

# WHAT WORRIES THE WORLD?

September 2023



GAME CHANGERS



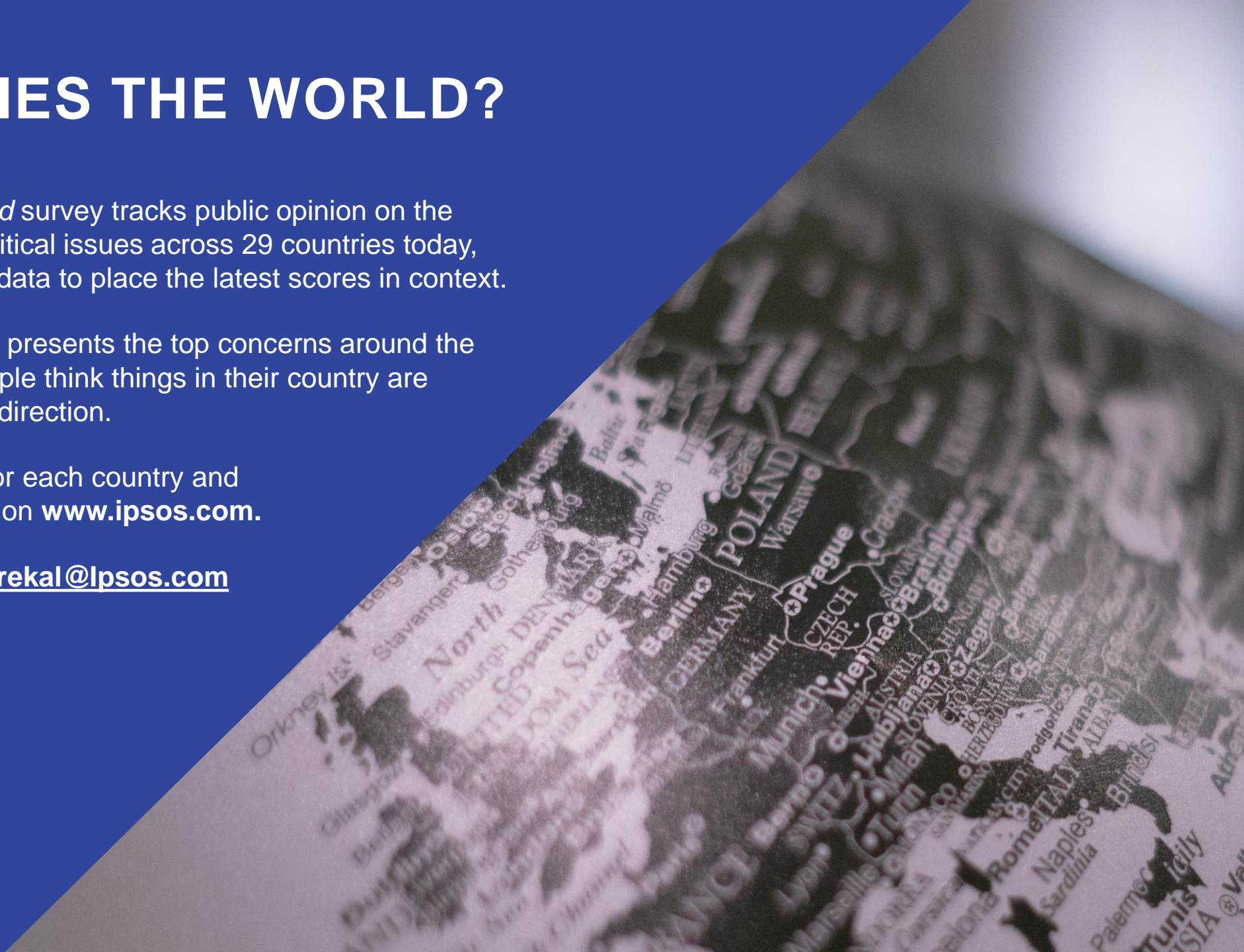
# WHAT WORRIES THE WORLD?

Ipsos' *What Worries the World* survey tracks public opinion on the most important social and political issues across 29 countries today, drawing on over ten years of data to place the latest scores in context.

This **global summary report** presents the top concerns around the world, alongside whether people think things in their country are heading in the right or wrong direction.

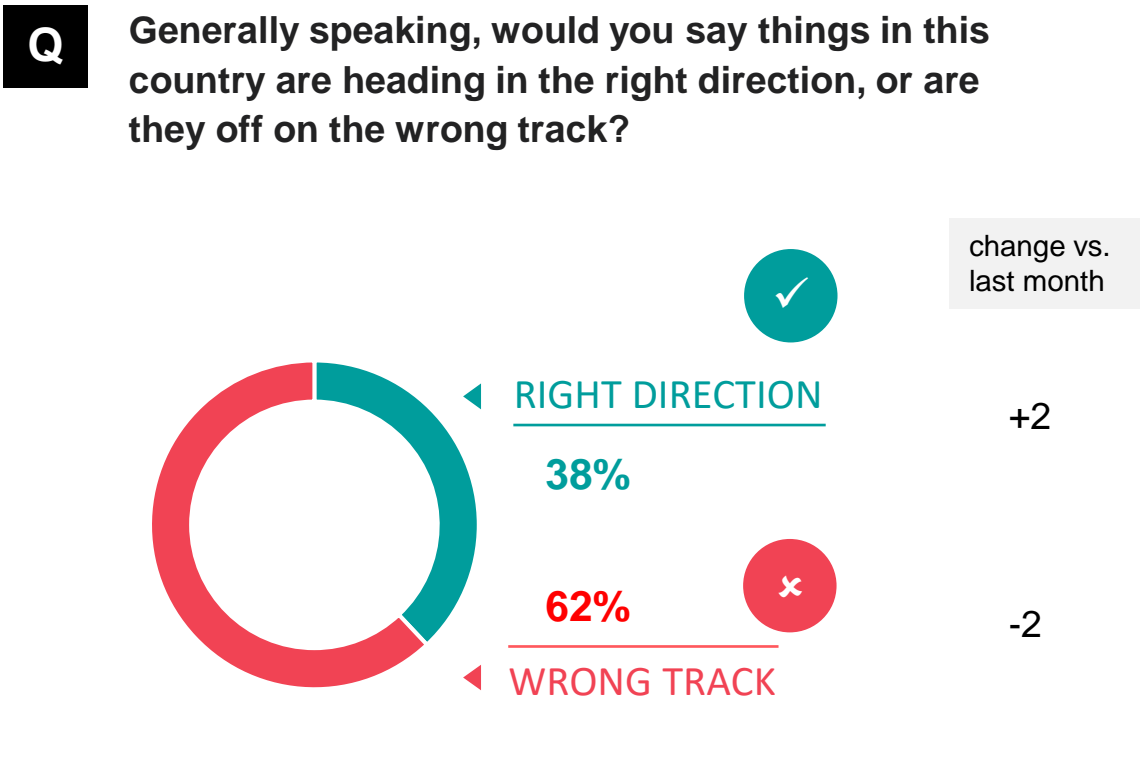
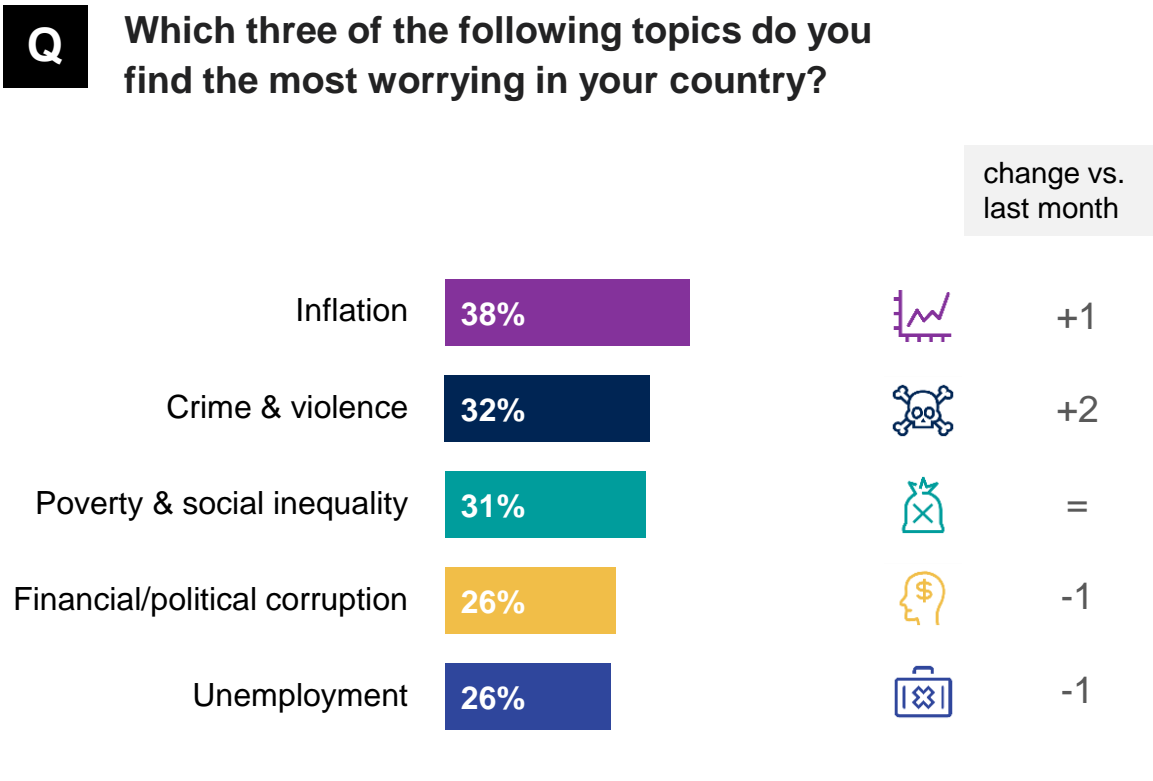
Full breakdowns of findings for each country and each issue are also available on **[www.ipsos.com](http://www.ipsos.com)**.

Please contact **[Teodros.Gebrekal@ipsos.com](mailto:Teodros.Gebrekal@ipsos.com)** for more information.



# WHAT WORRIES THE WORLD? SEPTEMBER 2023

Inflation is the top concern for the 18<sup>th</sup> consecutive month with almost four in ten (38%) across 29 countries picking it as a major issue in their country. Worry about crime & violence has risen to 32% and is at its highest level since before the pandemic in March 2020, the month before coronavirus was added to the list of issues included in *What Worries the World*.



