

PERILS OF PERCEPTION 2015

A 33 COUNTRY STUDY



These are the latest findings from the Ipsos **Perils of Perception** survey. The results highlight how wrong people across **33 countries** are about some key issues and features of the population in their country.

Perceptions are *not* reality...

WHAT PROPORTION OF
TOTAL HOUSEHOLD WEALTH
DO YOU THINK THE
WEALTHIEST 1% OWN?





Q. What proportion of the total household wealth do you think the wealthiest 1% own?

People generally overestimate the total household wealth that the wealthiest 1% in their country own. This is particularly true for developed countries.



% point difference

too low | too high

Avg. guess Actual

Great Britain		+36	59	23
France		+33	56	23
Australia		+33	54	21
Belgium		+32	50	18
New Zealand		+32	50	18
Canada		+30	55	25
Germany		+29	59	30
Spain		+29	56	27
Italy		+23	46	23
Japan		+22	41	19
Norway		+20	45	25
United States		+20	57	37
China		+17	56	39
Netherlands		+16	40	24
South Korea		+15	49	34
Sweden		+14	46	32
Ireland		+13	40	27
Chile		+11	54	43
Colombia		+9	43	34
South Africa		+6	49	43
Poland		+4	38	34
Argentina		+2	46	44
Mexico		0	36	36
Turkey		-1	53	54
Israel		-7	32	39
Brazil		-8	40	48
India		-13	40	53
Peru		-15	32	47
Russia		-17	53	70

WHAT PROPORTION OF
TOTAL HOUSEHOLD WEALTH
DO YOU THINK THE
WEALTHIEST 1%
SHOULD OWN?





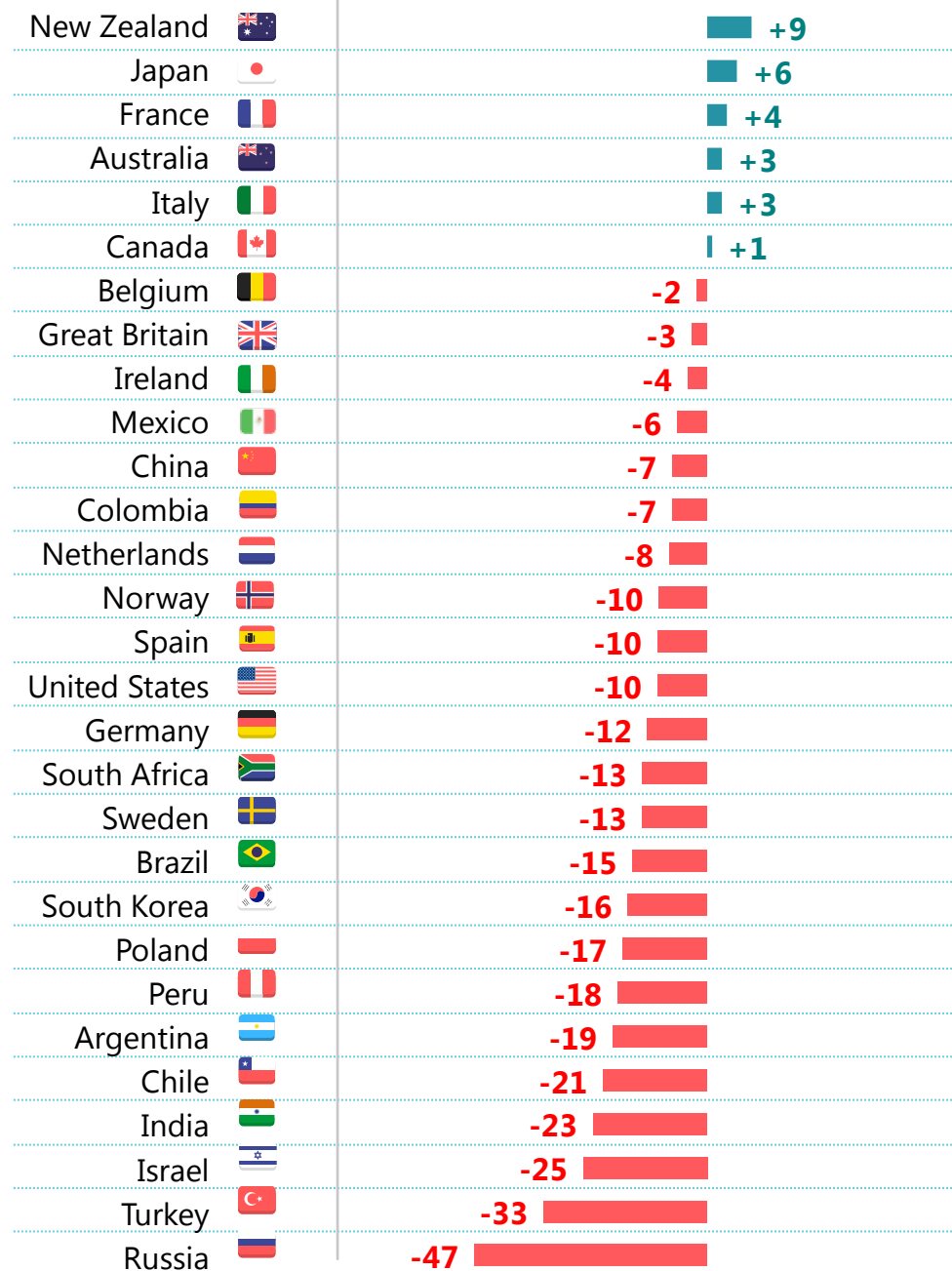
Q. What proportion of the total household wealth do you think the wealthiest 1% **should** own?

