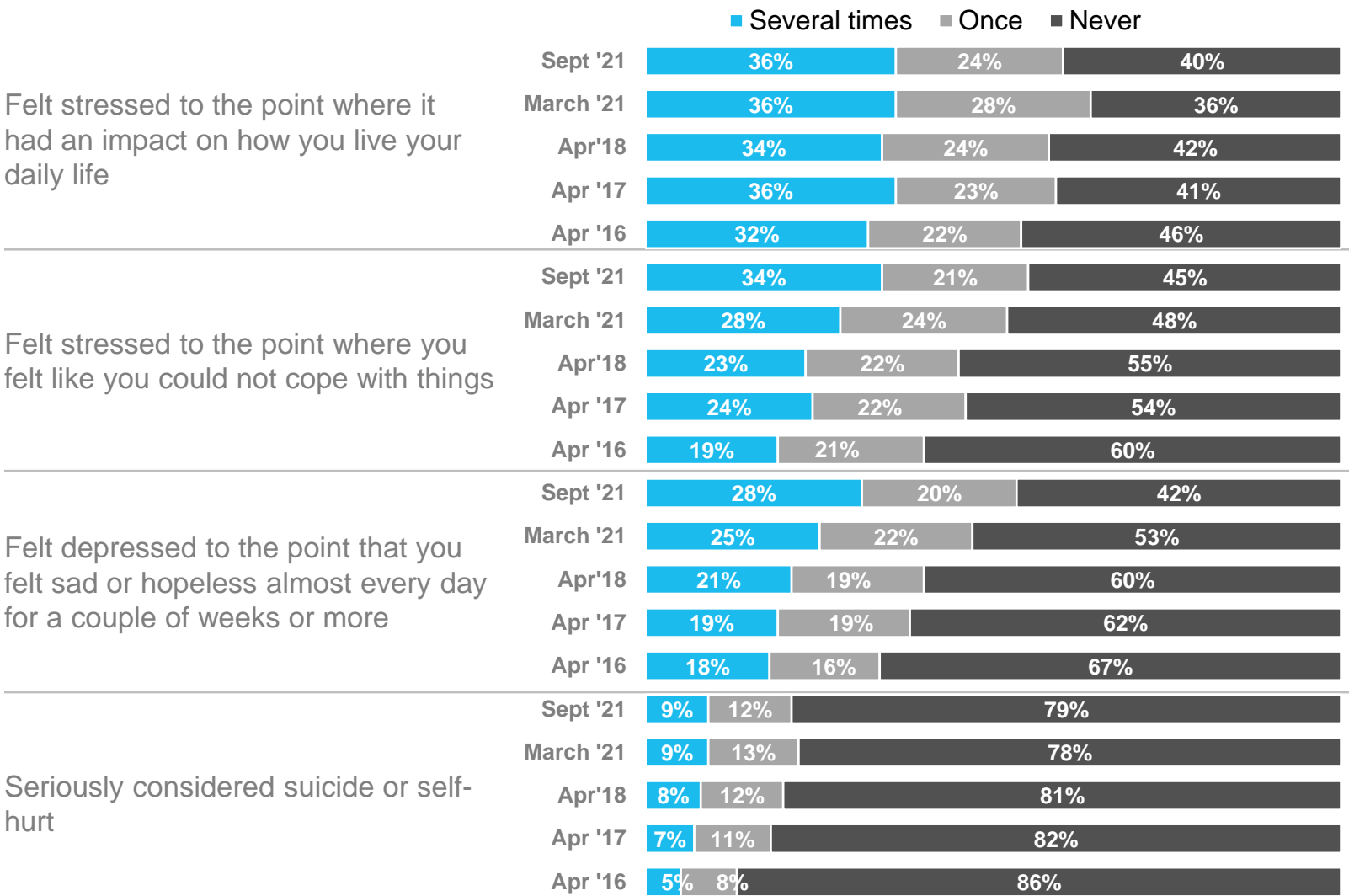
- The bottom-line is that while mental health has become more prevalent in the public mindset over the past several years, it will likely only increase in importance since its challenges are a reality for so many Canadians. Governments and companies will no doubt be under increasing pressure from the public to act further in the months and years ahead.

# EXPERIENCING MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Canadians have experienced significant levels of stress over the past year.