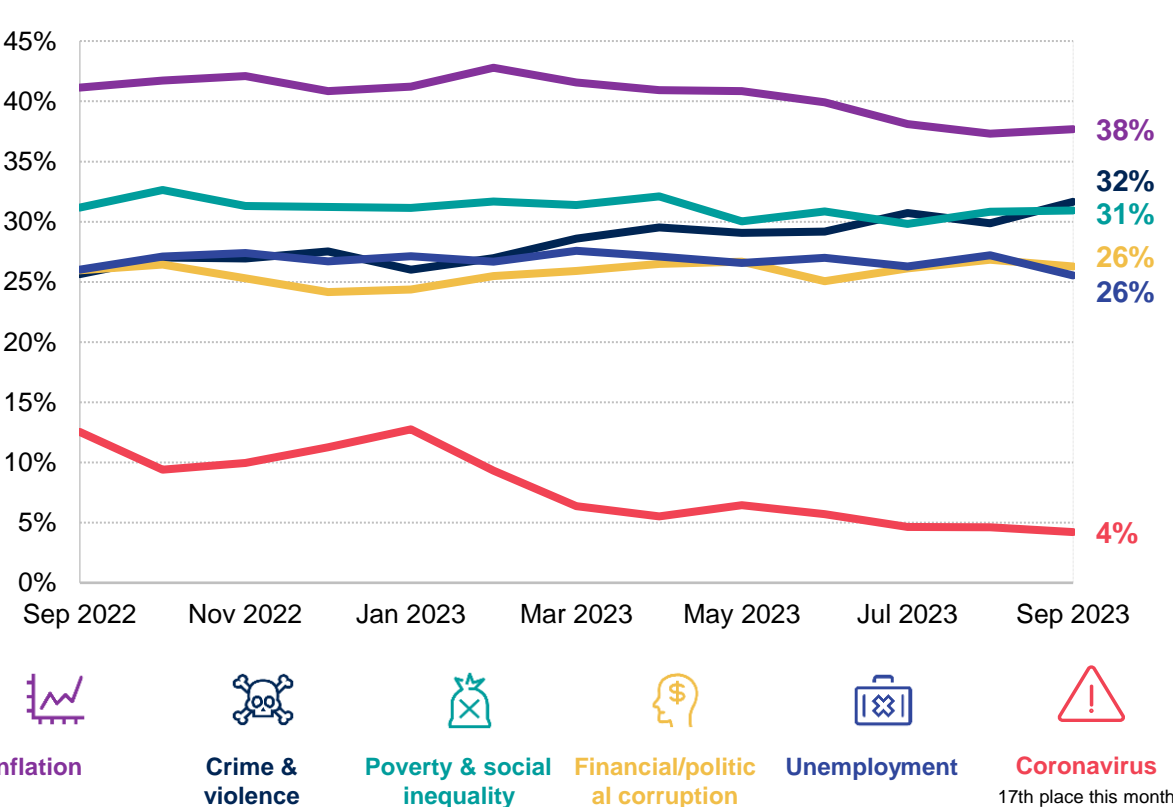
**Base:** Representative sample of 24,732 adults aged 16-74 in 29 participating countries, August 25th 2023 - September 8th 2023.  
**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details.*  
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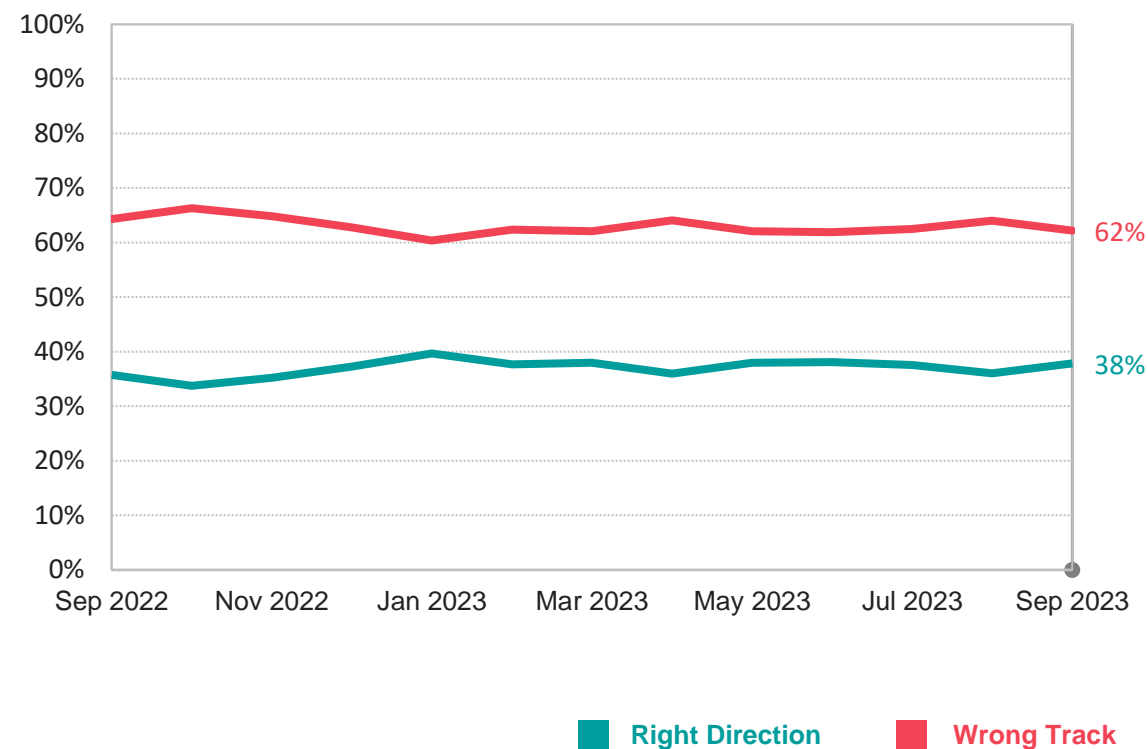


# WHAT WORRIES THE WORLD? 12-MONTH TREND

**Q** Which three of the following topics do you find the most worrying in your country?



**Q** Generally speaking, would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?



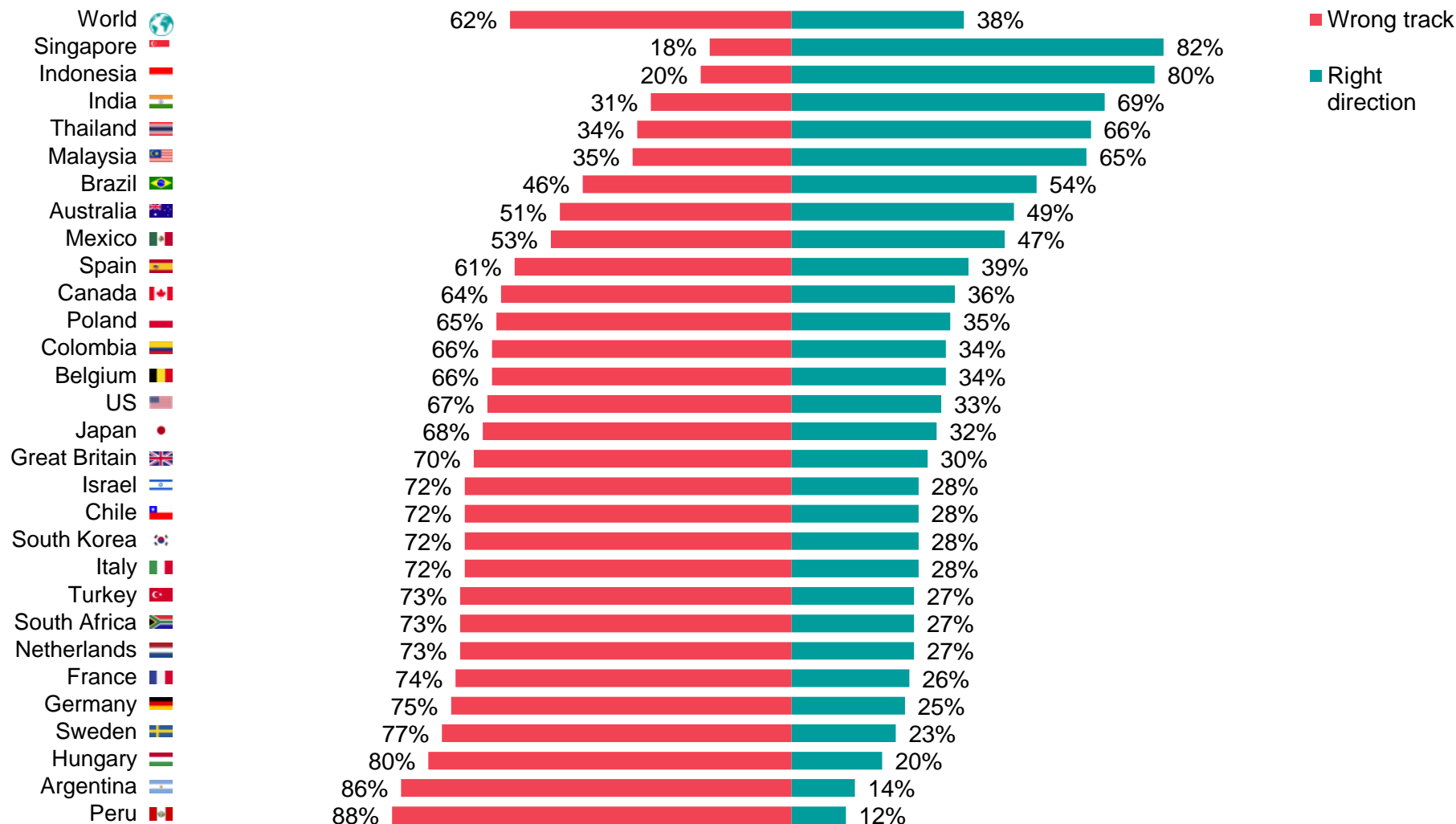
**Base:** Representative sample of c.24,732 adults aged 16-74 in 29 participating countries, September 2022 - September 2023.  
**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details.*

# DIRECTION OF TRAVEL **ALL COUNTRIES**



# RIGHT DIRECTION VS. WRONG TRACK MONITOR

**Q** Would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track? (September 2023)



Almost four in ten (38%) globally say their country is headed in the right direction. This is a slight increase of 2pp on August's figure.

In September, Germany has recorded its lowest right direction score in the last decade; only one in four (24%) say the country is headed in the right direction. Germany's right direction score has been on a steady decline since March 2022, when 46% said the country was on a good path. In the last two months, its score has fallen 16pp.

Moving the other direction is South Africa. After having the lowest right direction score last month (14%), 27% are now happy with how the country is going. Peru is now bottom after a 6pp decline in their right direction score.