People tend to think the wealthiest 1% should own a lower proportion of their country's total household wealth than they currently do.



% point difference

too low | too high



Should	Actual
27	18
25	19
27	23
24	21
26	23
26	25
16	18
20	23
23	27
30	36
32	39
27	34
16	24
15	25
17	27
27	37
18	30
30	43
19	32
33	48
18	34
17	34
29	47
25	44
22	43
30	53
14	39
21	54
23	70

OUT OF EVERY 100 PEOPLE

AGED 20 YEARS OR OVER

HOW MANY DO YOU THINK

ARE EITHER OVERWEIGHT

OR OBESE?



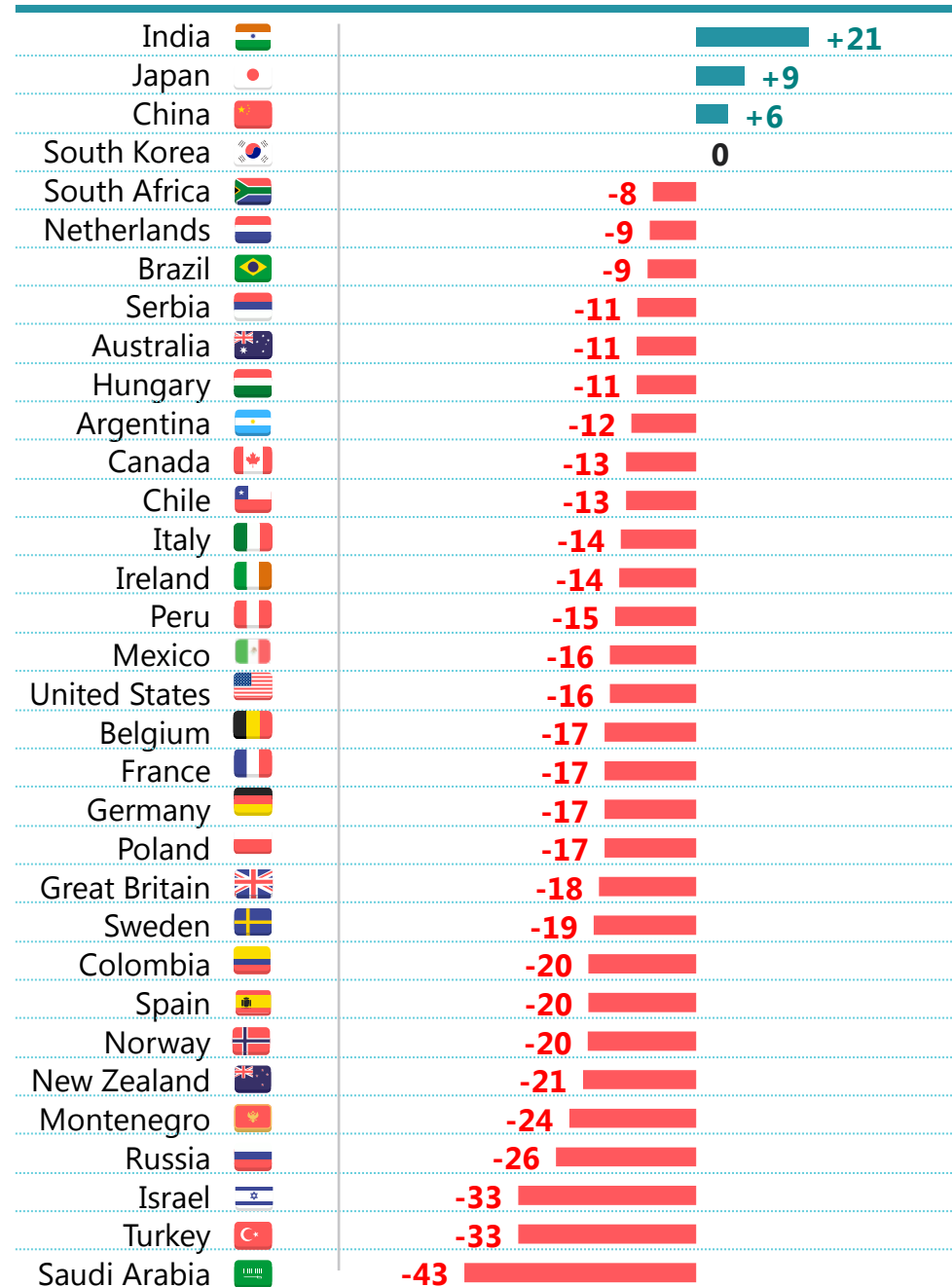


Q. Out of every 100 people aged 20 years or over], how many do you think are either overweight or obese?

The public generally underestimate the proportion of overweight or obese people in their country.

