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Climate change concerns, conscientious health and brand purpose the top trends in Singapore & Southeast Asia - Ipsos Global Trends Survey 2021

Singapore, 06 December 2021 – The view that businesses should fight climate change, conscientious personal health and aligning with brands that reflect consumers' personal values were the top trends in 2021 across Southeast Asia, the Ipsos Global Trends Study 2021 study reveals.

The Ipsos Global Trends Study 2021 is the latest instalment of the wide-ranging Ipsos survey series that seeks to understand how global values are shifting. This year's update polls the public in 25 countries around the world, including Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines in Southeast Asia.

The survey reveals a world where public attitudes and values have changed less than might be expected under pressure from the pandemic. The changes in the data tend to be driven by long-running trends in public opinion that pre-date COVID-19.

Among other key findings in the study:

- Most people across 25 countries believe it is more important that businesses fight climate change than pay the right amount of tax. In Singapore, three quarters of people agree with this statement.
- Seven in ten globally now say they tend to buy brands that reflect their personal values and that business leaders have a responsibility to speak out on social issues. The number was similar in Singapore, at 72%.

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- Around the world, agreement on the urgency of dealing with climate change continues to rise but many other social attitudes hold steady, despite COVID-19. Southeast Asian countries in the study said that they were heading for environmental disaster, with 96% of Indonesians agreeing with this statement.

Climate change and the environment

Concern about the climate was identified as the strongest global value in the Global Trends 2019 survey and its position has strengthened during the pandemic.

In **Singapore**, 91% agree that we are heading for environmental disaster unless we change our habits quickly. Neighbouring countries in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia (96%) and Thailand (93%) ranked in the top two of the 25 countries surveyed, with the Philippines (89%) expressing a similar sentiment.

Across the 25 markets, almost two thirds (63%) say it is more important to them that companies do as much as they can to reduce harm to the environment than it is that companies pay the right amount of tax, while just a quarter say tax is more important than climate (27%). In **Singapore**, almost three quarters (74%) say harm to the environment is more important.

Emerging markets are most likely to see dealing with climate as the imperative: more than eight in ten Colombians (82%) as well as a similar proportion of Chinese and Brazilian citizens (78%) say companies prioritising the environment is more important to them.

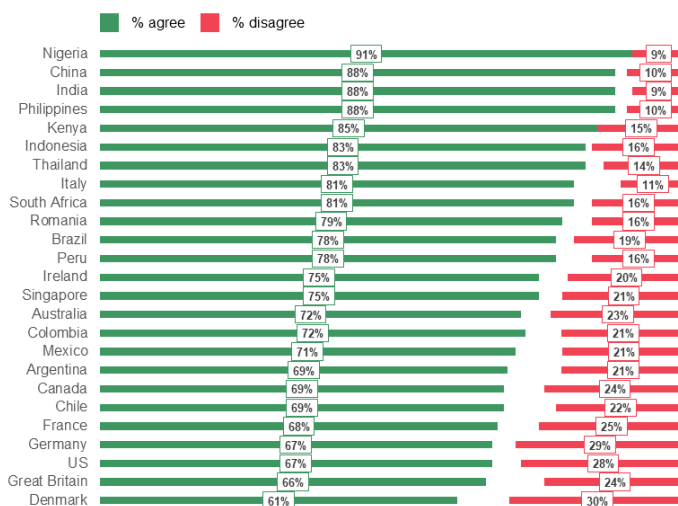
Conscientious health

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More than nine in 10 **Singaporeans** (94%) say that they need to do more to look after themselves physically, compared to the global average of 89%. And three quarters (74%) will sacrifice convenience if it means getting healthier products.

Personal health remains important

"I will sacrifice convenience if it means getting healthier products"



Base: 24,332 adults aged 16-75 (18-75 in US and CA) in 25 markets interviewed August - September 2021

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Brand purpose

The importance of brands aligning with personal values has been accelerated over the pandemic: this year **seven in ten across the 25 countries surveyed agree that they tend to buy brands that reflect their personal values (70%)**.

In **Singapore**, 87% believe that it is possible for a brand to support a good cause and make money at the same time. In addition, 64% of people are generally willing to spend extra for a brand with an image that appeals to them.

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GAME CHANGERS



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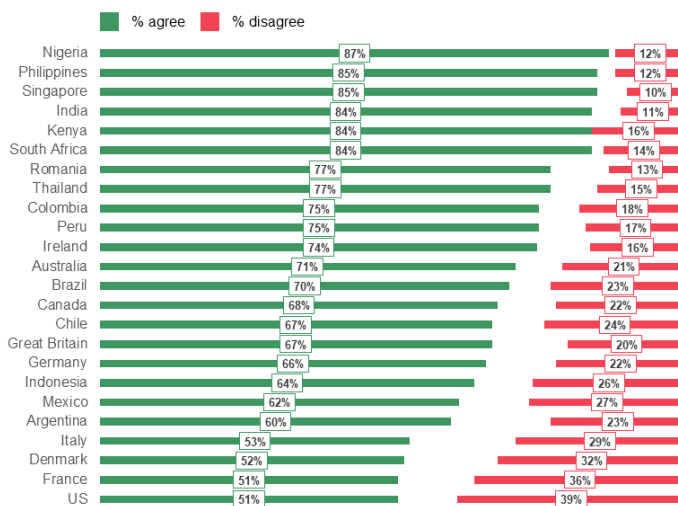
Singaporeans are the least concerned of any of the 25 countries surveyed about buying products from their own country, at 53%.