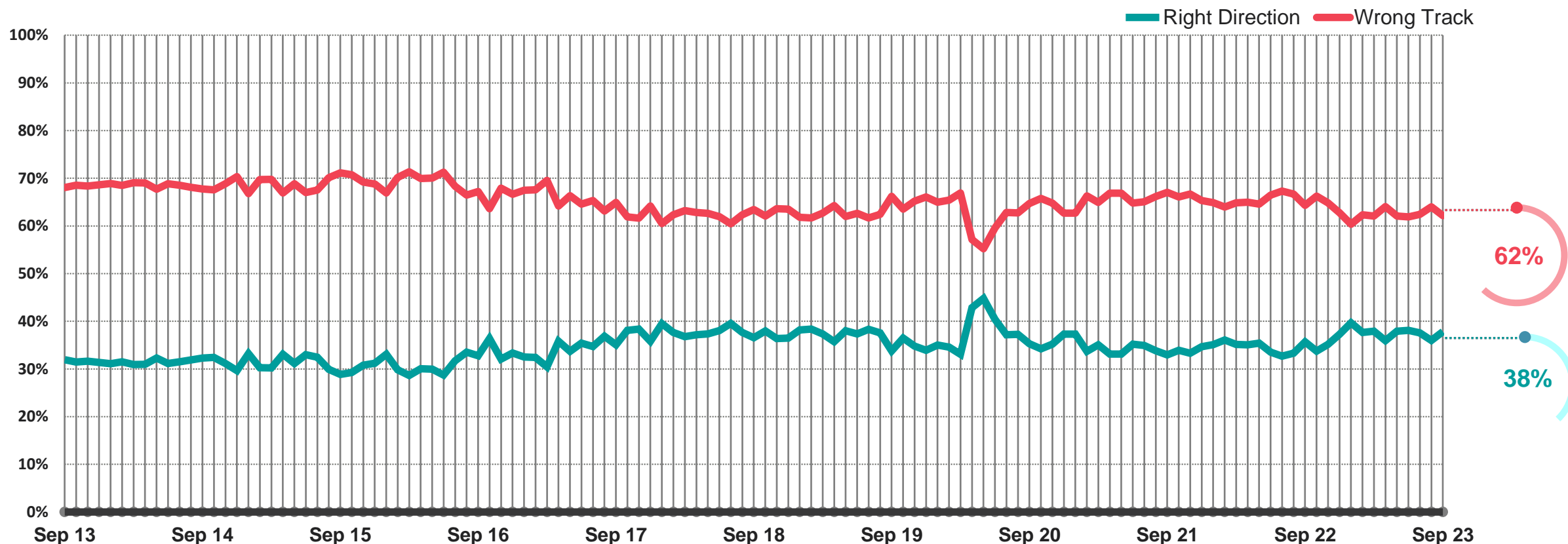
**Base:** Representative sample of 24,732 adults aged 16-74 in 29 participating countries, August 25th 2023 - September 8th 2023.

**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details.*

**Filter:** Country: World | Current Wave: Sep 23

# GLOBAL: RIGHT DIRECTION/WRONG TRACK

**Q** Would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?  
(Global country average score)



**Base:** Representative sample of c.24,732 adults aged 16-74 in 29 participating countries, 2013 - 2023.

**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details.*

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Filter: Country: World | Current Wave: Sep 23



# WORRIES THE WORLD? TOP ISSUES RANKED

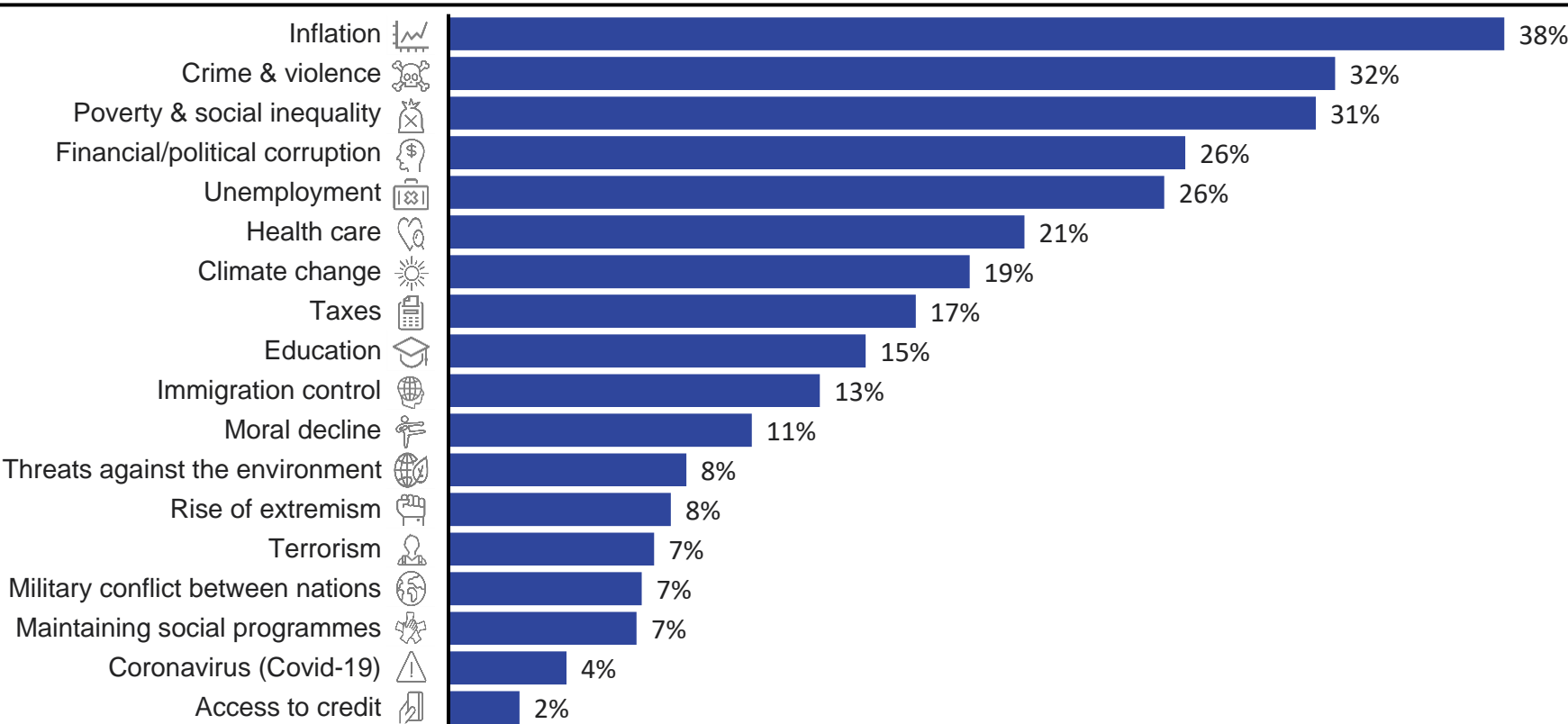




# WORLD WORRIES: THE FULL LIST

**Q** Which three of the following topics do you find the most worrying in your country?

% mentioned in September 2023 (global country average)



Inflation is the top concern in our *What Worries the World* survey for the 18<sup>th</sup> month in a row. Almost four in ten (38%) across 29 countries say it is a major issue.

Crime & violence is the second biggest worry, moving ahead of poverty & social inequality. Corruption and unemployment make up the rest of the five biggest concerns.

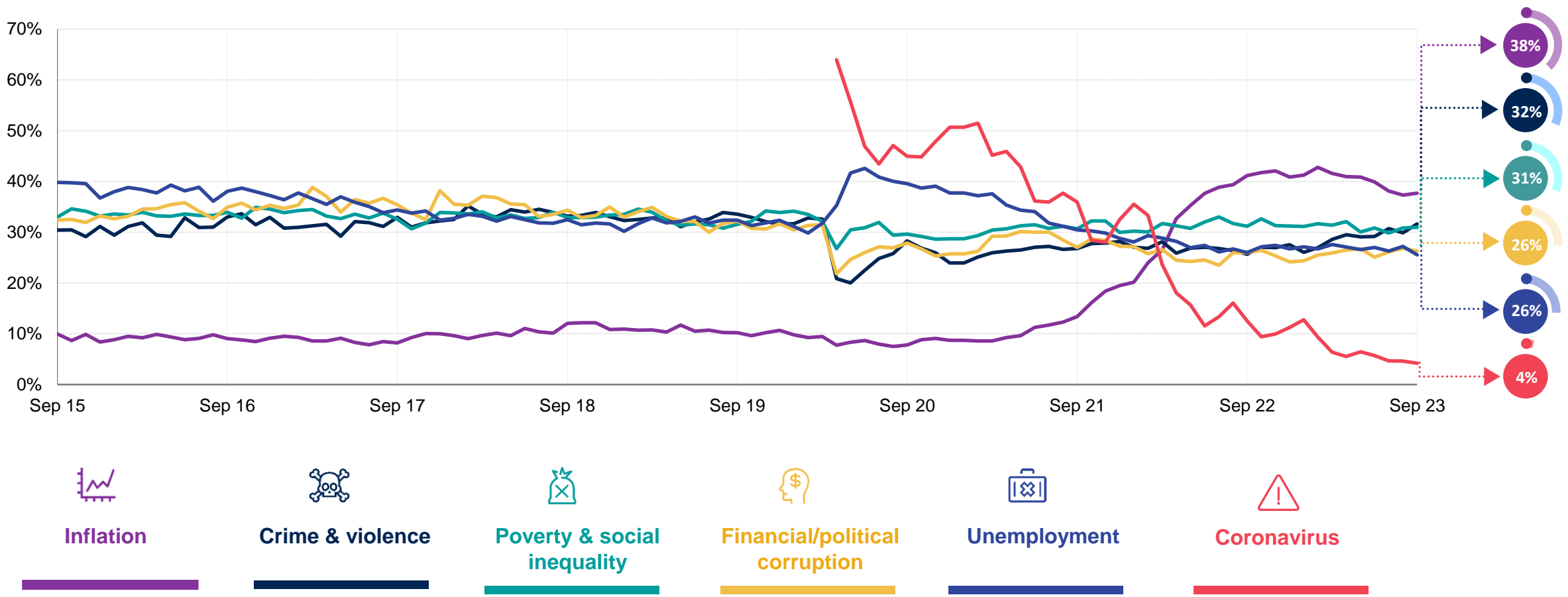
Only 4% choose coronavirus as a worry. This is the lowest level of concern we've seen since it was added to the survey in 2020.

**Base:** Representative sample of 24,732 adults aged 16-74 in 29 participating countries, August 25th 2023 - September 8th 2023.