% point difference

too low | too high



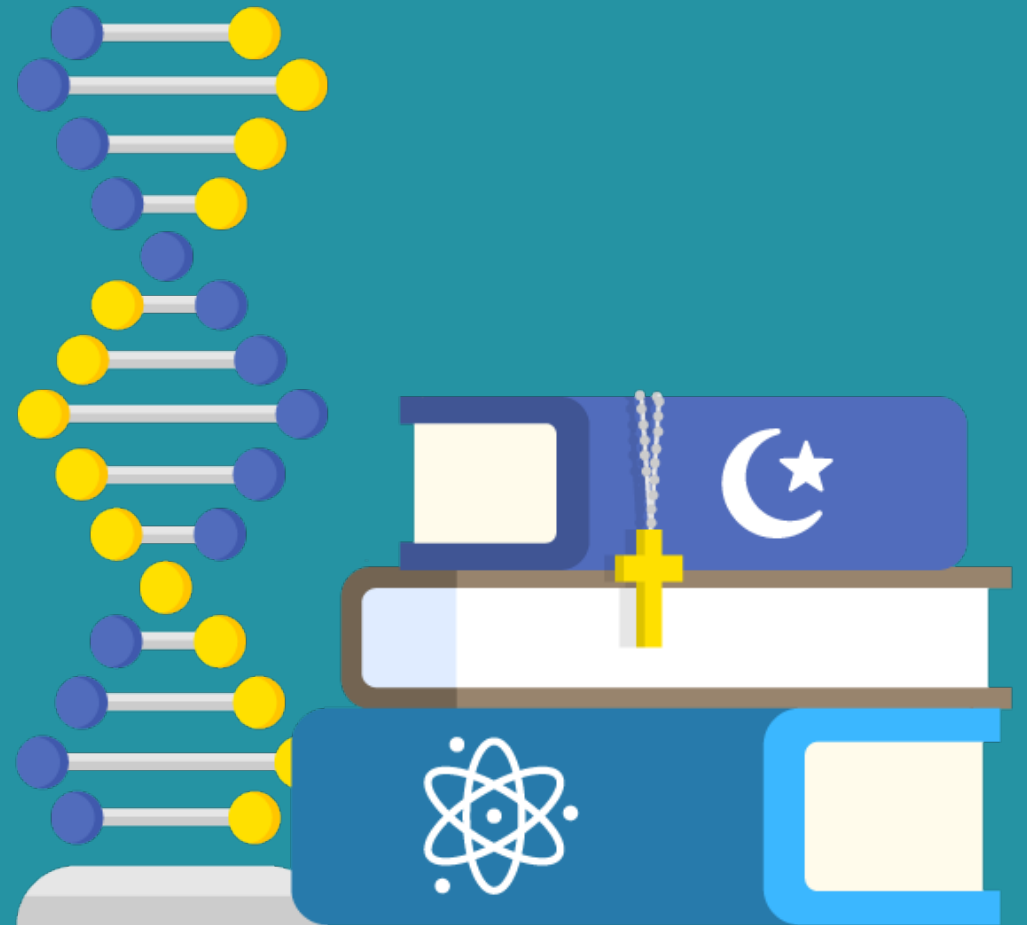
Avg. guess Actual

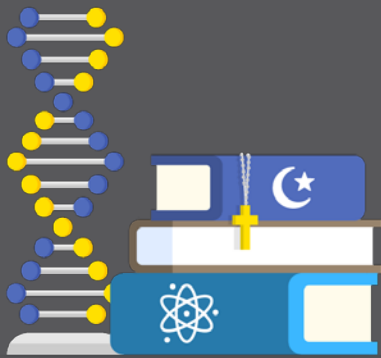
41	20
32	23
34	28
32	32
47	55
40	49
47	56
42	53
51	62
49	60
40	52
43	56
53	66
36	50
44	58
41	56
53	69
50	66
36	53
32	49
40	57
40	57
44	62
33	52
35	55
38	58
33	53
47	66
35	59
31	57
24	57
32	65
28	71

