

# WHAT WORRIES THE WORLD?

August 2021



GAME CHANGERS



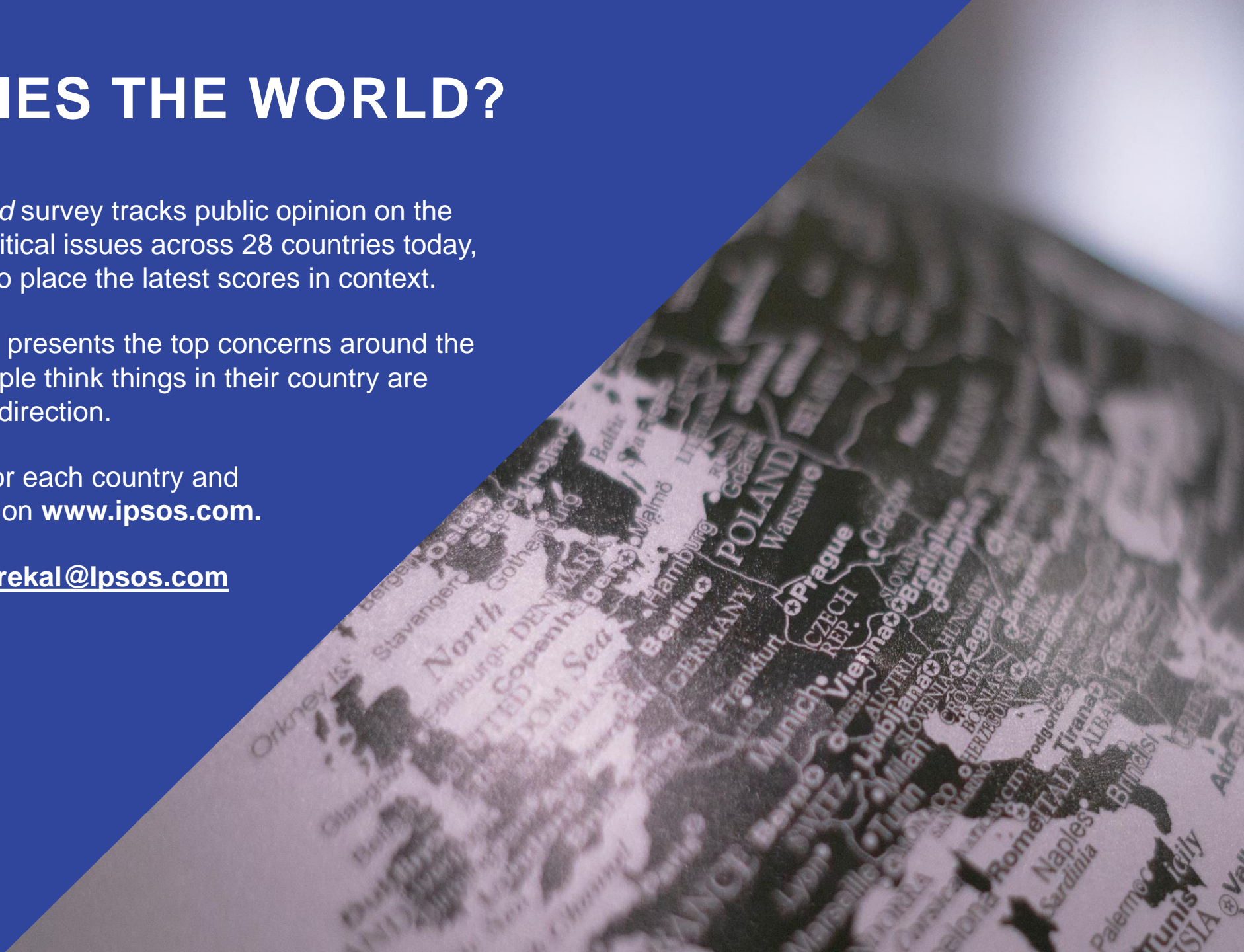
# WHAT WORRIES THE WORLD?

Ipsos' *What Worries the World* survey tracks public opinion on the most important social and political issues across 28 countries today, drawing on 10 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)**.

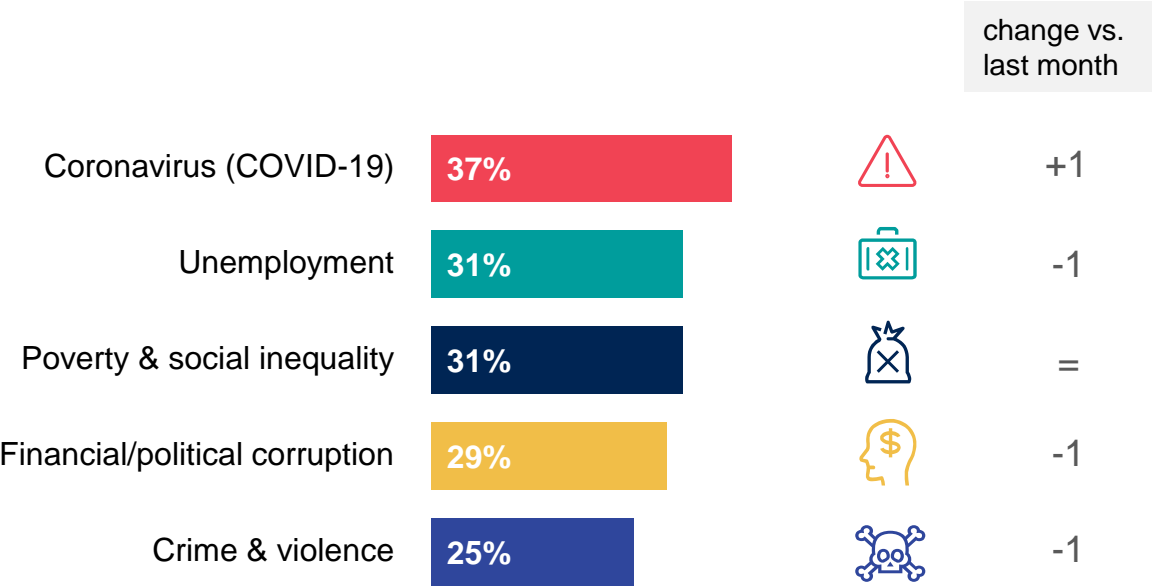
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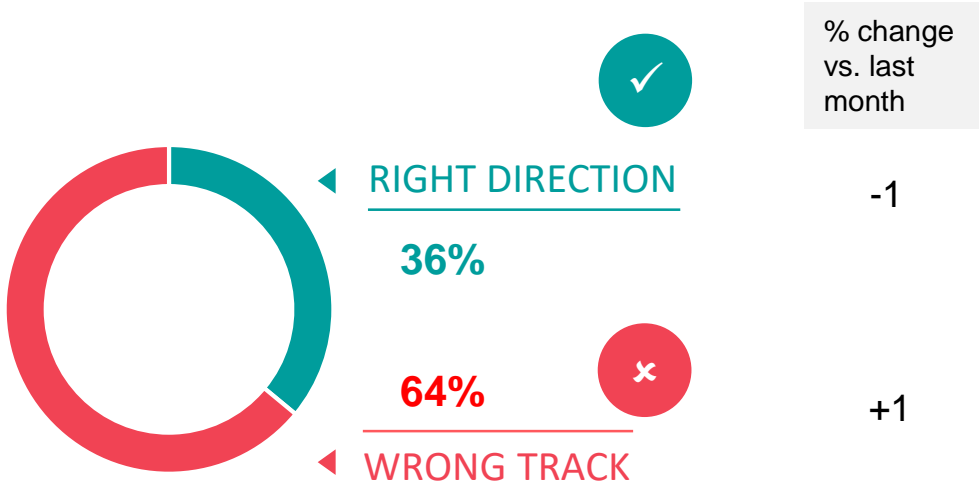
# WHAT WORRIES THE WORLD? AUGUST 2021

Concern about Coronavirus remains the world’s top worry, with 37% placing it in the top three issues facing their country today. Meanwhile, 64% say things in their country are on the “wrong track”.