**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details.*

# WORLD WORRIES: LONG-TERM TREND

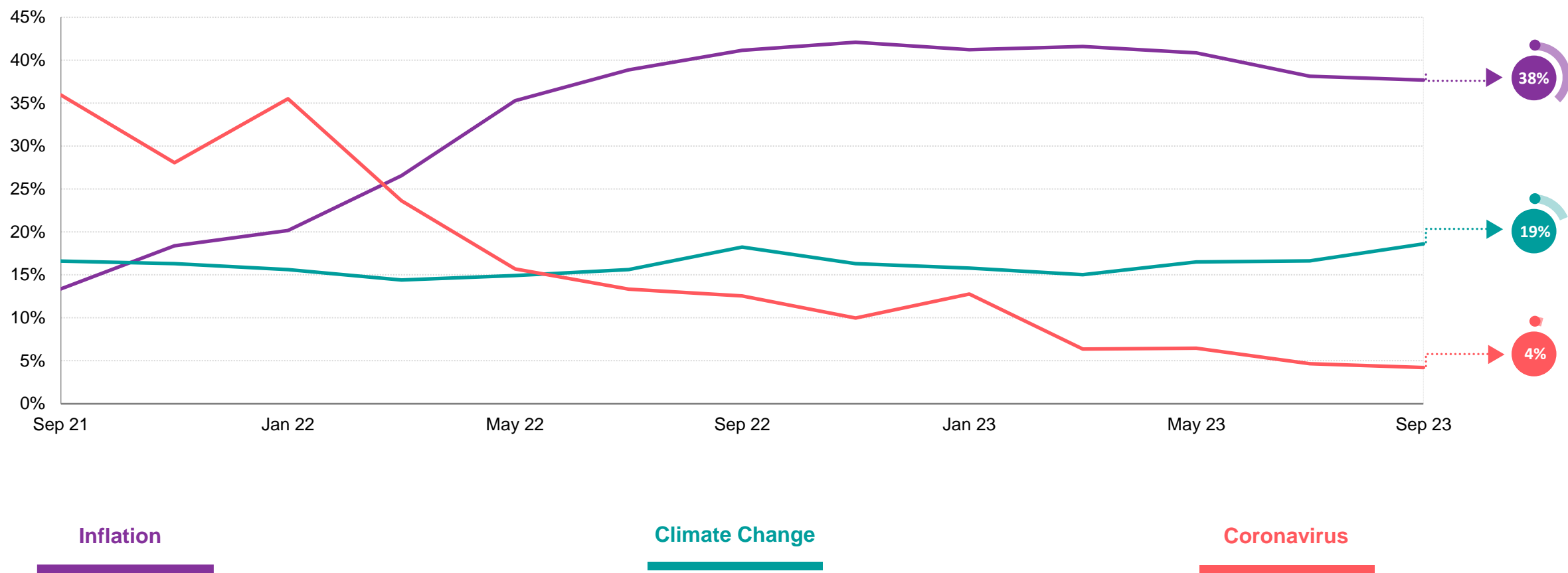
**Q** Which three of the following topics do you find the most worrying in your country?  
*Global country average*



**Base:** Representative sample of 24,732 adults aged 16-74 in 29 participating countries, 2015 - 2023.  
**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details.*



# WORLD WORRIES: LONG-TERM TREND (INFLATION, CLIMATE CHANGE & CORONAVIRUS)

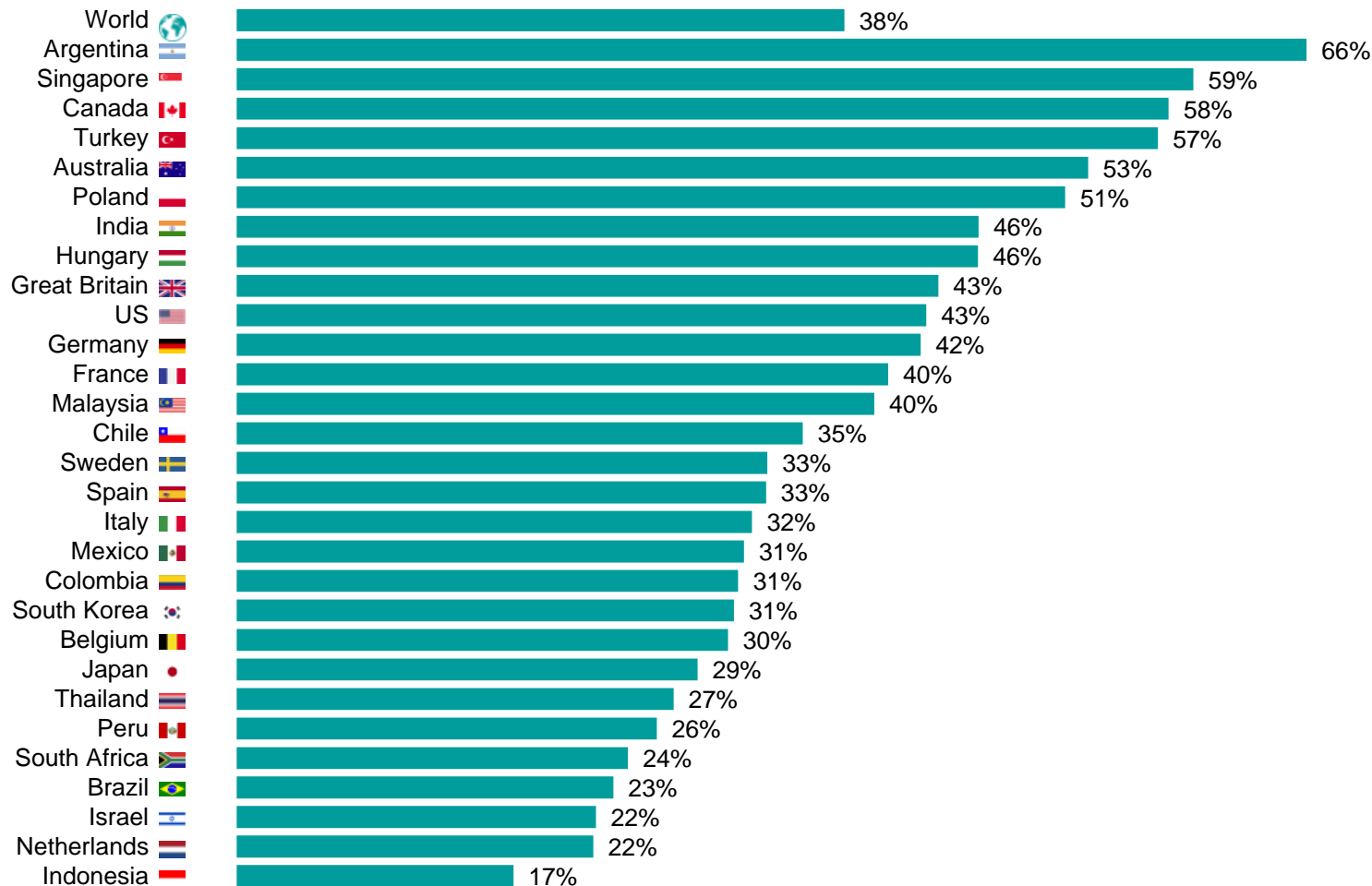


**Base:** Representative sample of c.24,732 adults aged 16-74 in 29 participating countries, September 2021 - September 2023.

**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details.*

**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Coronavirus was introduced into the survey in April 2020.*

# 1 | INFLATION



Almost four in ten (38%) across 29 countries choose inflation as the one of the biggest concerns facing their country.

On a global level, worry about rising prices is 4pp lower than it was six months ago, when 42% picked it as an issue in their country.

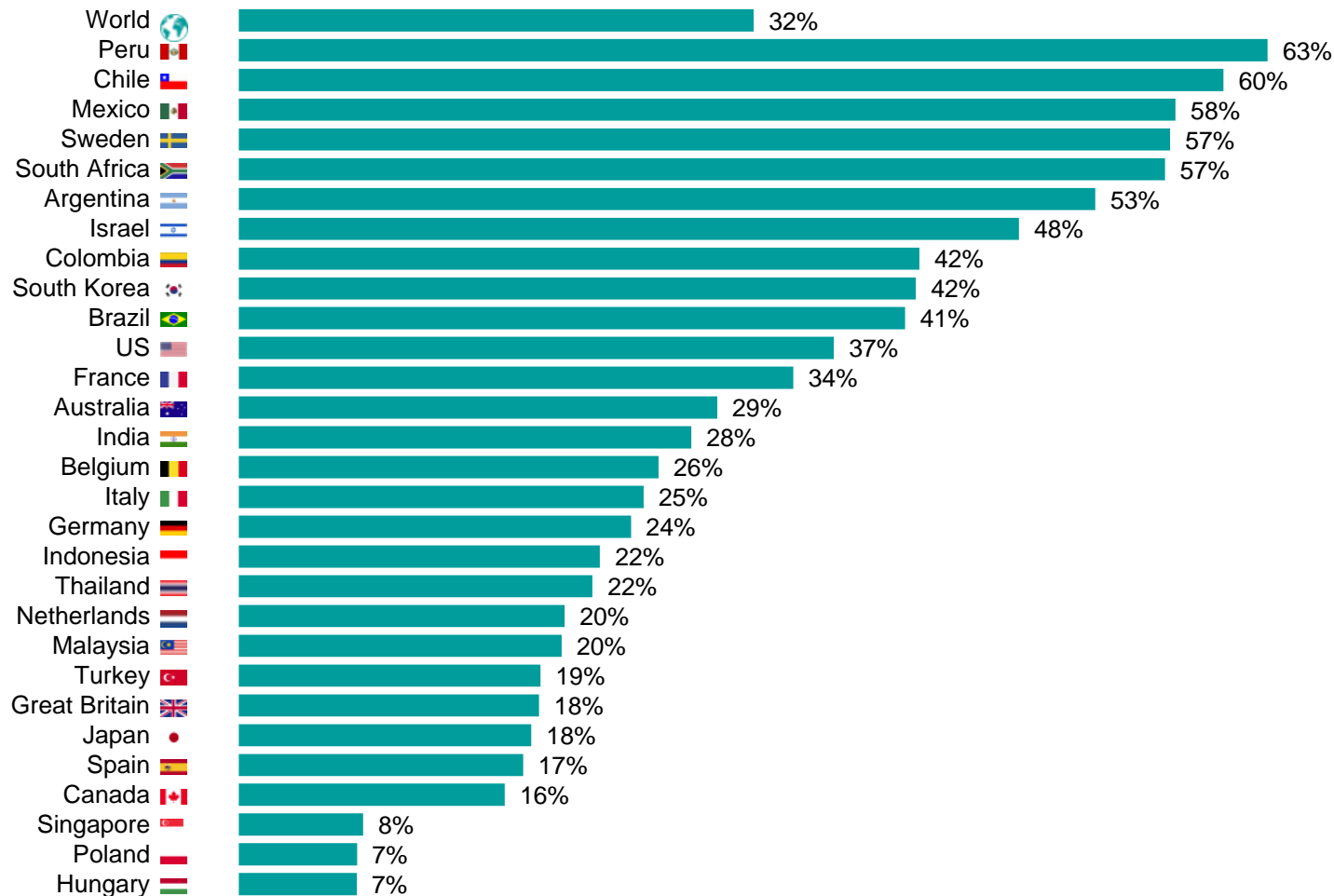
Argentina is the most concerned country with two-thirds (66%) saying it is a worry. Singapore is second after a 10pp increase in worry since last month with six in ten (59%) picking the cost of living as an issue.

Canada, Turkey and Australia make up the rest of the top five.

Indonesia remains the least concerned country about inflation with less than one in five (17%) believing it's a worry in their country.