OUT OF EVERY 100 PEOPLE

ABOUT HOW MANY DO YOU THINK

**DO NOT AFFILIATE THEMSELVES WITH
ANY RELIGION?**



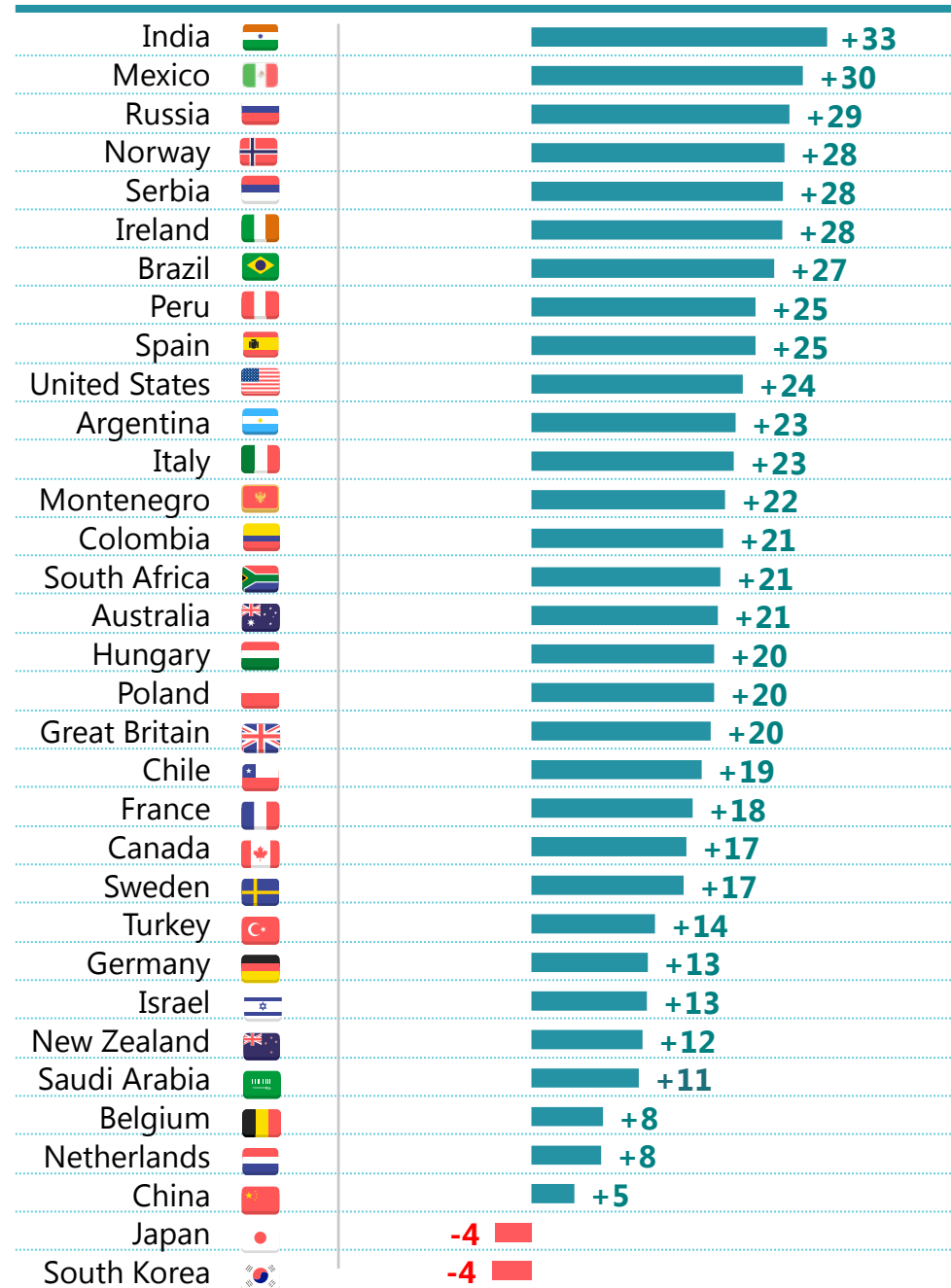


Q. Out of every 100 people, about how many do you think do not affiliate themselves with any religion – that is, atheists, agnostics and those who say they do not identify with any religion?

Across the world, people tend to over-estimate the level of non-religious people in their country.

% point difference

too low | too high



Avg. guess Actual

33	0.1
35	5
45	16
38	10
31	3
34	6
35	8
28	3
44	19
40	16
35	12
35	12
25	3
28	7
36	15
45	24
39	19
26	6
45	25
35	16
46	28
41	24
44	27
15	1
38	25
16	3
49	37
12	1
37	29
50	42
57	52
53	57
42	46

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF
THE POPULATION DO YOU THINK
**ARE IMMIGRANTS (I.E. NOT
BORN IN THIS COUNTRY?)**