**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?



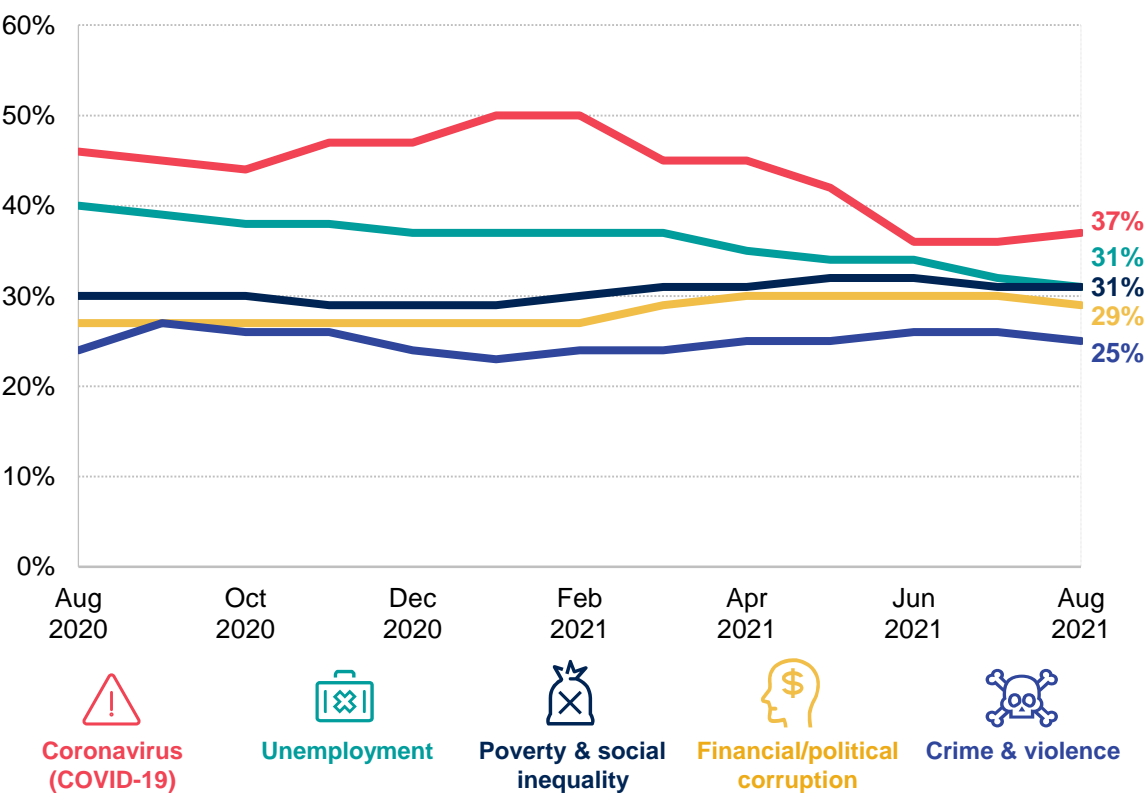
**Base:** Representative sample of 19,010 adults aged 16-74 in 28 participating countries, July 23<sup>rd</sup> – August 6<sup>th</sup> 2021.

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

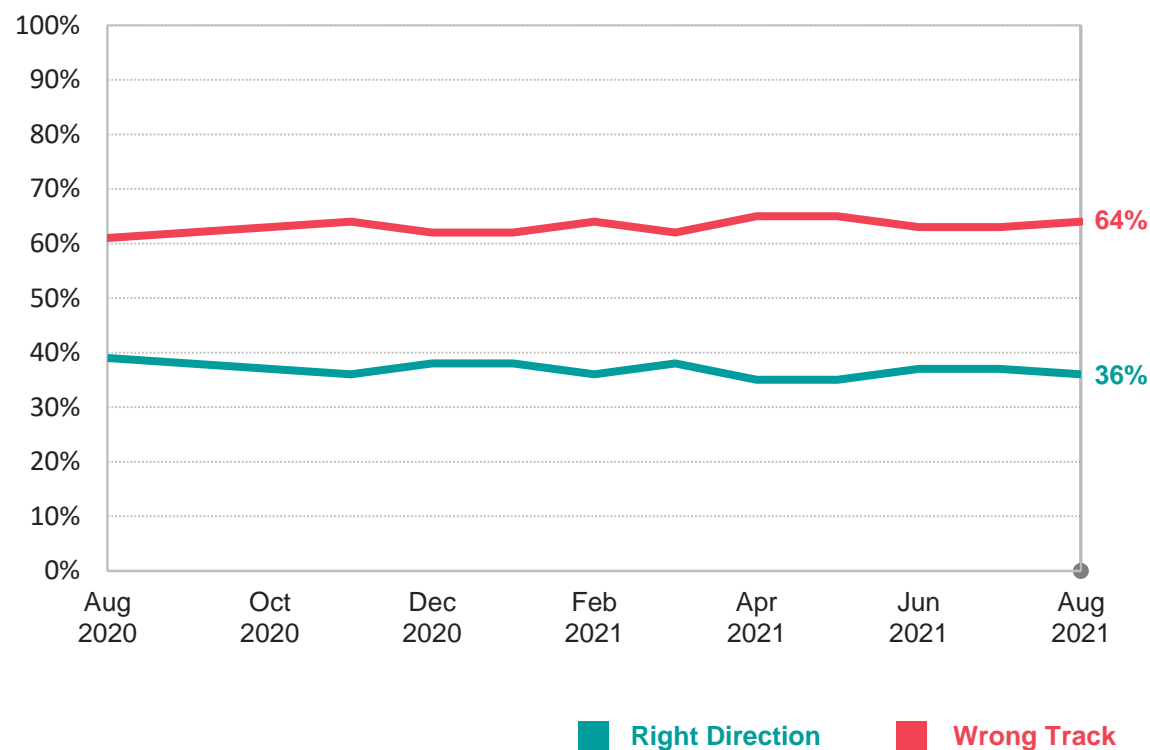


# WHAT WORRIES THE WORLD? 12-MONTH TREND

**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.20,000 adults aged 16-74 in 28 participating countries, August 2020 – August 2021.