## 2 | CRIME & VIOLENCE



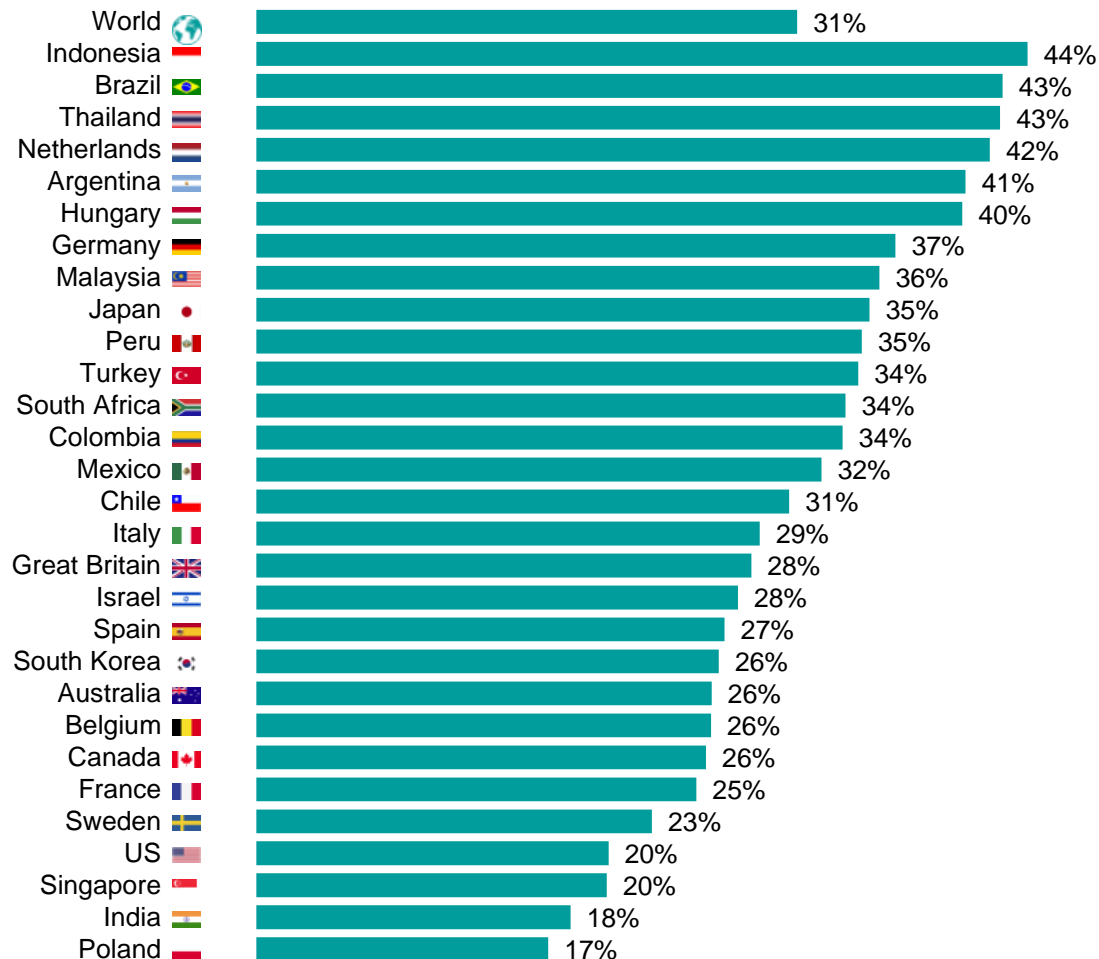
One in three (32%) across 29 countries choose crime & violence as a worry in their country.

Concern about crime & violence is at its highest level since before the pandemic. Back in March 2020 – the month before coronavirus was added to *What Worries the World* as a concern – 33% thought it was a top issue.

South Korea has seen the biggest rise in worry this month, up 18pp. Over four in ten (42%) say it is one of the top issues affecting the country. This comes on the back of a series of violent attacks in the country.

Peru is now the most concerned country about crime. In September it has seen a 6pp increase in worry, with 63% now choosing it as a concern.

### 3 | POVERTY & SOCIAL INEQUALITY

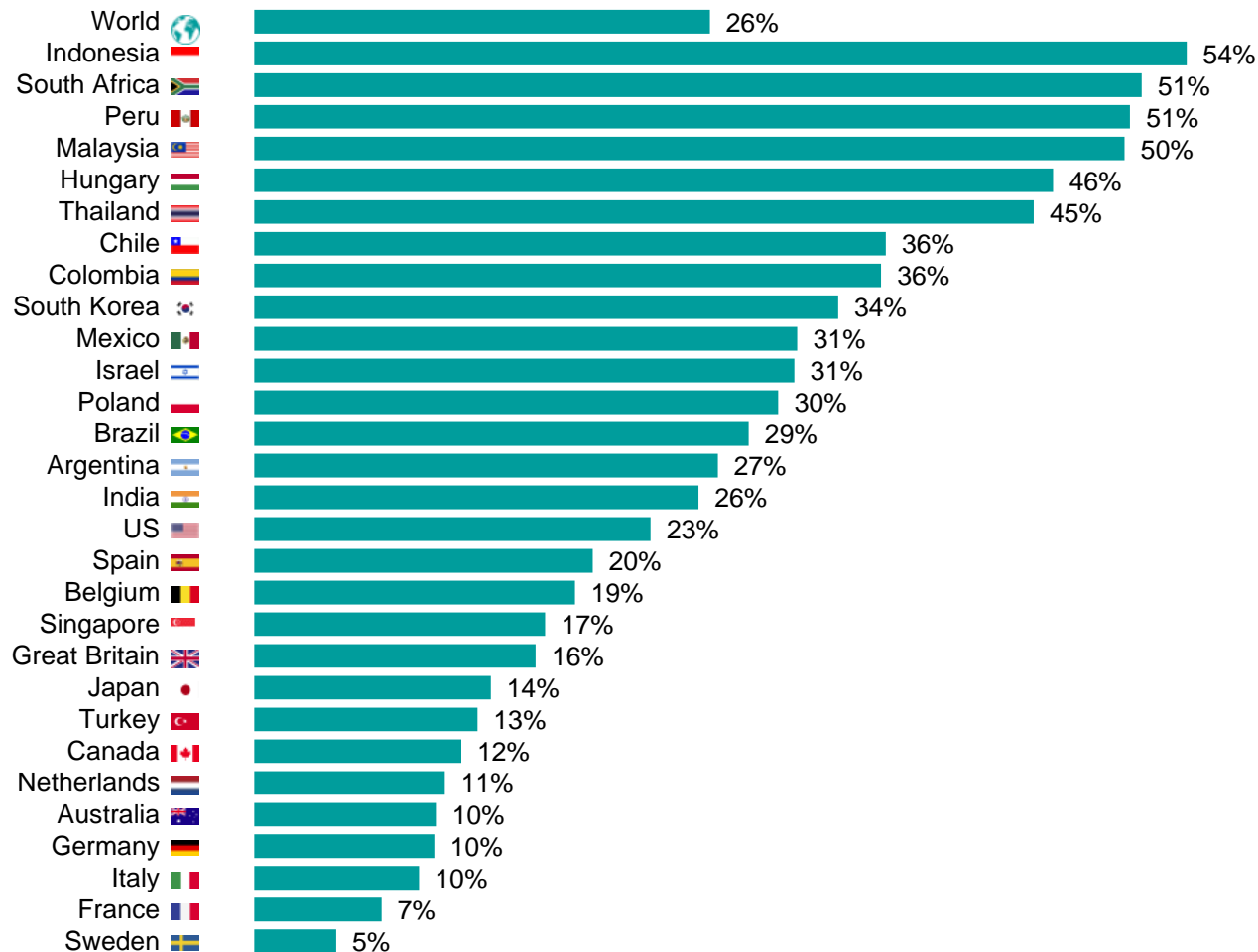


One in three (31%) across 29 countries choose poverty & social inequality as one of the biggest concerns in their country. Level of worry is the same as last month but the issue has fallen from second to third place in *What Worries the World* after an increase in concern about crime & violence.

Indonesia remains the most worried country for the second month in a row, with 44% picking it as a concern. Brazil and Thailand rank second and third, with 43% in both markets saying inequality is a worry.

Netherlands is fourth with worry about inequality increasing by 7pp compared to last month. It is the country's biggest concern with four in ten (42%) choosing it as a concern.

## 4 | FINANCIAL/POLITICAL CORRUPTION



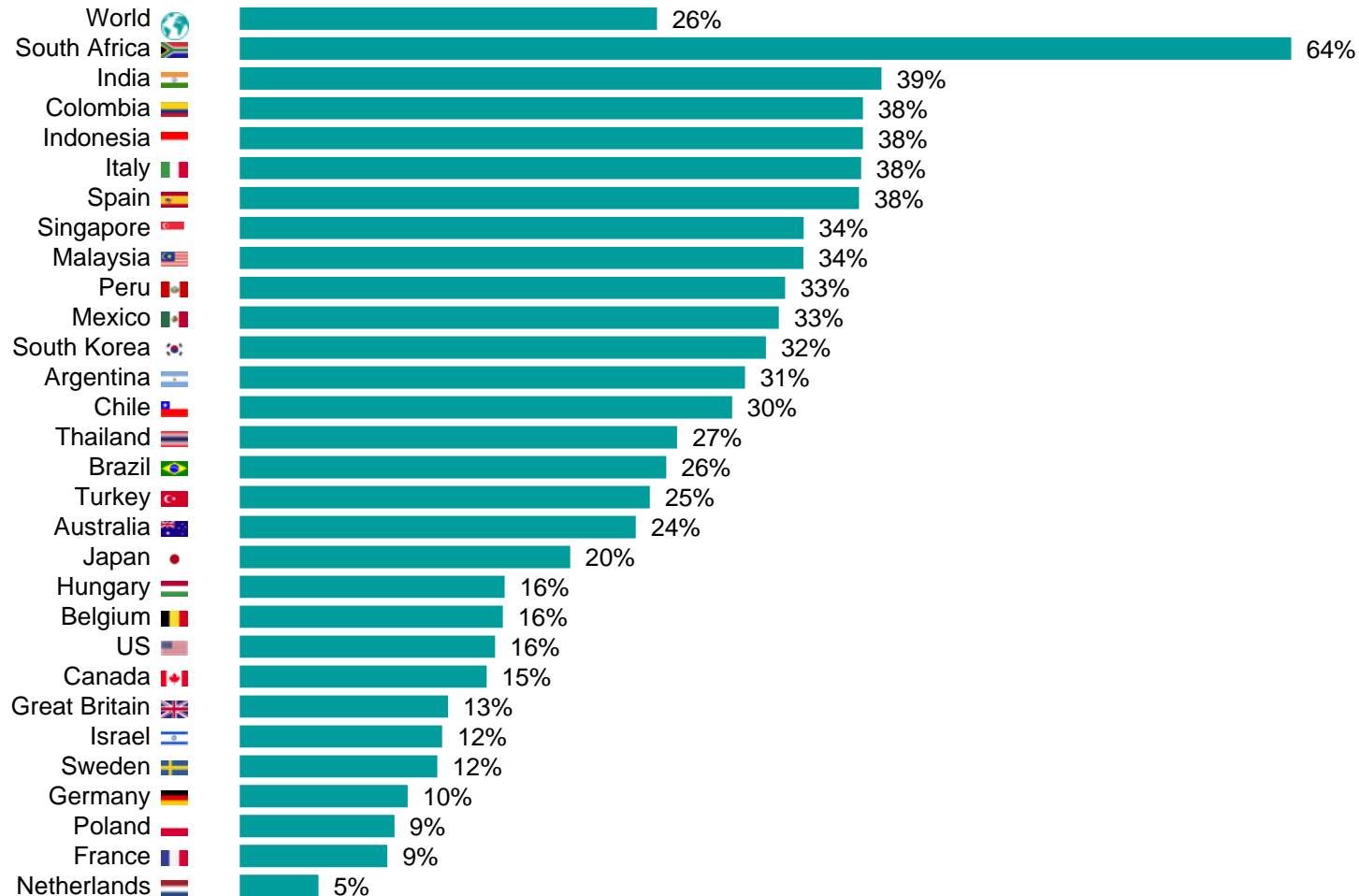
Financial/political corruption is the fourth biggest concern in our *What Worries the World* survey with one in four across 29 countries choosing it as a concern.