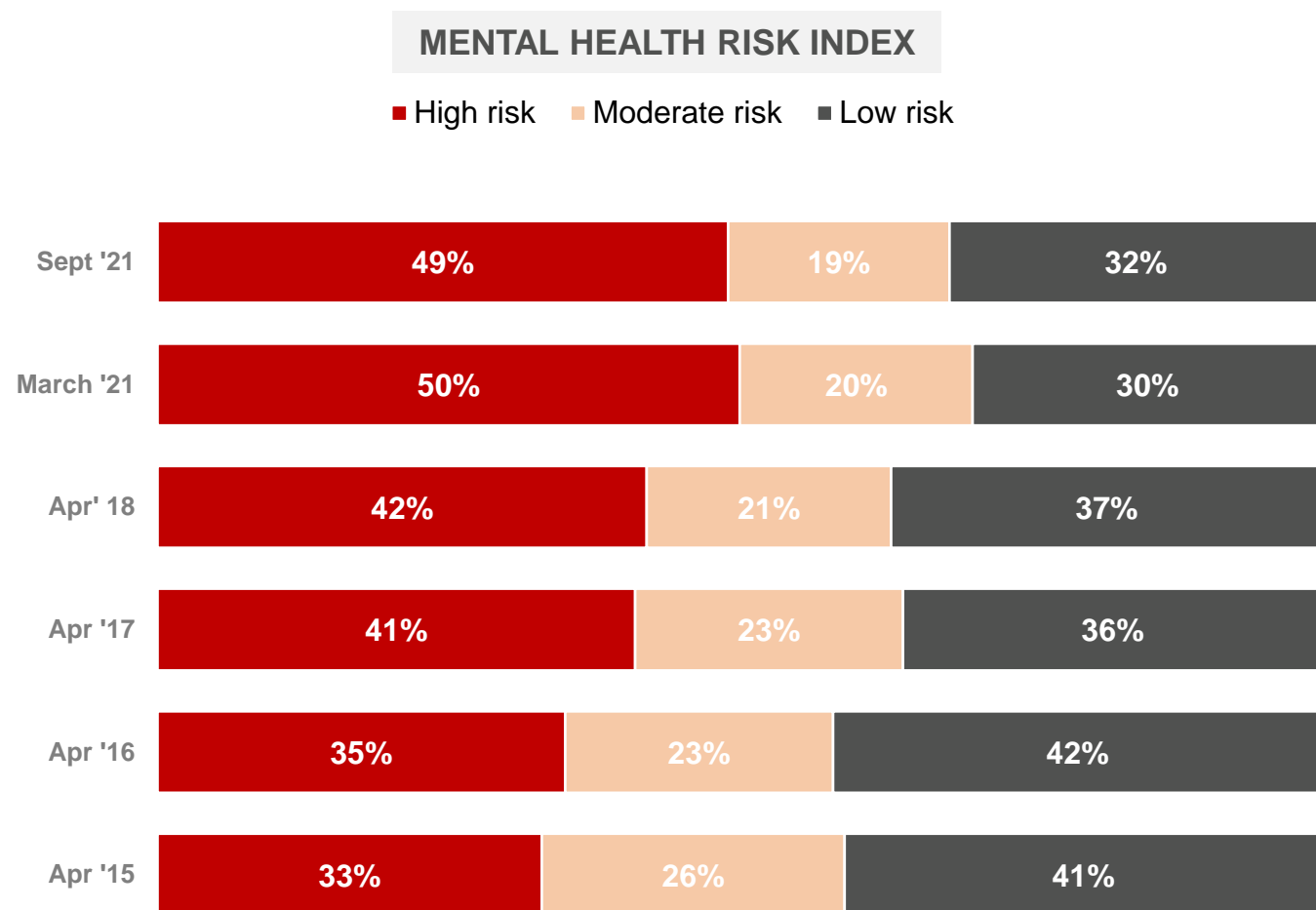
There has also been a noteworthy level of depression and even suicide/self-hurt consideration.

## MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES EXPERIENCED PAST YEAR



# EXPERIENCING MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Combining the specific mental health elements into an index shows that fully half of Canadians can be classified as “high risk” on their mental health. This is up a full 14 percentage points from 5 years ago (Apr '16).