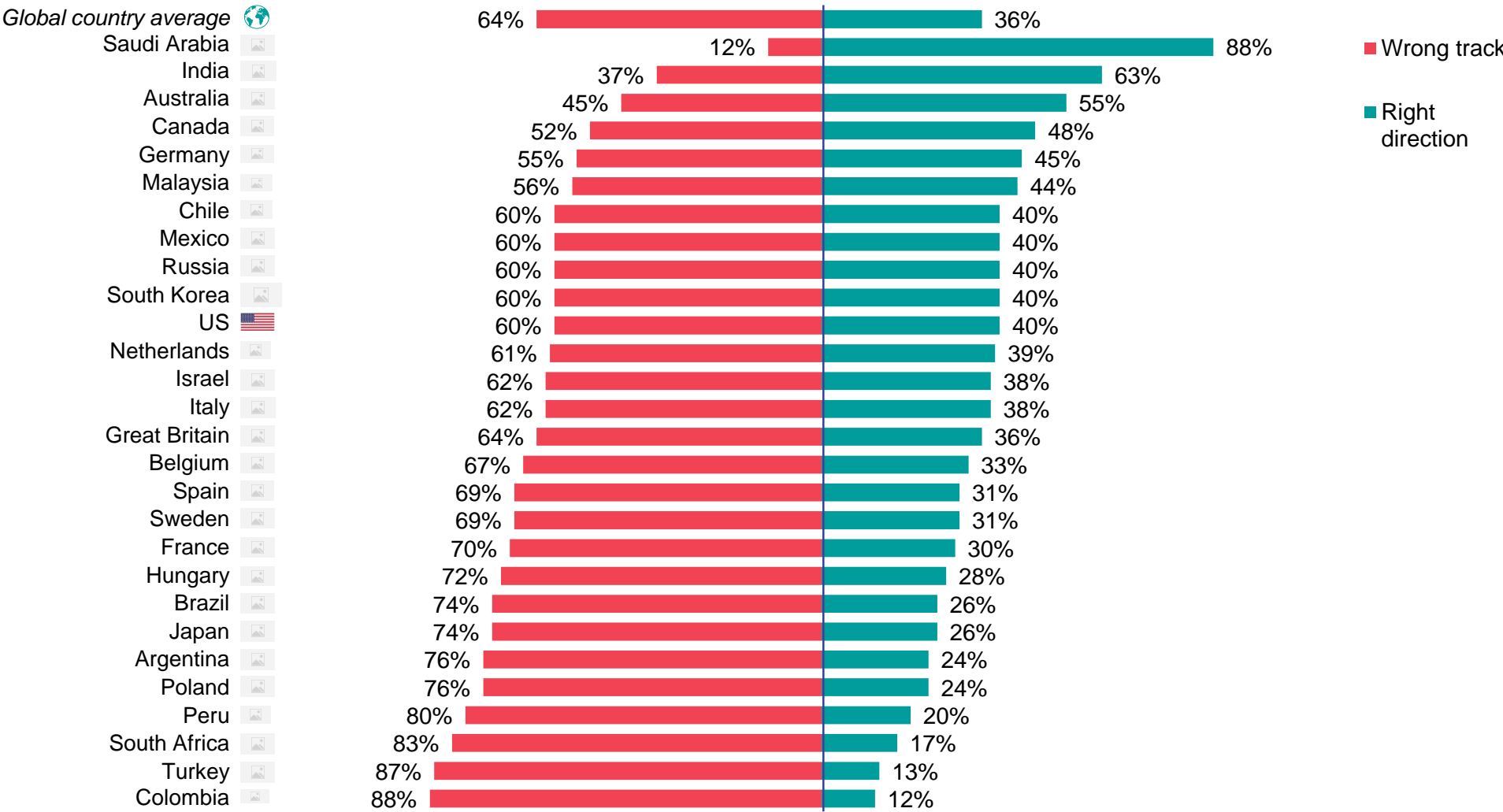
**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. *Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details.*

# 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? (August 2021)



Across the 28 nations surveyed, 64% on average say that things in their country are on the wrong track while 36% take the view that things are heading in the right direction.

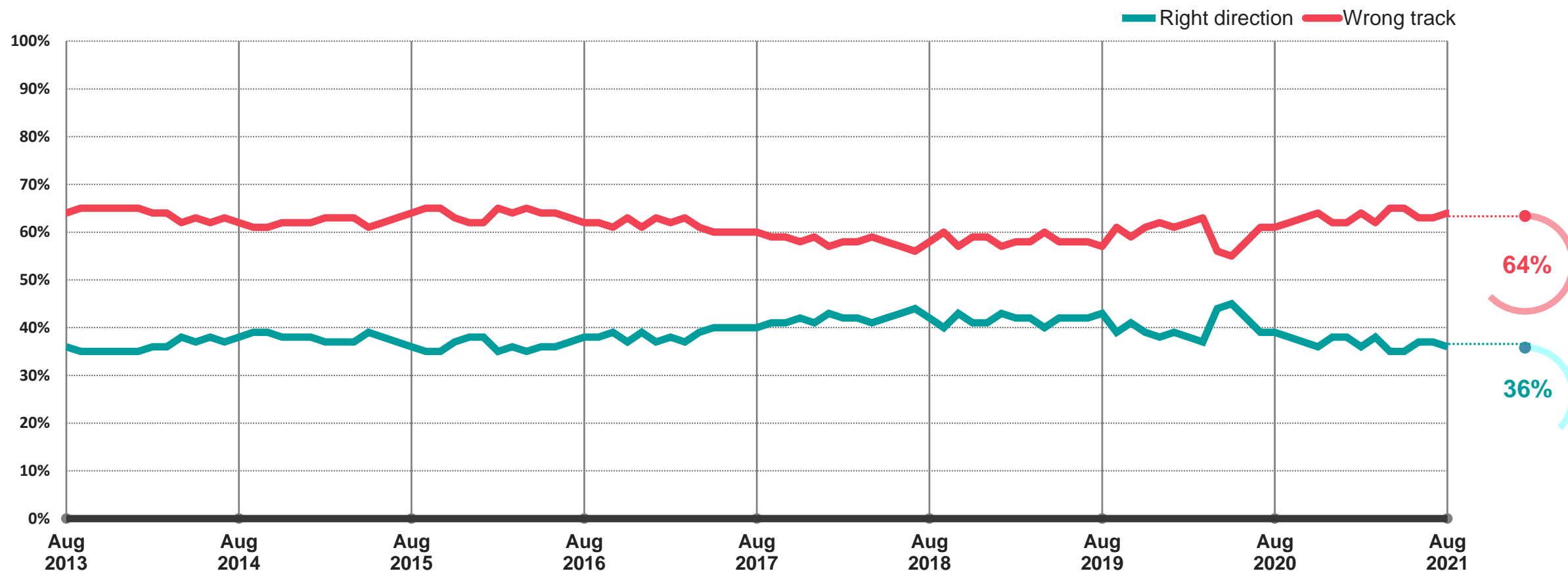
This is a slightly more pessimistic picture than we saw at the start of the year (62% vs. 38%) and one year ago (57% vs. 43%).

The countries where most people say that things are heading in the wrong direction are Colombia (88%) and Turkey (87%), followed by South Africa (83%) and Peru (80%).

The largest month-on-month change is in Great Britain with 64% selecting “wrong track”, up 10 points. We also see optimism slipping by 6 points in Israel, and 5 points in Turkey, Poland, the US, Germany and Canada.

# 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 c. 20,000 adults aged 16-74 in 28 participating countries, 2013 - 2021.

