



World View of American Cultural and Economic Impact Sinks, reveals Ipsos survey

China bucks the trend

February 12, 2004, Washington, D.C. - President George W. Bush has seen a steady erosion in world opinion about the impact of the U.S. on other countries' economies and cultures - except in China. Recent polling by Ipsos, the global marketing research firm, finds that urban Chinese have an overwhelmingly positive assessment of the impact of the U.S. on their country.

"Reactions to American economic and cultural influences have taken a significant turn for the worse in recent years, especially among European and Latin American countries," said Thomas Riehle, President of the company's U.S. Public Affairs division. "In our latest tracking survey, the urban Chinese are the only ones who are resoundingly upbeat about the American impact on their economy and culture."

Ipsos has been tracking global views on these issues since 1997. Among the highlights of the most recent nine-country survey:

- Urban Chinese have an overwhelmingly positive (68%) assessment of the impact of the U.S. on their economy.
- The British public gives a lukewarm assessment of American economic impact, with only a 10-point margin of positive responses over negative responses (32% vs. 22%).
- Public opinion in the rest of the surveyed countries is overwhelmingly negative about the impact of the United States on their domestic economies.
- Negative opinions exceed positive ones by significant margins in Spain (49% to 26%), Germany (49% to 22%) and Canada (44% to 32%) and Italy (40% to 33%).
- The majority of respondents from urban Mexico (63%), France (57%), and urban Brazil (52%) give outright negative assessments.

These results are in marked contrast to the results in 1997, when the net score on American economic influence was positive or neutral everywhere except Mexico (minus 19 percentage points) and France (minus 6 percentage points).

In this latest survey, urban Chinese are alone in their strongly positive view of America's impact on their culture (61%). In 1997, net perceptions of American cultural influence were positive in Brazil (plus 20 percentage points), Italy (plus 12 percentage points) and urban China (plus 8 percentage points), and only mildly negative elsewhere, with the French giving the most negative overall net assessment (minus 17 percentage points).

- Today, Italians are of two minds on the subject, with positive assessments (36%) slightly offsetting negative ones (32%).
- The British public is inclined to be slightly more negative (31%) than positive (26%).
- Both Canadians and Germans tend to have a negative opinion (37% and 44%, respectively) toward American cultural influence, or else do not venture an opinion or say the U.S. has made no difference (44% and 43%). No more than one in five Canadians (19%) or Germans (16%) go so far as to see a positive American influence on their respective cultures.



- Opinions among urban Brazilians have reversed to give a net negative rating of American cultural influence (41% negative versus only 20% positive). Back in 1997, urban Brazilians had a 20 percentage point net positive opinion of American influence on their culture.
- Majorities in Spain (51%), urban Mexico (57%), and France (52%) now take an outright negative view of American influence on their culture.

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Survey Methods

The most recent data presented in this alert were collected on the Ipsos Global Express in Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Spain and the U.K. between the dates of November 8 and December 10, 2003. The sample in six countries was national, but urban-only in Brazil, China and Mexico. Telephone interviewing was used for the national samples, and in-person interviewing was used for the urban samples. Ipsos Global Express uses sample sizes of 500 in each country; the margin of error is within ± 4 percentage points.

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