Since 2013, the importance of brands being associated with values has grown across a number of key markets, with 17 percentage point increases in agreement in Britain and France, and a rise of 16 points in the US. In **Singapore**, 72% of people agree with this statement.

Similarly, there is high interest in business leaders getting involved social issues, with more than eight in ten of the public in **Singapore** agreeing that business leaders having a responsibility to speak out on social and political issues facing their country.

Many see a role for business in social issues

"Business leaders have a responsibility to speak out on social and political issues affecting my country"



Base: 24,332 adults aged 16-75 (18-75 in US and CA) in 25 markets interviewed August - September 2021

However there remain strong tensions in the public interest in businesses showing wider

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social purpose, with 45% of the sample across all countries and 49% in **Singapore** agreeing that “I don’t care if a brand is ethically or socially responsible, I just want them to make good products.”

Singaporeans also have high levels of trust in online recommendations from a well-known site or app, at 80%.

Faith in science

Rising belief in science is another long-term trend. Six in ten of the 25-market global sample agree that eventually all medical conditions will be curable (60%) – a figure which has been rising since the start of the Global Trends series in 2013 and continued to rise through the pandemic as vaccines were developed in record time.

Optimism is again higher among those in emerging markets, with nine in ten Indonesians (90%) and more than eight in ten in Thailand and the Philippines (84% and 82%) agreeing that science will conquer all diseases. In **Singapore**, 53% agree that “eventually all medical conditions and diseases will be curable”.

However there is a longer-term increase in positivity: in 2013, just a quarter agreed all medical conditions will eventually become curable.

Attitudes to data and technology

Public opinion remains firmly against social media firms: **84% of the public across all countries and 83% in Singapore agree that social media companies have too much power**. While this has risen somewhat in almost all countries between 2019 and 2021, the most notable increase has been in China where the proportion who think social media firms

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have too much power has risen from 67% to 83%.

More than three quarters of Singaporeans (78%) say they are concerned about how information being collected about them when they go online is being used by their own government. Singapore ranked fifth highest with this concern.

Singapore tops the list of 25 countries at 91% (compared to 84% global average) with those that agree with the statement that it is inevitable they will all lose some privacy in the future because of the power of new technology.

However, attitudes towards data have not become more anxious over this time. Instead, the survey has recorded rising apathy and even openness to sharing personal data. In fact, 83% of Singaporeans can't imagine life without the internet, the third highest of all countries surveyed.

Katharine Zhou, Managing Director for Ipsos in Singapore said: "The 2021 Ipsos Global Trends study shows Southeast Asians' concerns are more pronounced than other parts of the world about the rising threat of climate change, the need to look after themselves physically, and for brands to align with good causes. It is also interesting to note that despite high levels of concern in Singapore about how data is collected about them online is being used by the government, they have become resigned to the view that a loss of privacy is inevitable – with Singapore topping the list of countries with this view.

"Global values, including those in Southeast Asia, have continued to remain the same, and climate concerns were not interrupted by COVID-19. Despite this, the world is changing fast where climate concern is turning into climate action, online and offline are becoming a blended reality and a view that political leaders should become social leaders."

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Note to Editors

To access the global report, click [HERE](#)

For further information or to set up further interviews with opinion leaders cited in this article, please contact

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About the study

25 countries are included in Ipsos Global Trends 2021. These are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Indonesia, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Romania, **Singapore**, South Africa, Thailand and the United States.

In most markets this wave of the survey was carried out online with adults aged 16-75 (18-75 in the US and Canada), using the Ipsos Online Panel between August – September 2021. However in some countries where internet penetration is lower different methods were used: in Nigeria and South Africa a face-to-face methodology was employed while Kenya the survey was carried out over the telephone.

The results are weighted to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to the most recent country census data.

Total global data has not been weighted by population size but are simply a country average. In established markets with a higher level of internet penetration (more than 60% online), the results can be taken as representative of the general working-age population.

In markets where internet penetration is lower, the results should be viewed as representative of a more urban, affluent and 'connected' population.

In each country a representative sample of online adults aged 16-75 (18-75 in the US) participated in

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the survey.

In most countries the sample size is approximately 1,000, however a sample size of 500 was used in Peru, Colombia, Argentina and Chile and the South African sample consists of 1,500 participants.

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