“High risk” = experienced at least 3 of the 4 items at least once in the past year, or experienced at least 1 of the items several times and 1 other at least once

# MENTAL HEALTH RISK BY DEMOGRAPHICS

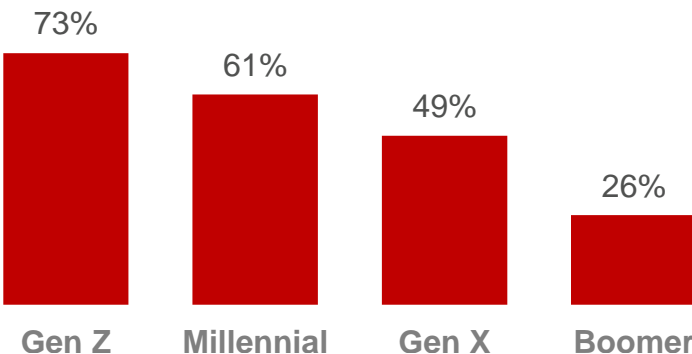
Importantly all demographics and regions are experiencing mental health challenges. But those most challenged currently are women, those with lower income, Millennials and especially Gen Z and residents in Alberta and Ontario.

HIGH RISK MENTAL HEALTH BY SEX

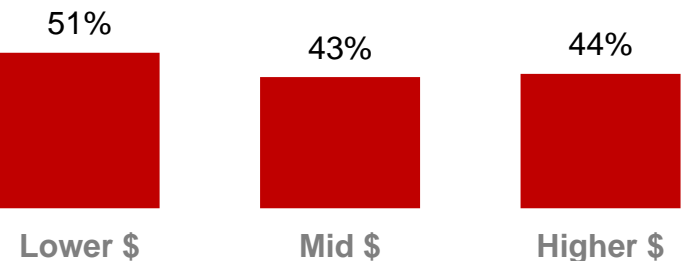
■ Sept '21



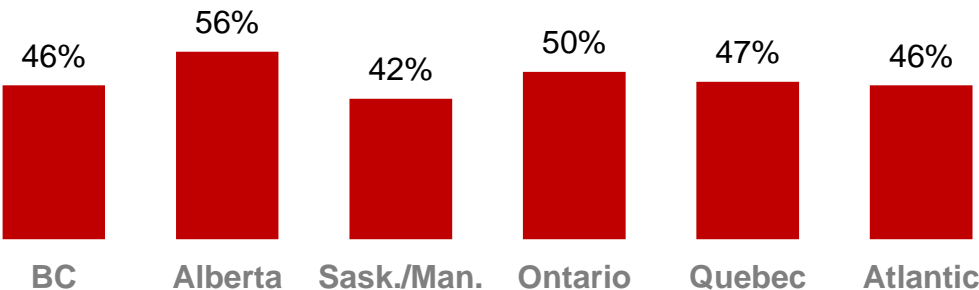
HIGH RISK MENTAL HEALTH BY GENERATION



HIGH RISK MENTAL HEALTH BY INCOME



HIGH RISK MENTAL HEALTH BY REGION



“High risk” = experienced at least 3 of the 4 items at least once in the past year, or experienced at least 1 of the items several times and 1 other at least once