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

# WORRIES THE WORLD? TOP ISSUES RANKED

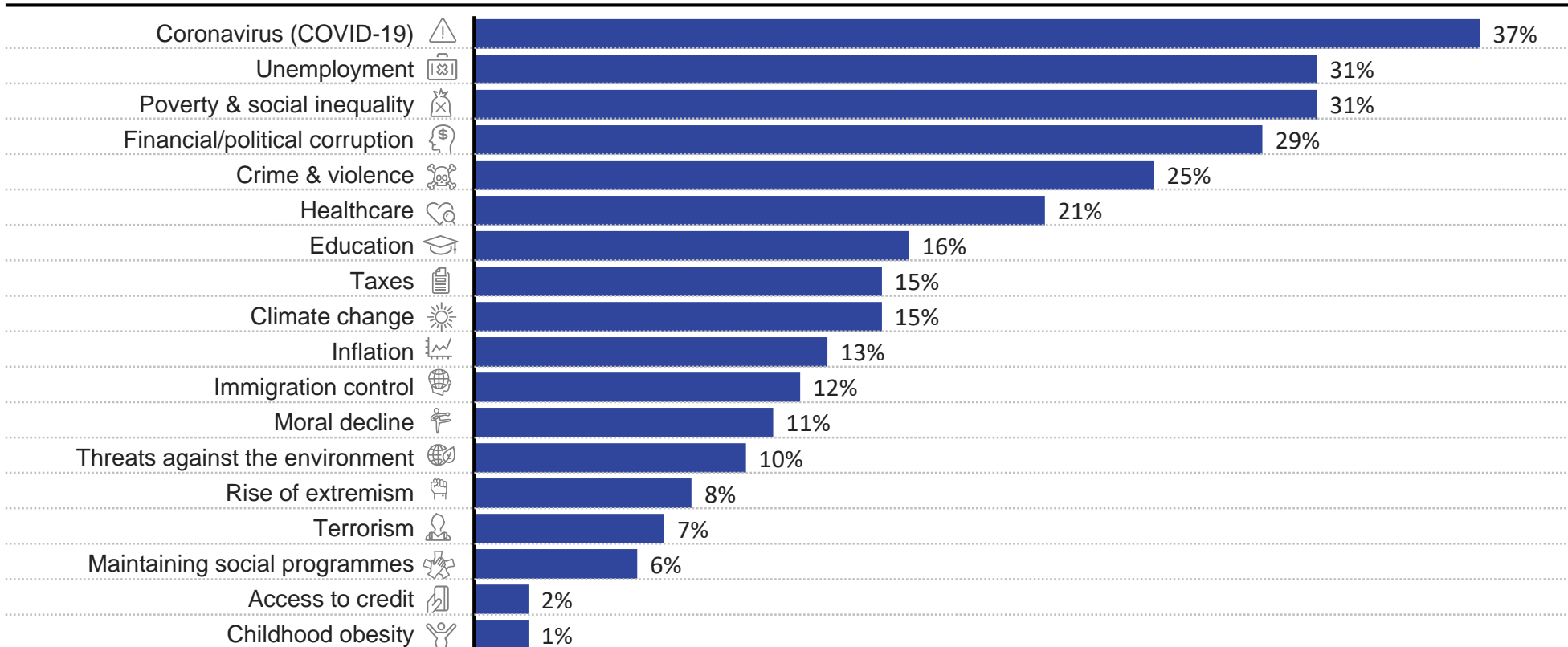




# WORLD WORRIES: THE FULL LIST

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

% mentioned in August 2021 (global country average)



Our full ranking of the 18 issues in our survey gives an overview of what people in 28 countries worry about today.

At a global level, 37% on average say that Covid-19 is one of the top issues facing their country. This has remained stable for three months but is down on the 50% recorded at the start of 2021 and 47% one year ago.

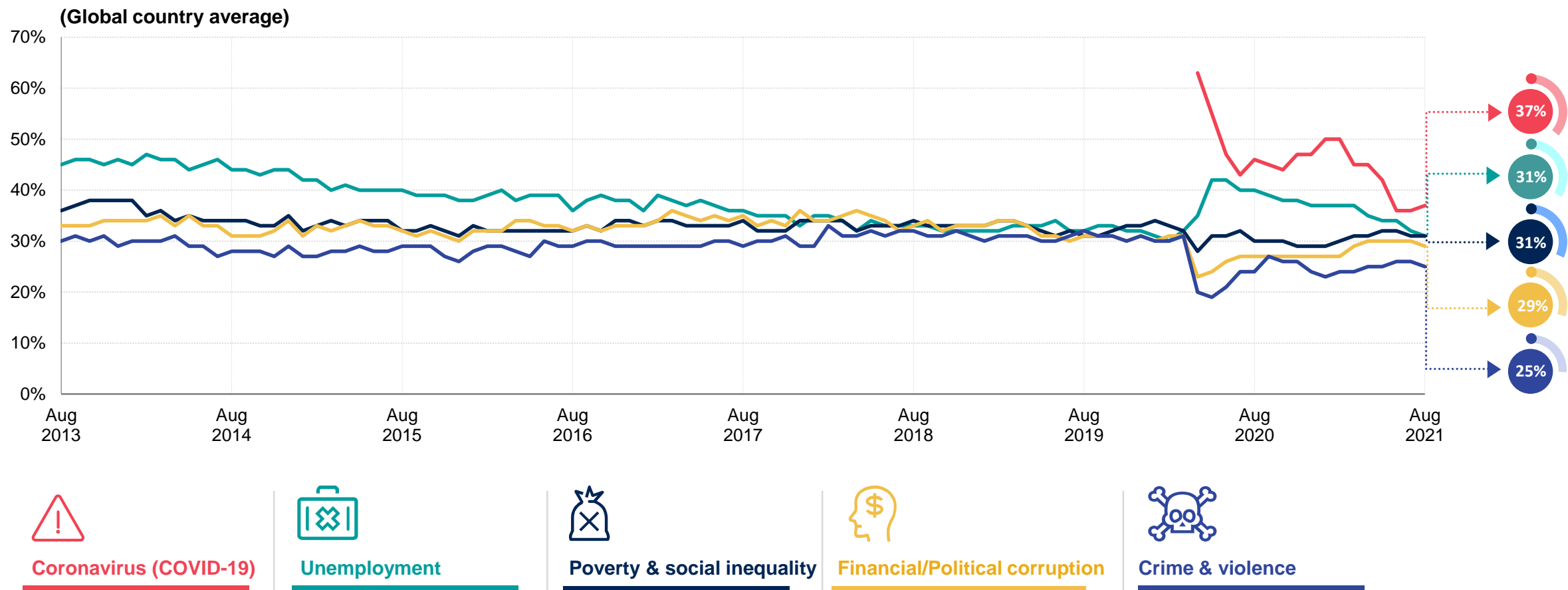
Unemployment and Poverty & social inequality, with 31%, are the next biggest issues across all countries, followed by Financial/political corruption (29%) and Crime & violence (25%).

**Base:** Representative sample of 19,010 adults aged 16-74 in 28 participating countries, July 23<sup>rd</sup> – August 6<sup>th</sup> 2021.