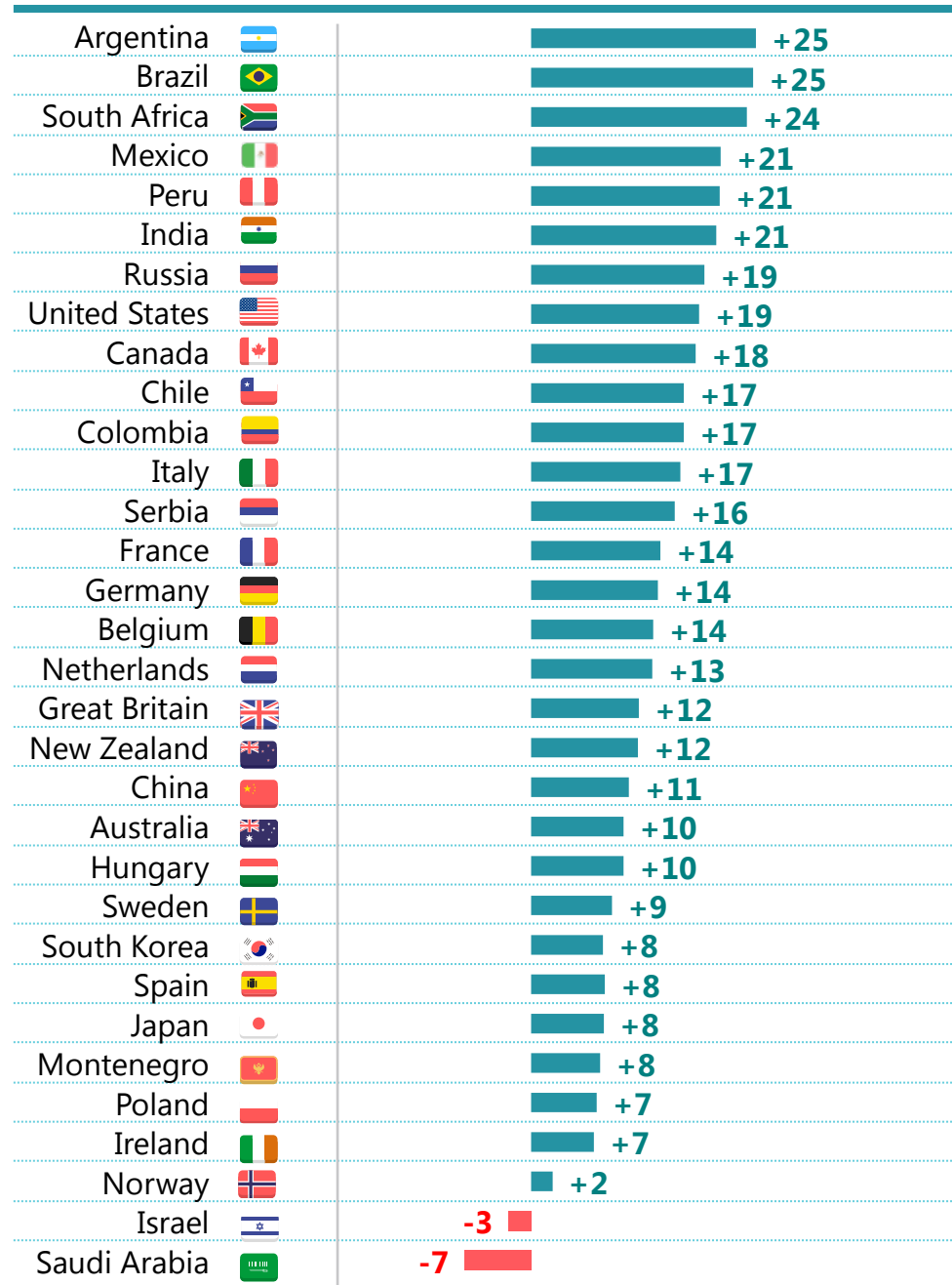


Q. What percentage of the population do you think are immigrants (i.e. not born in this country)?

People generally overestimate the level of immigration in their country. This is particularly true in Latin America.

% point difference

too low | too high



Avg. guess Actual

30	5
25	0.3
29	5
22	1
21	0.3
21	0.4
27	8
33	14
39	21
19	2
17	0.3
26	9
22	6
26	12
26	12
24	10
25	12
25	13
37	25
11	0.1
38	28
15	5
25	16
11	3
22	14
10	2
16	8
9	2
23	16
16	14
24	27
24	31

OUT OF EVERY 100

YOUNG ADULTS AGED 25-34

**ABOUT HOW MANY DO YOU THINK
LIVE WITH THEIR PARENTS?**



















Q. Out of every 100 young adults aged 25-34, about how many do you think live with their parents?

All countries surveyed over-estimate the proportion of 25-34 year-olds living with their parents in their country.

% point difference | **too high**

Great Britain		<div><div></div></div> +29
Spain		<div><div></div></div> +25
France		<div><div></div></div> +25
United States		<div><div></div></div> +22
Ireland		<div><div></div></div> +20
Sweden		<div><div></div></div> +20
Belgium		<div><div></div></div> +17
Norway		<div><div></div></div> +15
Serbia		<div><div></div></div> +14
Italy		<div><div></div></div> +12