As well as being the most concerned country about inequality, Indonesia also has the highest level of concern about corruption. It is the country's biggest worry with 54% picking it as an issue.

More than one in two also choose corruption as a top concern in South Africa, Peru and Malaysia.

Hungary completes the top five, with 46% considering corruption a worry. Last month, Thailand was the third most concerned country about corruption, but it has now fallen to sixth after a 7pp decline.

# 5 | UNEMPLOYMENT



One in four (26%) across 29 countries choose unemployment as one of the biggest concerns in their country. This level of concern is unchanged from last month.

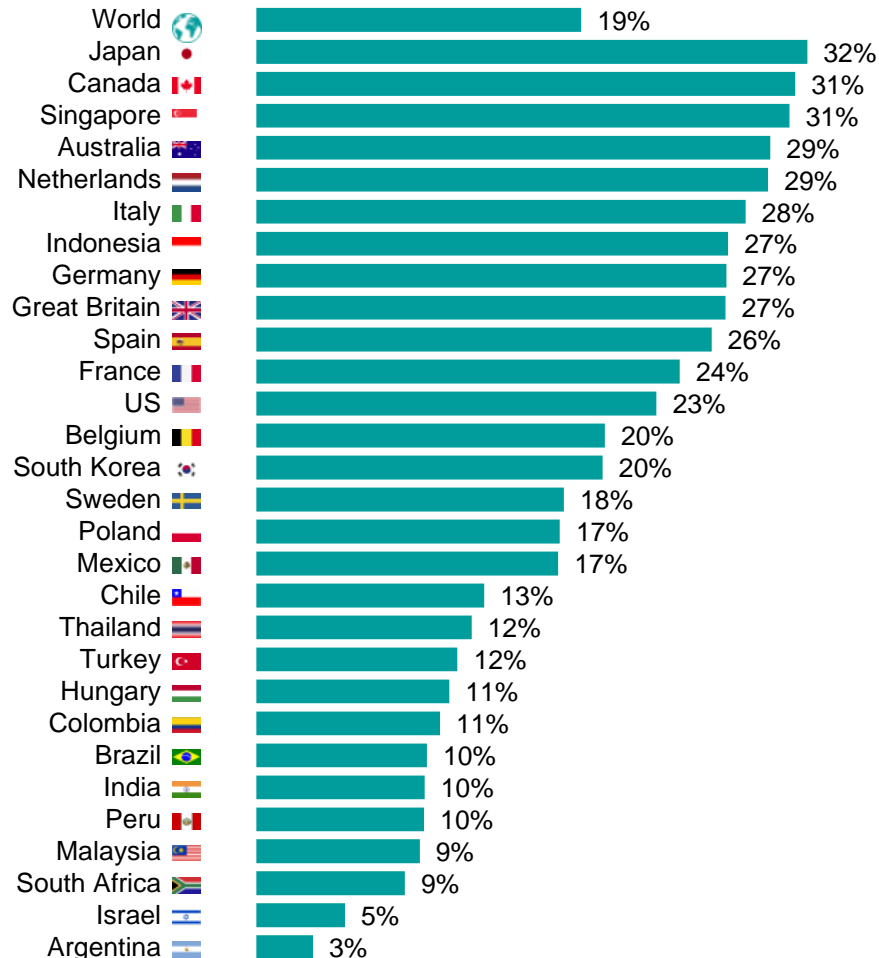
At a global level, worry is the same as it was 12 months ago (26%) but is 4pp lower than two years ago and is 14pp lower than September 2020.

South Africa is the most concerned about unemployment, with 64% choosing it as a worry. South Africans have been the most worried about jobs since April 2021.

India is the second most worried country (39%), with Colombia, Indonesia, Italy and Spain all following behind (each on 38%).



# 7 | CLIMATE CHANGE



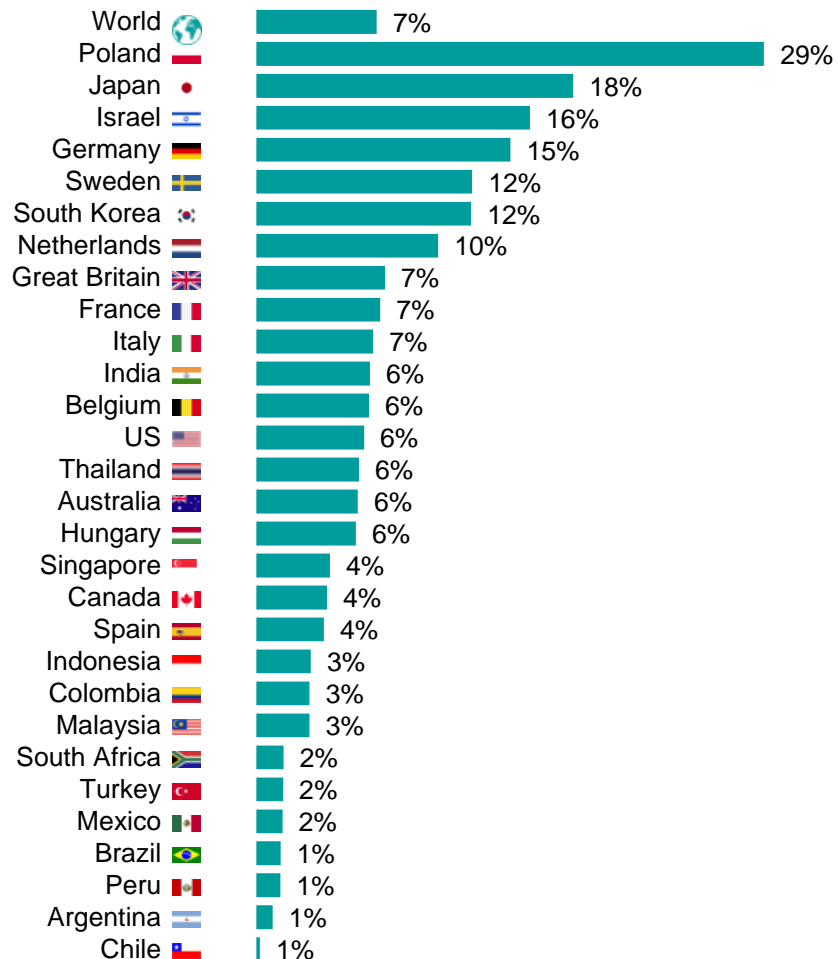
One in five (19%) choose climate change as one of the biggest worries in their country and it ranks seventh out of 18 worries in our survey.

Over recent years, there has been a slight rise in concern each September on the previous year, as the northern hemisphere exits summer. This time last year, global concern was 18%, in 2021 it was 16%.

This month, Japan is the most concerned country with one in three (32%) picking it as an issue.

Spain sees its record level of concern for climate change this month with 26% choosing it as a worry. This beats the country's previous high last September of 25%.

# 15 | MILITARY CONFLICT BETWEEN NATIONS



Military conflict between nations ranks 15<sup>th</sup> out of 18 concerns in our *What Worries the World* survey, between terrorism and maintaining social programmes.

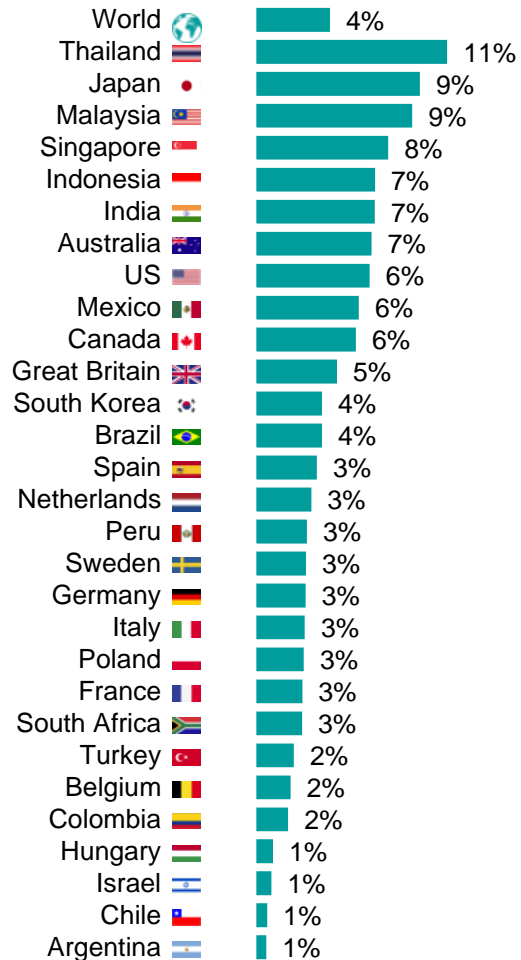
7% across 29 countries say it's one of the biggest issues affecting their country.

Global concern has stayed moderately flat. At the beginning of this year, 8% cited it as a concern and last year's was also 8%.

Poland is the most concerned country about this issue. Three in ten (29%) say it is a major issue in Poland, up 2pp on last month's score.

The least concerned countries about military conflict are in LATAM, taking all five spots at the bottom of the ranking.

# 17 | CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



Concern for coronavirus has reached a new level this month. Only 4% say it is an issue in their country, which is the lowest score since it was added to *What Worries the World* in April 2020.

That first month in April 2020, 63% said it was a top issue in their country. In September 2021, it was still the top concern in our *What Worries the World* survey.

Even at the beginning of this year, coronavirus ranked tenth in our list of global concerns. At the time Malaysia was the most concerned country with 37% choosing it as an issue.

Eleven per cent of people in Thailand picking coronavirus as a worry is enough to make it the most concerned country globally.

# ECONOMIC FOCUS





# THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY IN MY COUNTRY

Running alongside our *What Worries the World* survey, Ipsos' monthly *Global Consumer Confidence* study asks the public in 29 countries questions relating to the economy and finance, on a country and personal level.

The following section draws on some of this data to provide extra context to this month's *What Worries the World* report. It shows how the public rate the current economic climate in their country.