**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?

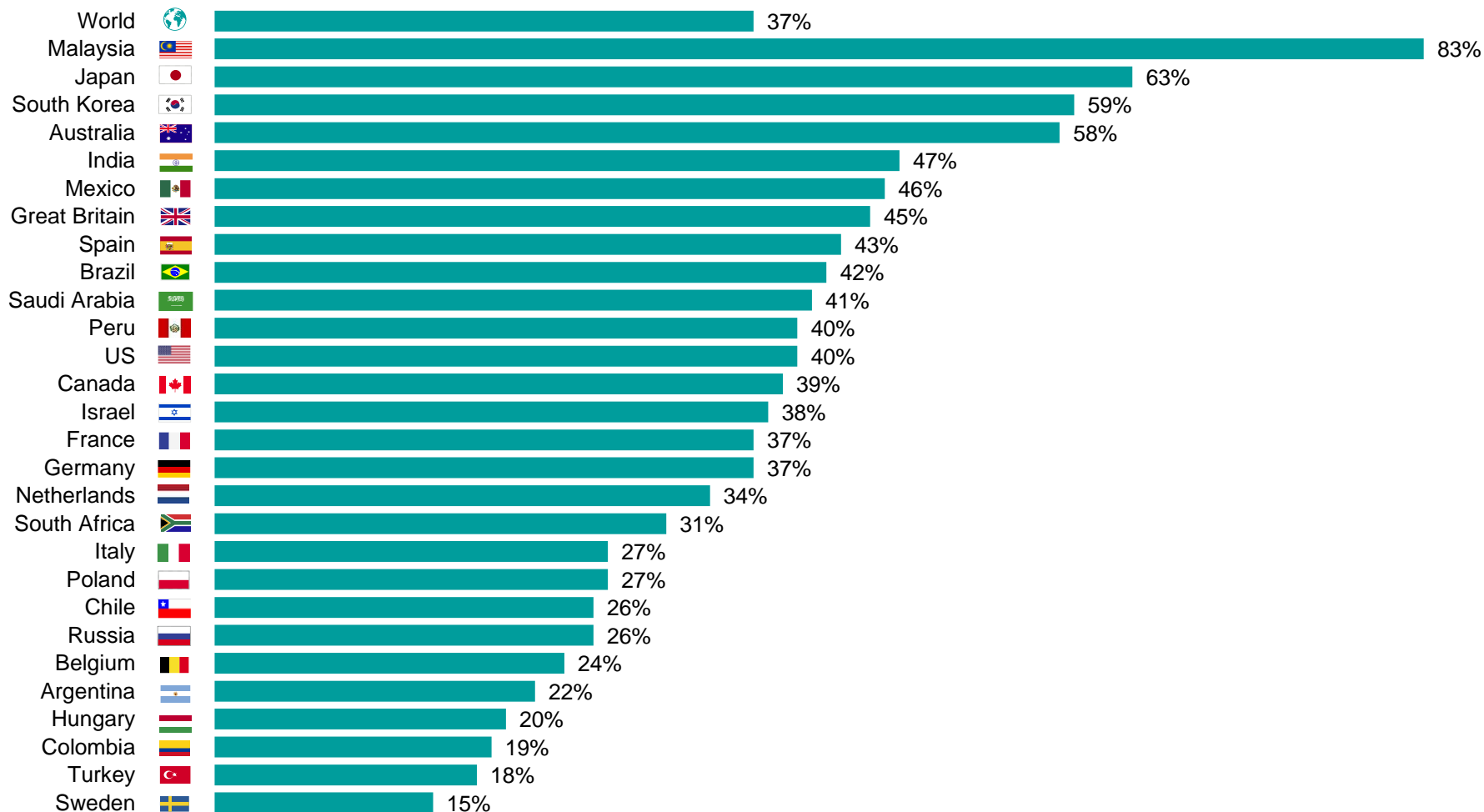


**Base:** Representative sample c. 20,000 adults aged 16-74 in 28 participating countries, 2013 - 2021.

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

# 1 | CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

(%) worried in August 2021 in each country



On average, 37% worldwide say Coronavirus is one of the biggest issues facing their country today.

Malaysia is again the country most concerned about Covid-19. A 7-point increase to 83% marks the highest seen since April 2020.

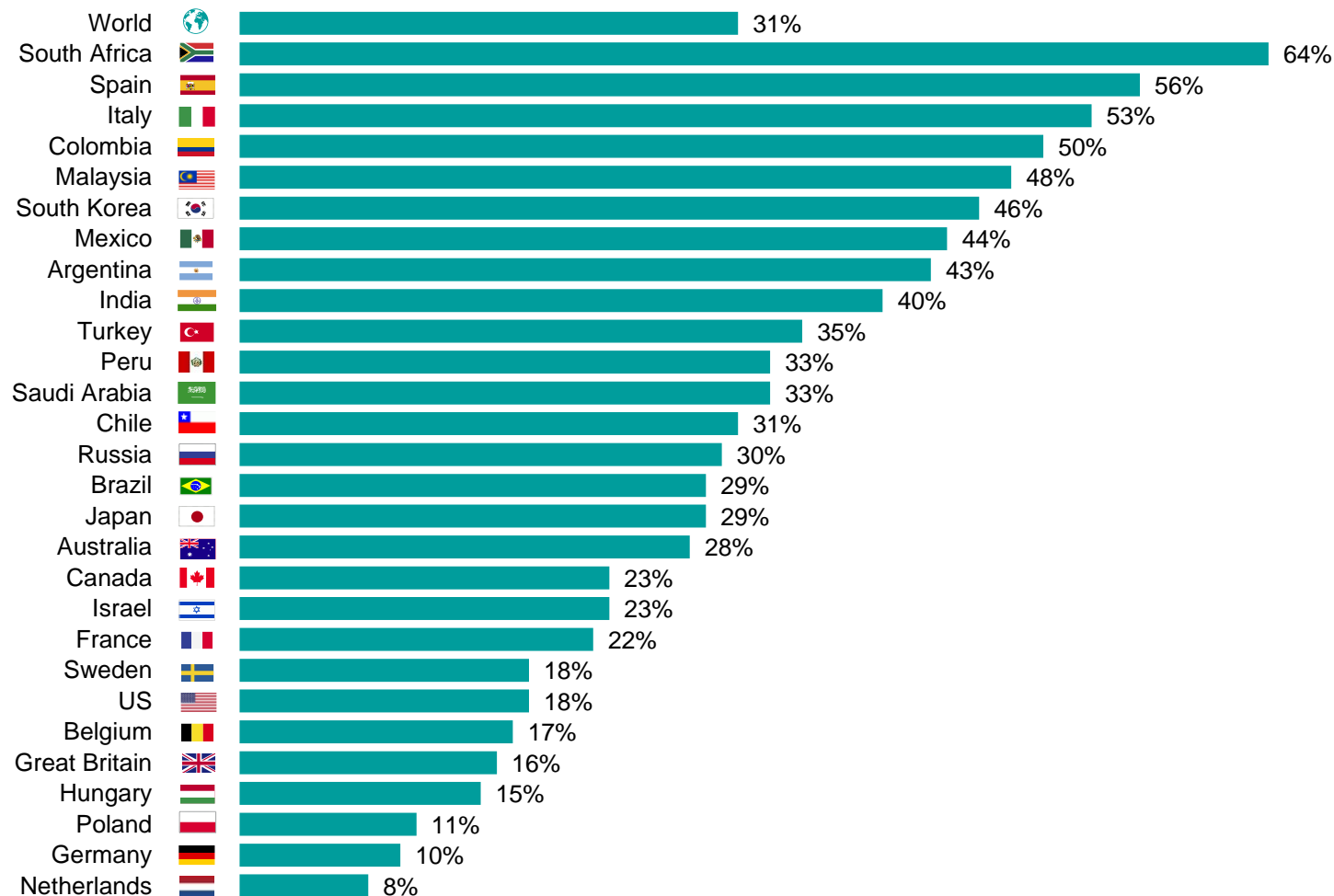
Around six in 10 in Japan, South Korea and Australia are concerned about Coronavirus. 59% marks the highest level of concern in South Korea in 2021, while Australia's 58% is also the highest recorded since September 2020.

The greatest month-on-month increases have occurred in the US (+15 points), Israel (+12) and Mexico (+10).

In August, Coronavirus becomes the single most worrying issue in France, Israel, the Netherlands and the US, taking the total number of countries with Covid-19 at #1 to 13 of 28.

# =2 | UNEMPLOYMENT AND JOBS

## (%) worried in August 2021 in each country



Unemployment is the second greatest worry worldwide, with 31% on average saying it is one of the most important issues in their country today. This is in line with Poverty & social inequality, previously in 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The top three countries selecting this issue are South Africa (64%), Spain (56%) and Italy (53%).