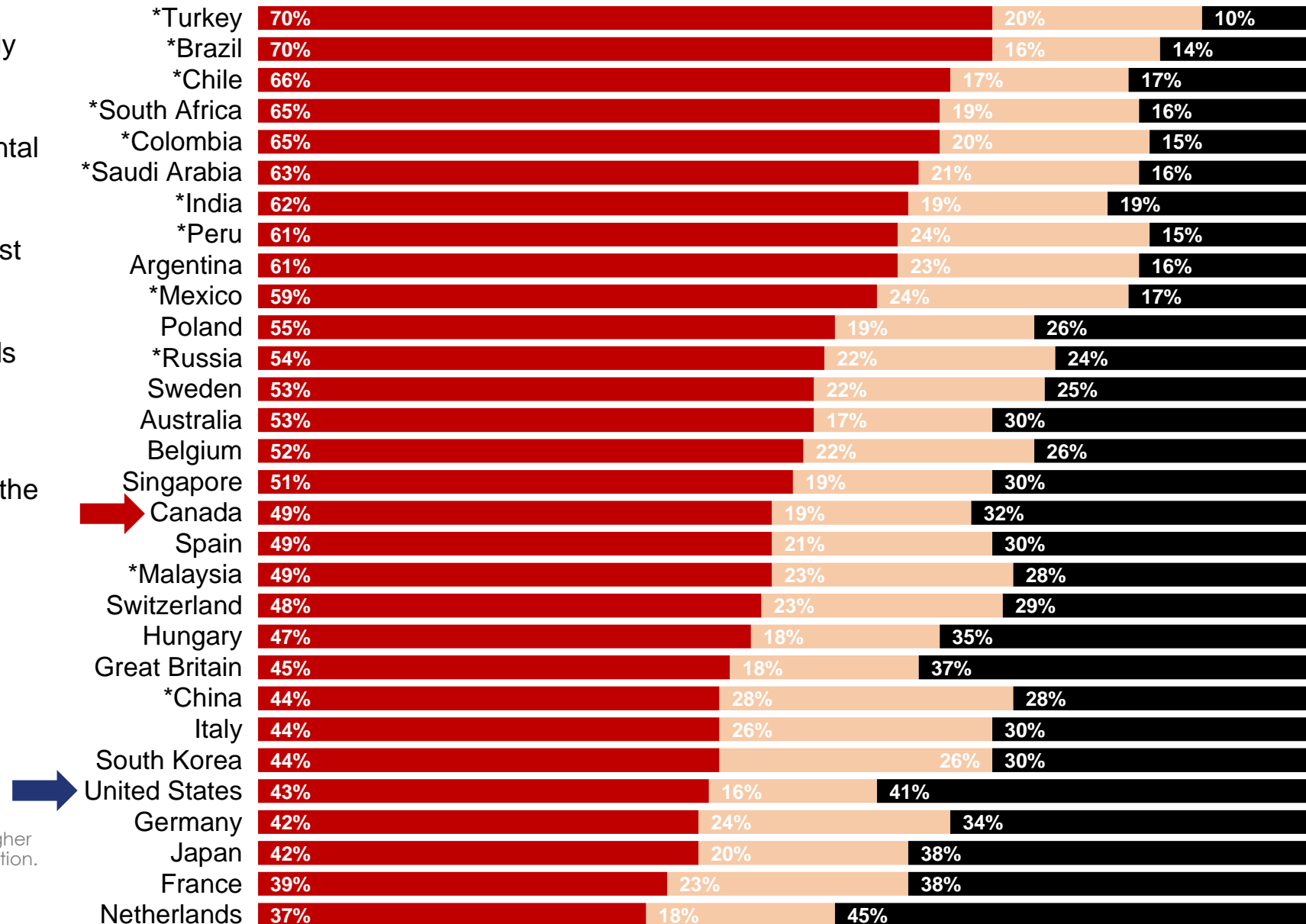
# MENTAL HEALTH RISK BY COUNTRY

■ High risk ■ Moderate risk ■ Low risk

Mental Health risk varies widely by country. While all countries are faced with significant challenges with respect to mental health among their citizens:

- Turkey and Brazil top the list of “high risk,”
- France and the Netherlands are the lowest.

Canada ranks in the middle of countries, notably higher than the US.



\* The samples are more urban and have higher education/income than the general population.



These are the results of a 30-market survey conducted by Ipsos on its Global Advisor online platform. Ipsos interviewed a total of 21,000+ adults, aged 18-74 in the United States, Canada, Malaysia, South Africa, and Turkey, and age 16-74 in 23 other markets in early September 2021.

The sample consists of approximately 1,000 individuals in each of Australia, Belgium, Canada, mainland China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Spain, and the US, and 500 individuals in each of Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Hungary, India, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Turkey, Singapore and Switzerland.

The samples in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, the US, Switzerland and Singapore can be taken as representative of their general adult populations under the age of 75.

The samples in Brazil, mainland China, Chile, Colombia, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Russia, Saudi Arabia, 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.

“The Global Country Average” reflects the average result for all the countries and markets where the survey was conducted. It has not been adjusted to the population size of each country or market and is not intended to suggest a total result.

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 +/- 5.0 percentage points. For more information on the Ipsos use of credibility intervals, please visit the Ipsos website.

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

# CONTACTS

**Mike Colledge**  
President  
Ipsos Public Affairs  
mike.colledge@ipsos.com



**Chris Martyn**  
Chief Research Officer  
Ipsos Public Affairs  
chris.martyn@ipsos.com



**Sanyam Sethi**  
Director  
Ipsos Public Affairs  
Sanyam.Sethi@ipsos.com



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Our research professionals, analysts and scientists have built unique multi-specialist capabilities that provide powerful insights into the actions, opinions and motivations of citizens, consumers, patients, customers or employees. Our 75 business solutions are based on primary data coming from our surveys, social media monitoring, and qualitative or observational techniques.

“Game Changers” – our tagline – summarises our ambition to help our 5,000 clients to navigate more easily our deeply changing world.

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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# Game Changers

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This is why our passionately curious experts not only provide the most precise measurement, but shape it to provide True Understanding of Society, Markets and People.

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So that our clients can act faster, smarter and bolder.  
Ultimately, success comes down to a simple truth:  
**You act better when you are sure.**