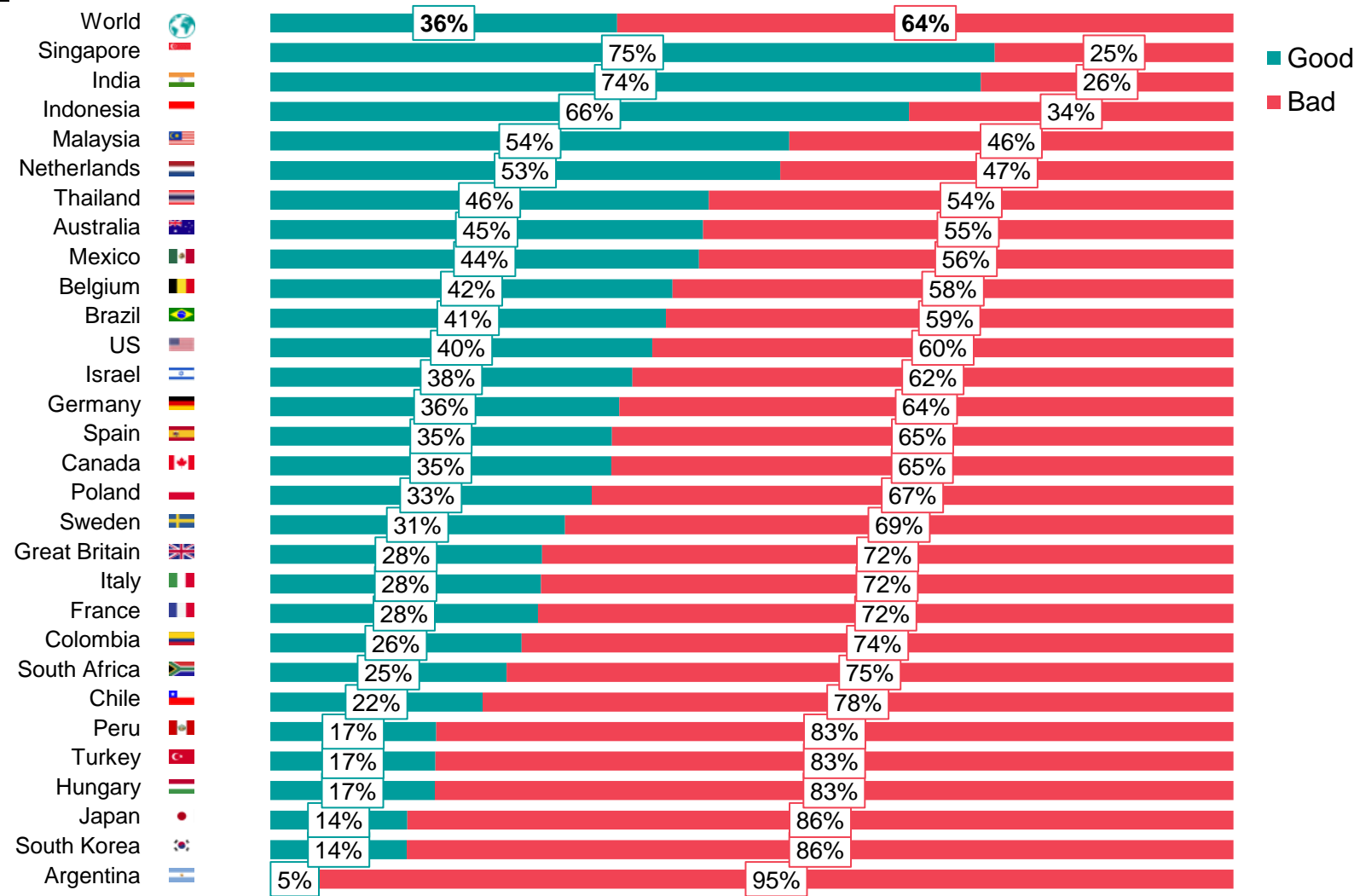
Please contact [Teodros.Gebrekal@Ipsos.com](mailto:Teodros.Gebrekal@Ipsos.com) for more information.



# CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION

Read more about perceptions of the economy in the Ipsos Global Consumer Confidence survey and explore the data in the [Ipsos Global Economic Indicator portal](#).

## Q How would you describe the current economic situation in your country?



Across 29 countries, Singapore remains the most positive about its current economy, with three-quarters of people (75%) describing it as “good”.

Thailand (+9pp) and Malaysia (+8pp) have seen the biggest increases in positive economic perception this month. South Africa (+7pp to 25%) has also seen a rise, recording its highest score since April 2022 (also 25%).

Meanwhile, after four months of stability and recovery, Sweden’s “good” economy score has fallen 9pp. Peru and Germany have also seen a 7pp decline this month.

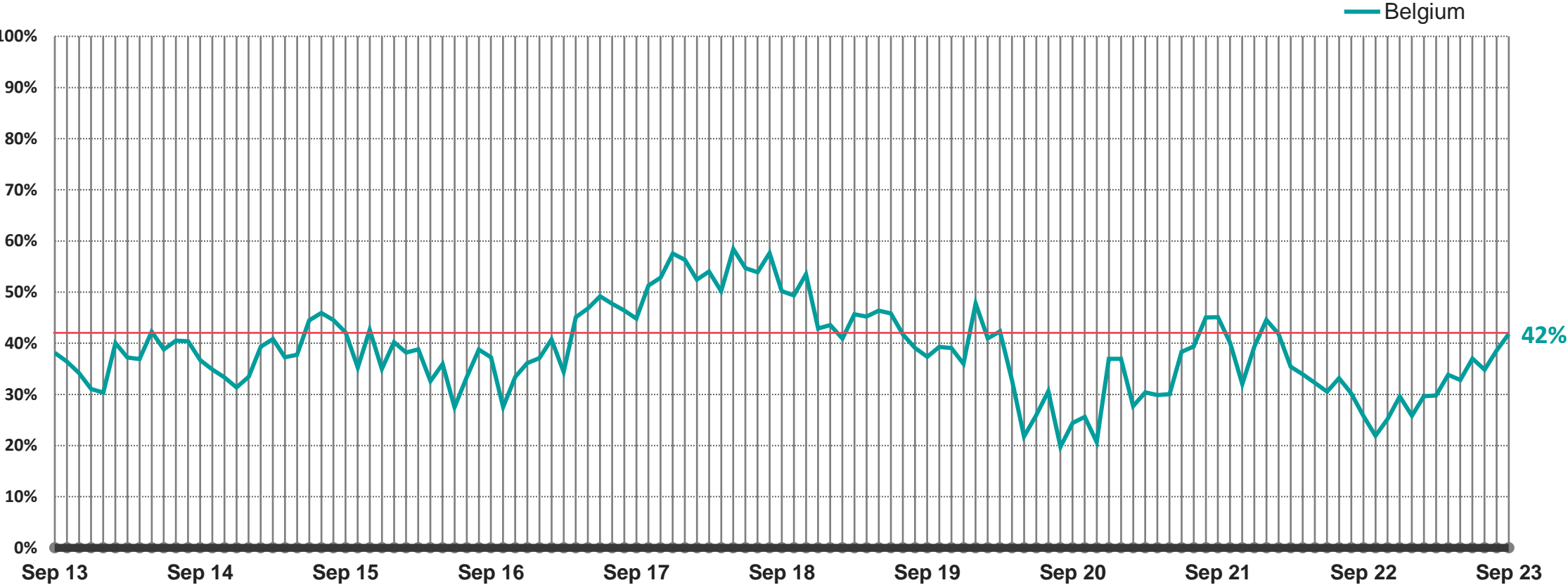
A 3pp rise from last month sees Belgium record its highest “good” economy score since February 2022 (both 42%). Positive economic perceptions have risen more in Belgium over the past 12 months than in any other country in our survey.



# CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION: BELGIUM

**Q** How would you describe the current economic situation in your country?  
(% 'Very good' or 'Somewhat good')

Positive economic perceptions have risen more over the past 12 months in Belgium than in any other country in our survey (+16pp vs. September 2022).



**Base:** Representative sample c. 500 adults aged 16-74 in Belgium, 2013 - 2023.  
**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details.*

# CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION: GERMANY

After a 7pp decline, Germany has recorded its lowest ever “good” economy score.

**Q** How would you describe the current economic situation in your country?  
(% ‘Very good’ or ‘Somewhat good’)



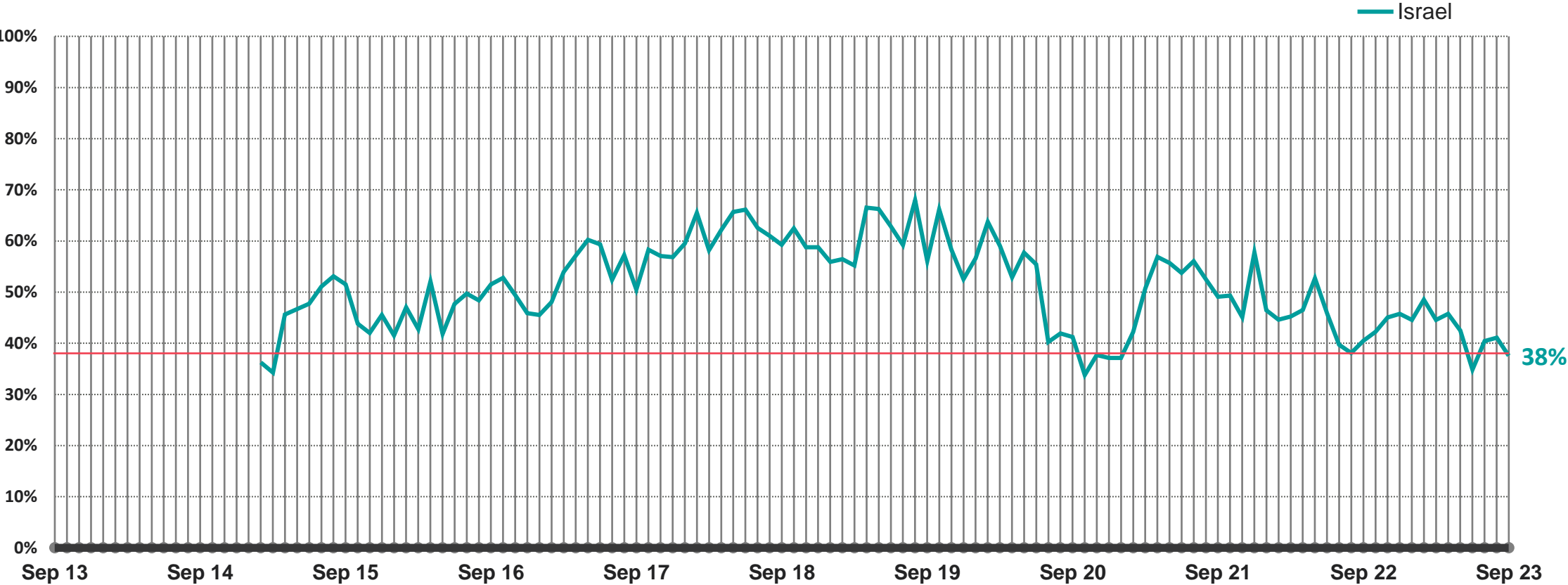
**Base:** Representative sample c. 1000 adults aged 16-74 in Germany, 2013 - 2023.  
**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details.*



# CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION: ISRAEL

**Q** How would you describe the current economic situation in your country?  
(% 'Very good' or 'Somewhat good')

After a 3pp drop this month, Israel is now 4pp away from its all-time lowest ever “good” economy score (34% in October 2020).