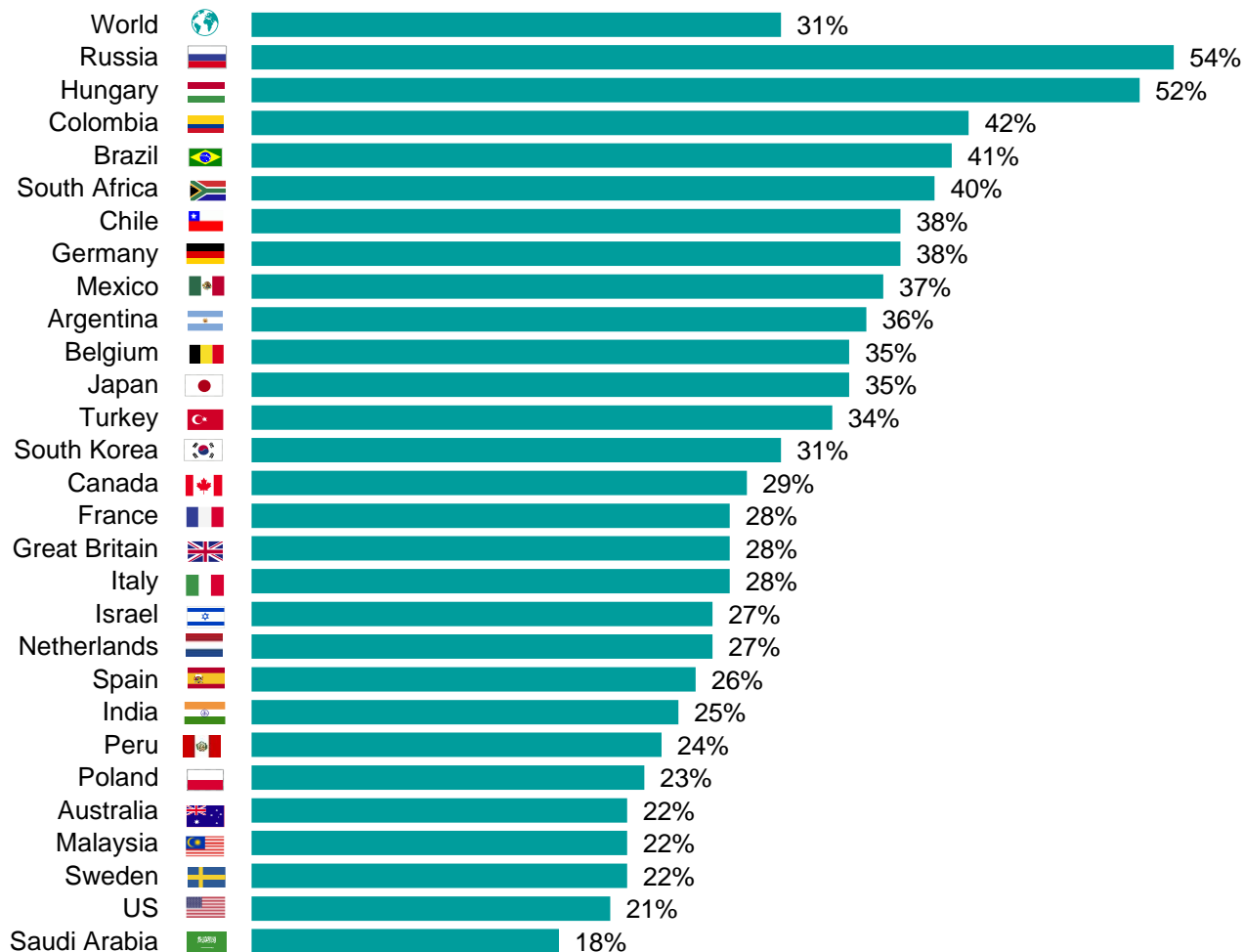
Spain sees the largest increase in concern about Unemployment vs. last month (+7 points). Nevertheless, this is the country's second lowest score since January 2020.

We see decreases in Hungary (-6), Great Britain (-5) and South Korea (also -5). 46% is the lowest recorded in South Korea since 2014.



# =2 | POVERTY & SOCIAL INEQUALITY

(%) worried in August 2021 in each country



Three in 10 (31%) on average across all 28 countries say that Poverty & social inequality is one of the top issues facing their country today. This is level with what we see for Unemployment in August.

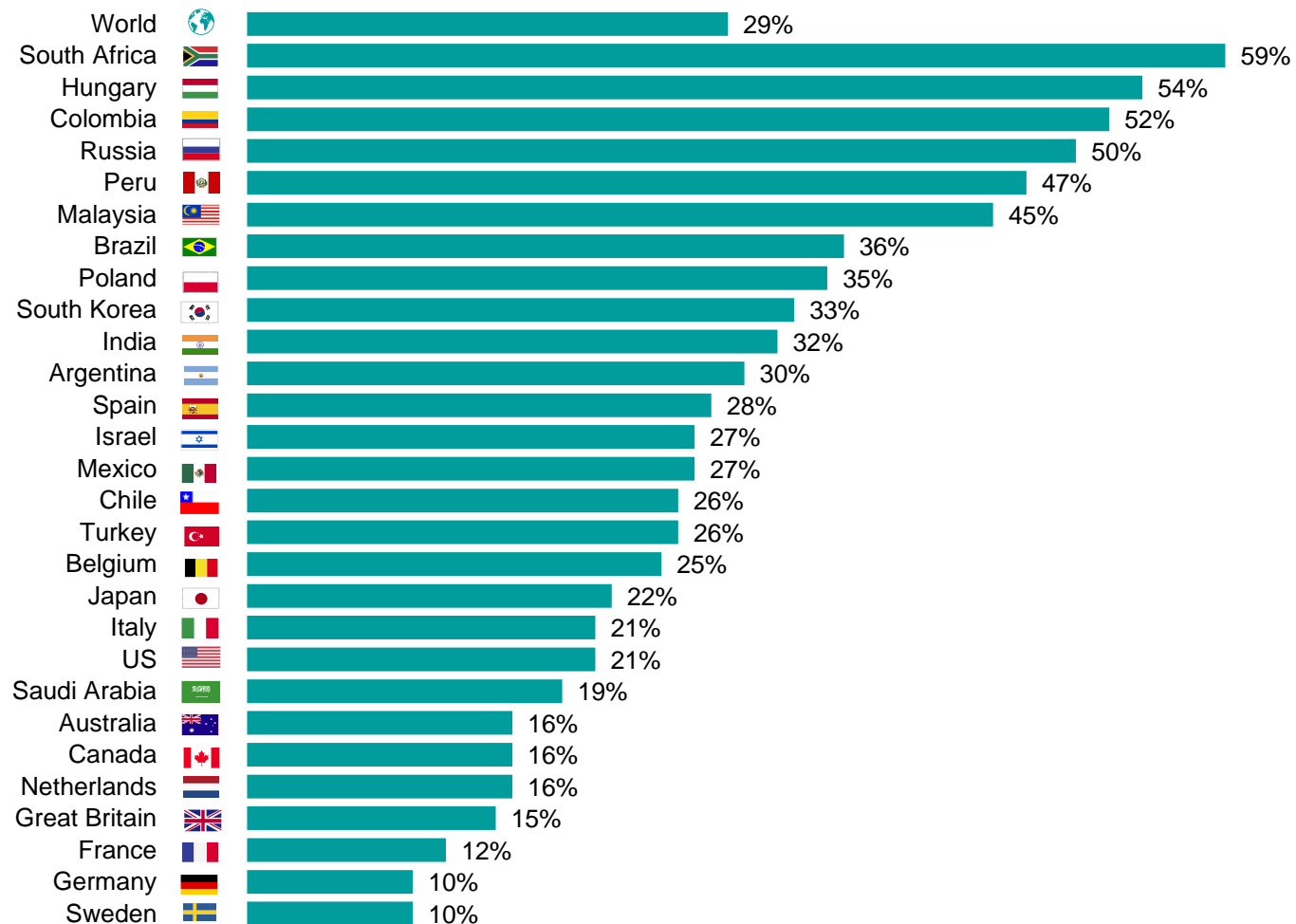
Russia and Hungary stand out as the nations where a larger proportion of the public are concerned about this issue.

The largest month-on-month increases in concern are seen in South Africa (+10), Hungary (+7), Brazil (+6) and South Korea (also +6).

