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### Nuclear, Biological or Chemical Attack Now Seen as Top Threat Facing the World

*Ipsos survey for the Halifax International Security Forum finds concern about a nuclear, biological, or chemical attack nudges ahead of cyberattacks as No.1 perceived threat for global citizens*

**Toronto, ON, November 18, 2022** – The invasion of Ukraine in late February has reignited talk of a possible nuclear attack and global citizens are clearly concerned.

A new Ipsos poll of more than 32,000 people for the Halifax International Security Forum finds the percentage who feel a nuclear, biological, or chemical attack taking place somewhere in the world is a somewhat/very real threat rose nine points from last year to a global country average of 75% (+9 points from 2021). That's even higher than in 2017 when North Korea tested a nuclear bomb and concern rose from 66% in 2016 to 71% in 2017.

While fear of a nuclear attack is in the top spot this year, the percentage of people globally that feel some person, organization, or country hacking into their public, private or personal information system for fraudulent or espionage purposes is a somewhat/very real comes in right behind at 74% (-1 pt since 2021).

#### Nuclear/biological/chemical attack concern surges in some countries

Concern about a nuclear, biological, or chemical attack happening is widespread and seen as a real threat by large majorities of adults in every country surveyed, but most of all in Thailand (84%, new this year), Turkey (82%, new), Japan (+17 points to 81%) and South Africa (+7 pts to 81%).

Countries showing the largest increases from last year in concern about a nuclear, biological or chemical attack are Germany (+19 pts to 73%), France (+19 pts to 63%) and Japan (+17 pts to 81%).

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### A nuclear, biological or chemical attack taking place somewhere in the world

*Q: How real do you feel the threat is of a nuclear, biological or chemical attack taking place somewhere in the world in the next twelve months? (% a very/somewhat a real threat)*

	2022	Change from 2021
<b>Global Country Average</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>9%</b>
Thailand	84%	n/a
Turkey	82%	-3%
Japan	81%	17%
South Africa	81%	7%
Peru	80%	5%
Colombia	79%	-1%
Australia	78%	6%
Ireland	78%	n/a
Mexico	78%	2%
Chile	77%	2%
Great Britain	77%	15%
Romania	77%	n/a
<b>United States</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>6%</b>
Spain	76%	6%
Sweden	75%	10%
Argentina	73%	-1%
<b>Canada</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>9%</b>
Germany	73%	19%
Hungary	73%	8%
India	72%	-3%
Netherlands	72%	16%
Poland	72%	15%
Belgium	71%	16%
Brazil	69%	6%
Malaysia	69%	4%
Indonesia	68%	n/a
South Korea	67%	6%
Italy	65%	12%
France	63%	19%

Source: Ipsos's Global Advisor for the Halifax International Security Forum. 32,507 people surveyed online across 33 countries from Sept. 23 – Oct. 7, 2022.

\*Excludes China, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Ukraine

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### Threat of hacking still (near) top of mind

Though cyberhacking isn't currently considered the No. 1 real threat, it has remained a leading concern for years and only fell one percentage point year over year to 74%.

And since 2015, hacking for fraudulent or espionage purposes has been seen as the threat most widely found to be real except for in 2020 (the year the COVID-19 pandemic started) and 2022 (the year Russia invaded Ukraine).

The proportion of citizens listing cyberattacks as a real threat declined five points or more in just six of the countries surveyed this year, including: India (-9 pts to 72%), Hungary (-9 pts to 50%), Sweden (-7 pts to 78%), Colombia (-6 pts to 76%), the Netherlands (-6 pts to 64%) and Canada (-5 pts to 75%).

Hacking is considered a real threat for 50% or more of respondents in all the countries surveyed, but there are significant rises in only three countries in 2022 — Japan (+7 pts to 67%), Australia (+5 pts to 84%) and France (+4 pts to 83%).

### World feels more dangerous, getting worse

The vast majority (85%) of people polled across 33 countries on Ipsos' Global Advisor online platform between September 23 and October 7, 2022, think the world became more dangerous over the past year — this is the highest percentage since Ipsos started asking the question in 2014 (83%) and is up significantly from 74% in 2018.

At the same time, the percentage of people who think more things are getting better these days than are getting worse dipped slightly to 47% (-2 pts) in 2022 and is four percentage points lower than 2017 when Ipsos first started asking this question.

### Worry about natural disasters dips slightly

Some concerns are rising as others fall or stagnate. Despite headline-grabbing heatwaves and wildfires this year, the percentage of people on average globally feeling that a major natural disaster in their country is a somewhat/very real threat, dipped by 3 points from last year to 66%.

Concern about other threats barely budged year over year at a global level, including: a terrorist attack taking place in their country (-1 pt to an average of 61%); the personal safety and security for themselves and their family being violated (+1 pt to an average of 61%); and a violent conflict breaking out between ethnic or minority groups in their country (-1 pt to an average of 59%).

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### Concern about an epidemic drops, while fear about armed conflict rises

People seem ready to put the COVID-19 pandemic in the rearview mirror, as the percentage of people worried about a major health epidemic breaking out in their country dropped 10 percentage points year over year to a global average of 60% in 2022.

Meanwhile, amid the invasion of Ukraine the percentage of people who view armed conflict between their country and another nation as a somewhat/very real threat rose (+4 pts to 50%) in 2022 and is up dramatically by 10 percentage points or more in eight countries, including: South Africa (+10 pts to 56%), Canada (+12 pts to 45%), Great Britain (+15 pts to 63%), Italy (+15 pts to 48%), Belgium (+16 pts to 47%), Sweden (+18 pts to 34%), Germany (+22 pts to 55%) and Japan (+23 pts to 72%).

### Lack of confidence in government and its agencies to deal with threats

Throughout the world, many citizens continue to be skeptical that “the appropriate levels of security and protection could be provided by [their] government or its agencies could respond effectively” to perceived real threats.

The majority (a global country average of 75%) feel a nuclear, biological, or chemical attack is a real threat, while under half (44%) remain somewhat/very confident their government could respond to the threat effectively — a gap of 31 percentage points. In comparison, 66% of people on average globally felt a nuclear, biological, or chemical attack was a real threat in 2021 while the percentage who were confident their government could respond to an attack effectively was 44% (a gap of 22 percentage points).

The gap between the threat of cyberhacking and confidence in the government response is also still wide but closed slightly. In 2022, 74% globally on average view being hacked as a real threat, while only 46% express confidence in their government’s ability to respond if some person, organization or country hacks into either their public, private or personal information system for fraudulent or espionage purposes — a difference of 28 percentage points. That’s in comparison to 2021 when 75% viewed hacking as a real threat and 45% were confident in their government’s response to cyberhacking — a difference of 30 percentage points.

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### About the Study

These are the results of a 33-market survey conducted by Ipsos on its Global Advisor online platform. Ipsos interviewed a total of 32,507 adults aged 18-74 in the United States, Canada, Malaysia, South Africa, and Turkey, 20-74 in Thailand, 21-74 in Indonesia, and 16-74 in 27 other markets between Friday, September 23 and Friday, October 7, 2022.

The sample consists of approximately 1,000 individuals in each of Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, mainland China, Colombia, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Romania, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, and the U.S., and 500 individuals in each of Hungary, Republic of Ireland, and Turkey.

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

The samples in Brazil, Chile, mainland China, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, and the UAE 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 market’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 Ipsos’ 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

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).

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