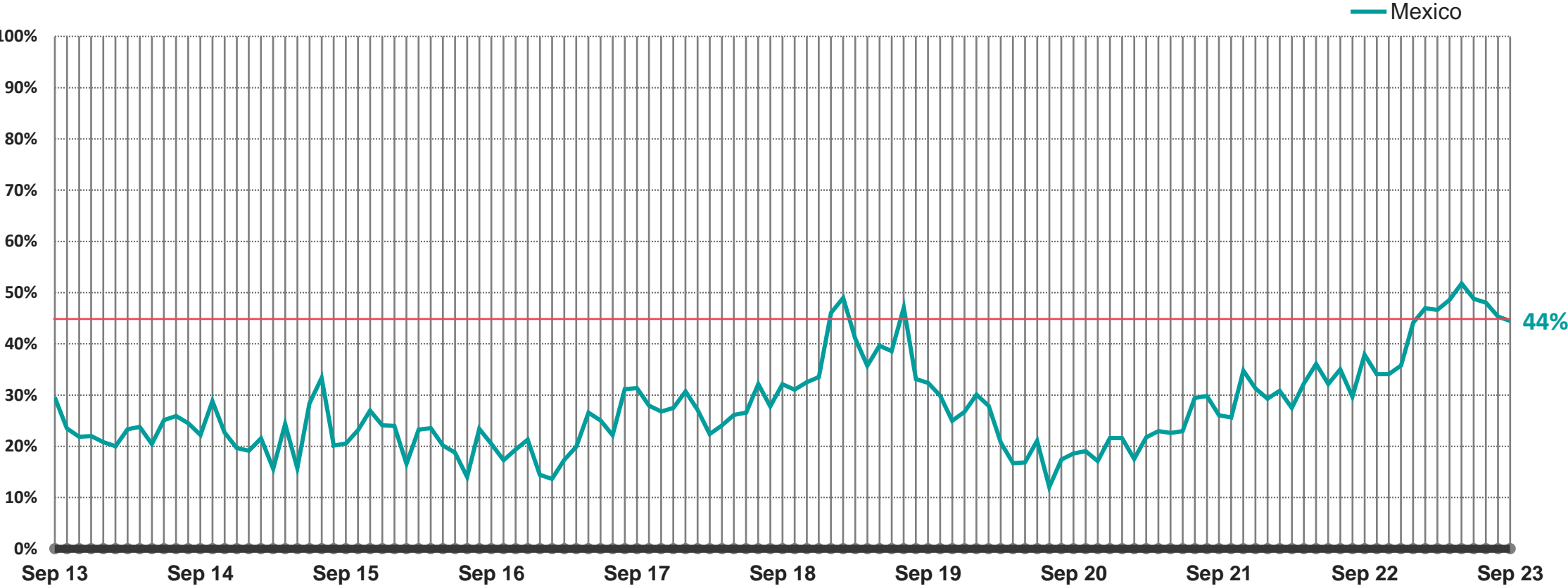


**Base:** Representative sample c. 500 adults aged 16-74 in Israel, 2013 - 2023.  
**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details.*

# CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION: MEXICO

After reaching a new highest ever score in May 2023 (52%), Mexico's "good" economy score has now fallen for four consecutive months.

**Q** How would you describe the current economic situation in your country?  
(% 'Very good' or 'Somewhat good')



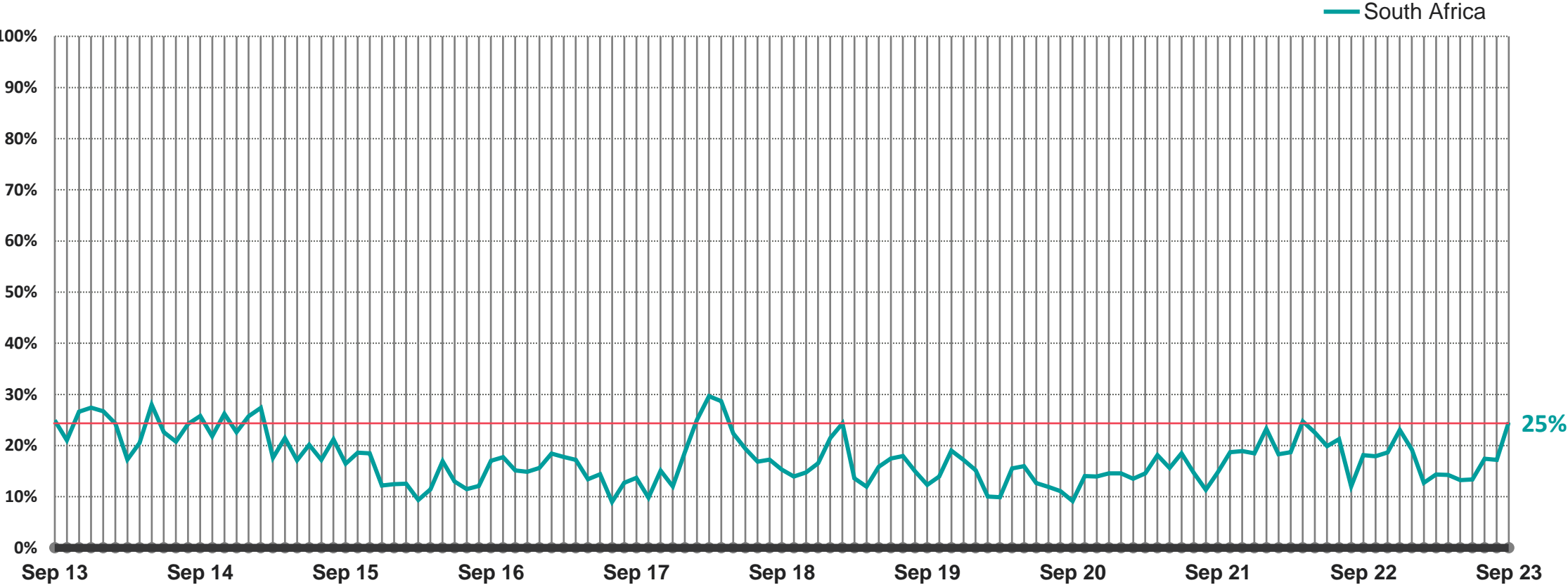
**Base:** Representative sample c. 500 adults aged 16-74 in Mexico, 2013 - 2023.  
**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details.*



# CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION: SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa’s “good” economy score has risen 7pp this month, its highest score since April 2022 (25%).

**Q** How would you describe the current economic situation in your country?  
(% ‘Very good’ or ‘Somewhat good’)



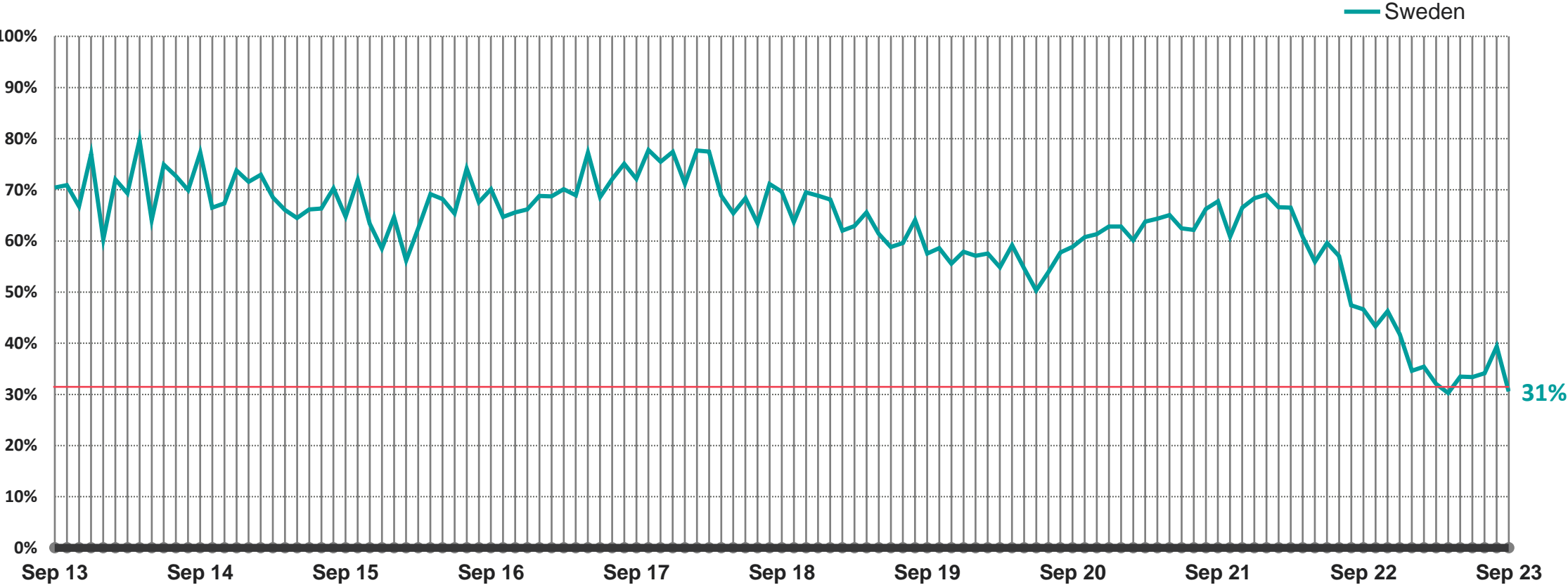
**Base:** Representative sample c. 500 adults aged 16-74 in South Africa, 2013 - 2023.  
**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details.*



# CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION: SWEDEN

**Q** How would you describe the current economic situation in your country?  
(% 'Very good' or 'Somewhat good')

Sweden's "good" economy score has fallen 9pp and now sits just 1pp above its all-time low (30% in April 2023).



**Base:** Representative sample c. 500 adults aged 16-74 in Sweden, 2013 - 2023.  
**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details.*

# CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION: US

**Q** How would you describe the current economic situation in your country?  
(% 'Very good' or 'Somewhat good')

A 4pp rise sees the US's "good" economy score reach 40% for the first time in almost two years and is the country's highest score since October 2021 (41%).



**Base:** Representative sample c. 1000 adults aged 18-74 in US, 2013 - 2023.  
**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details.*



# METHODOLOGY

This 29-country Global Advisor survey was conducted between August 25th 2023 and September 8th 2023 via the Ipsos Online Panel system among 20,570 adults aged 18-74 in Canada, Israel, Malaysia, South Africa, Turkey and the United States, 20-74 in Indonesia and Thailand, 21-74 in Singapore, and 16-74 in all other nations.

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

The sample consists of approximately 1000+ individuals in each of Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Israel, Japan, Mexico, Spain, Sweden, and the US, and approximately 500+ individuals in each of Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Thailand 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 US can be taken as representative of these countries' general adult population under the age of 75.

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

Weighting has been employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to the most recent census data.

The precision of Ipsos online polls are 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.

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 knows or not stated responses. The publication of these findings abides by local rules and regulations.