Brazil's 41% is the highest ever recorded for the nation on this issue. The same applies to South Africa, with 40% today.

## 4 | FINANCIAL/POLITICAL CORRUPTION

(%) worried in August 2021 in each country



Financial/Political Corruption is ranked fourth in our list of world worries as 29% on average across our 28 countries count it among the big issues of the day.

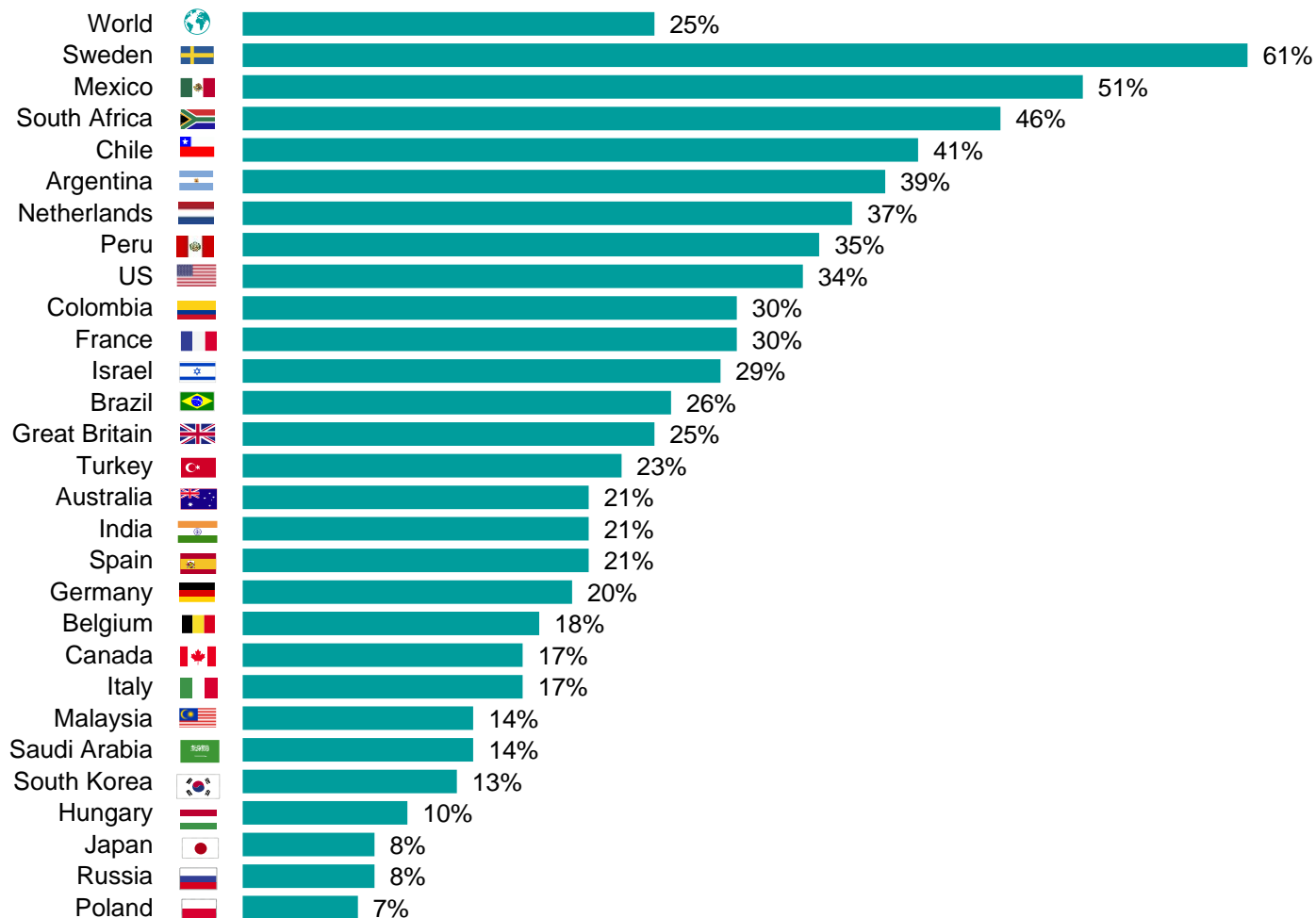
South Africans are most concerned about corruption, with 59% selecting this is a top worry in their country today.

Next in the list of nations most concerned about this issue are Hungary (54%, a 3-point increase vs. last month), Colombia (52%) and Russia (50%).

In 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> place, Peru and Malaysia both see a 6-point decrease in concern compared to July 2021.

## 5 | CRIME & VIOLENCE

(%) worried in August 2021 in each country



Crime & violence is the fifth greatest worry globally with one in four (25%) across all countries selecting it as one of the most important issues facing their country today.

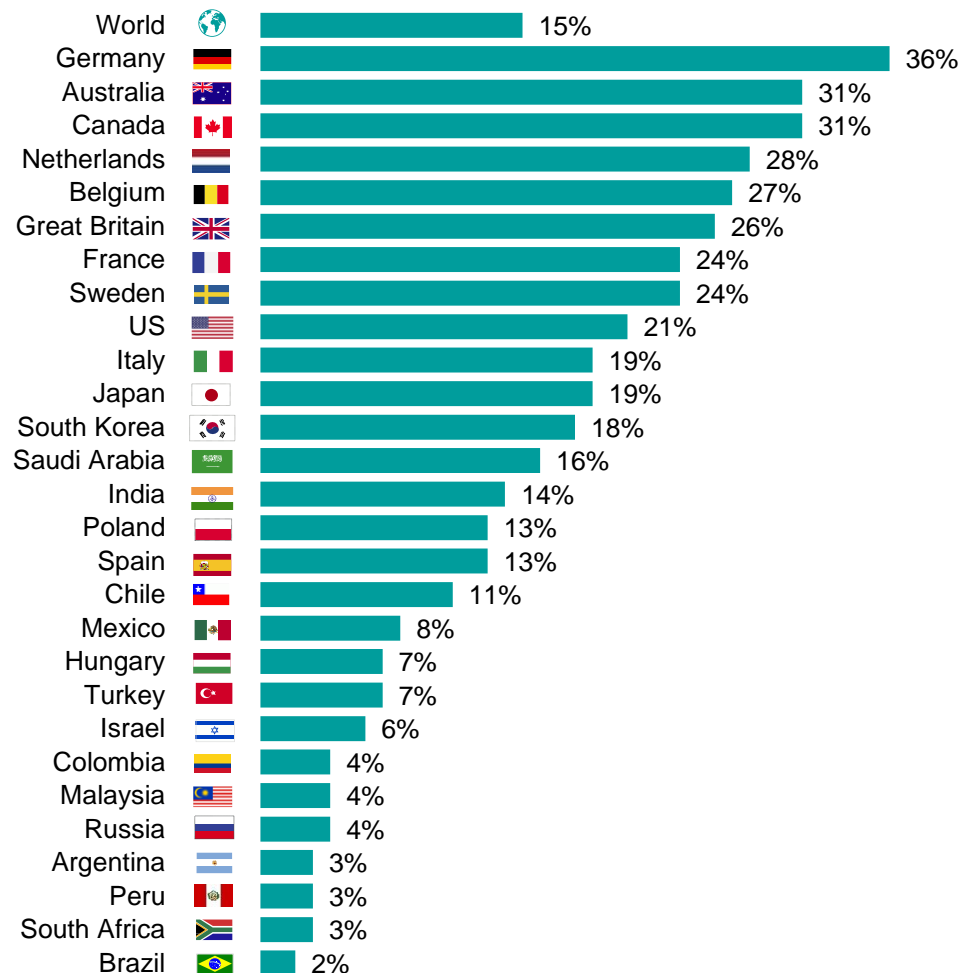
Sweden is once again the country most concerned about Crime and violence, with 61% selecting this issue. More than half (51%) of Mexicans also consider this a top concern in their country today.

The largest increases in concern about Crime & violence seen this month are seen in Spain (+6 points) and Saudi Arabia (+5).

# CLIMATE CHANGE

*With the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 26) taking place this autumn, we take a look at environmental concerns.*

**(%) worried in August 2021 in each country**



Worldwide, 15% place climate change among their top 3 concerns. Overall, it is ranked 9<sup>th</sup> of our list of 18 issues.

This is 4 percentage points higher than 12 months ago and just shy of the 16% seen in August 2019.

Germany is currently the country most concerned about climate change, with 36% selecting this (+6 percentage points vs. last month, and the highest Germany has recorded to date). Australia and Canada are next, with 31% in each reporting climate change to be a top concern.

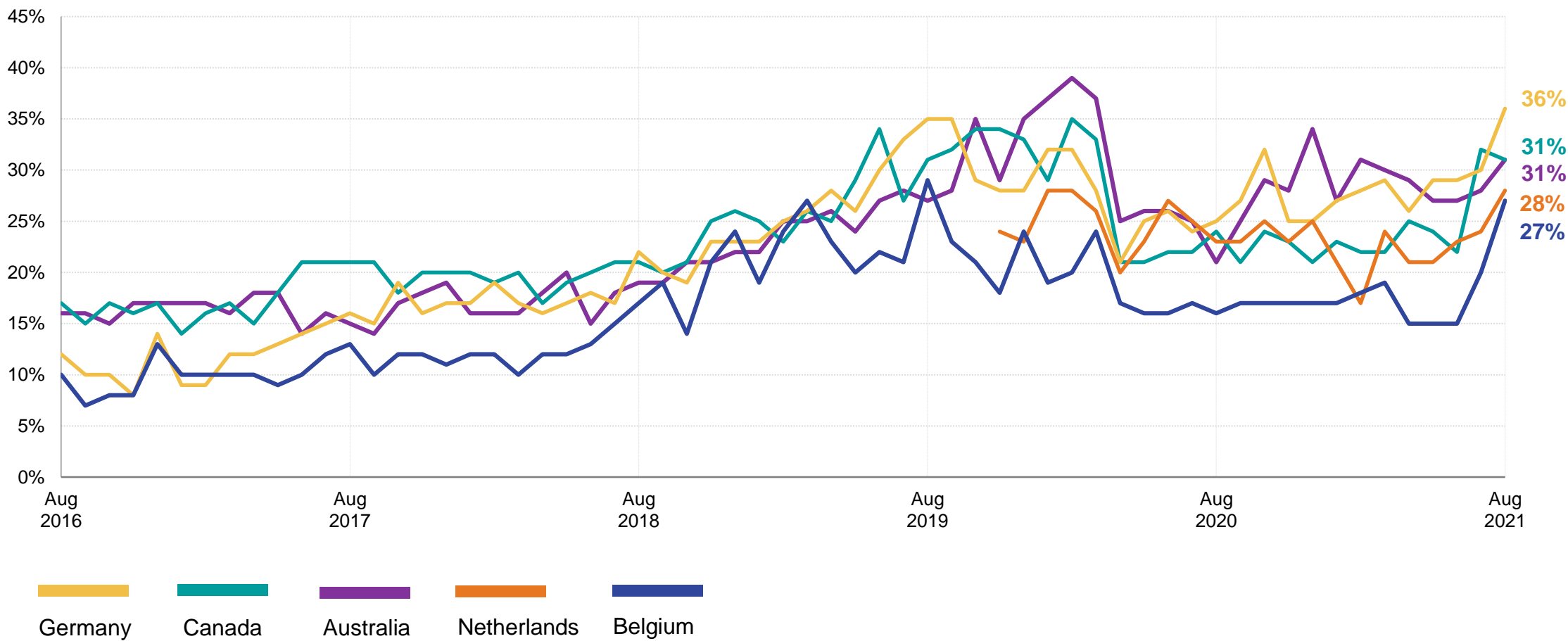
Other notable increases are seen in Belgium (+7 vs. July 2021) and Sweden (+6).

The highest score recorded for climate change was 39% in Australia in February 2020, following the devastating bushfires of 2019/2020.



# CLIMATE CHANGE CONCERN

5-year trend of the top 5 countries most concerned about climate change (as of August 2021).



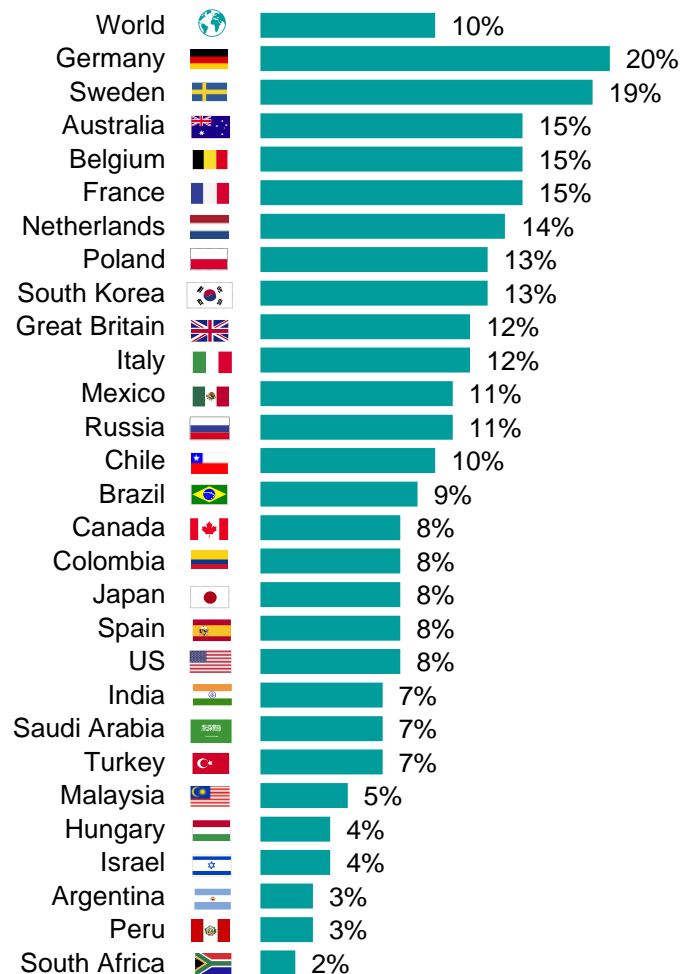
**Base:** Representative sample of c.1000 adults aged 16-74 in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands, 2016 - 2021.

**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. See methodology for details.

# THREATS AGAINST THE ENVIRONMENT

*With the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 26) taking place this autumn, we take a look at environmental concerns.*

**(%) worried in August 2021 in each country**



In addition to the 15% who count climate change to be a top issue facing their country today, 10% select “threats against the environment” to be an important issue. Overall, this is ranked 13 of our total list of 18 worries.

Germany comes top for concern about this, as well as for climate change, as one in five (20%) put this in their top 3 issues.

In second place, Sweden’s 19% marks a 5-point increase from last month. This is the largest percentage recorded since December 2019.

# METHODOLOGY

This 28-country Global Advisor survey was conducted between July 23<sup>rd</sup> and August 6<sup>th</sup> 2021 via the Ipsos Online Panel system among 19,010 adults aged 18-74 in Canada, Israel, Malaysia, South Africa, Turkey and the United States, and 16-74 in all 21 other countries.

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, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, 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, 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 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.