Germany		<div><div></div></div> +10
Netherlands		<div><div></div></div> +7
Poland		<div><div></div></div> +2
Hungary		<div><div></div></div> +1

Avg. guess Actual

43	14
65	40
36	11
34	12
39	19
24	4
34	17
19	4
68	54
61	49
27	17
18	11
46	44
49	48

HOW OLD DO YOU THINK
**THE AVERAGE PERSON IN YOUR
COUNTRY IS?**





Q. How old do you think the average person in your country is?

In every country across the study, people over-estimate the average age within their country.

% point difference too high

Brazil		+25
Turkey		+24
India		+22
Hungary		+22
China		+19
Japan		+18
Norway		+17
Mexico		+16
Montenegro		+16
South Africa		+16
Sweden		+16
Poland		+15
Italy		+14
Ireland		+14
Peru		+14
Belgium		+14
Serbia		+14
Argentina		+13
South Korea		+12
Colombia		+12
Israel		+11
Chile		+11
Netherlands		+11
Great Britain		+11
Australia		+10
United States		+9
Saudi Arabia		+9
Spain		+9
Russia		+9
Canada		+8
New Zealand		+7
France		+6
Germany		+4

Avg. guess	Actual
56	31
54	30
49	27
63	41
56	37
65	47
56	39
44	28
56	40
43	27
57	41
55	40
59	45
50	36
41	27
55	41
56	42
44	31
53	41
41	29
41	30
45	34
53	42
51	40
48	38
47	38
36	27
51	42
48	39
50	42
45	38
47	41
51	47

OUT OF EVERY 100 PEOPLE

ABOUT HOW MANY DO YOU THINK

ARE AGED 14 OR YOUNGER?



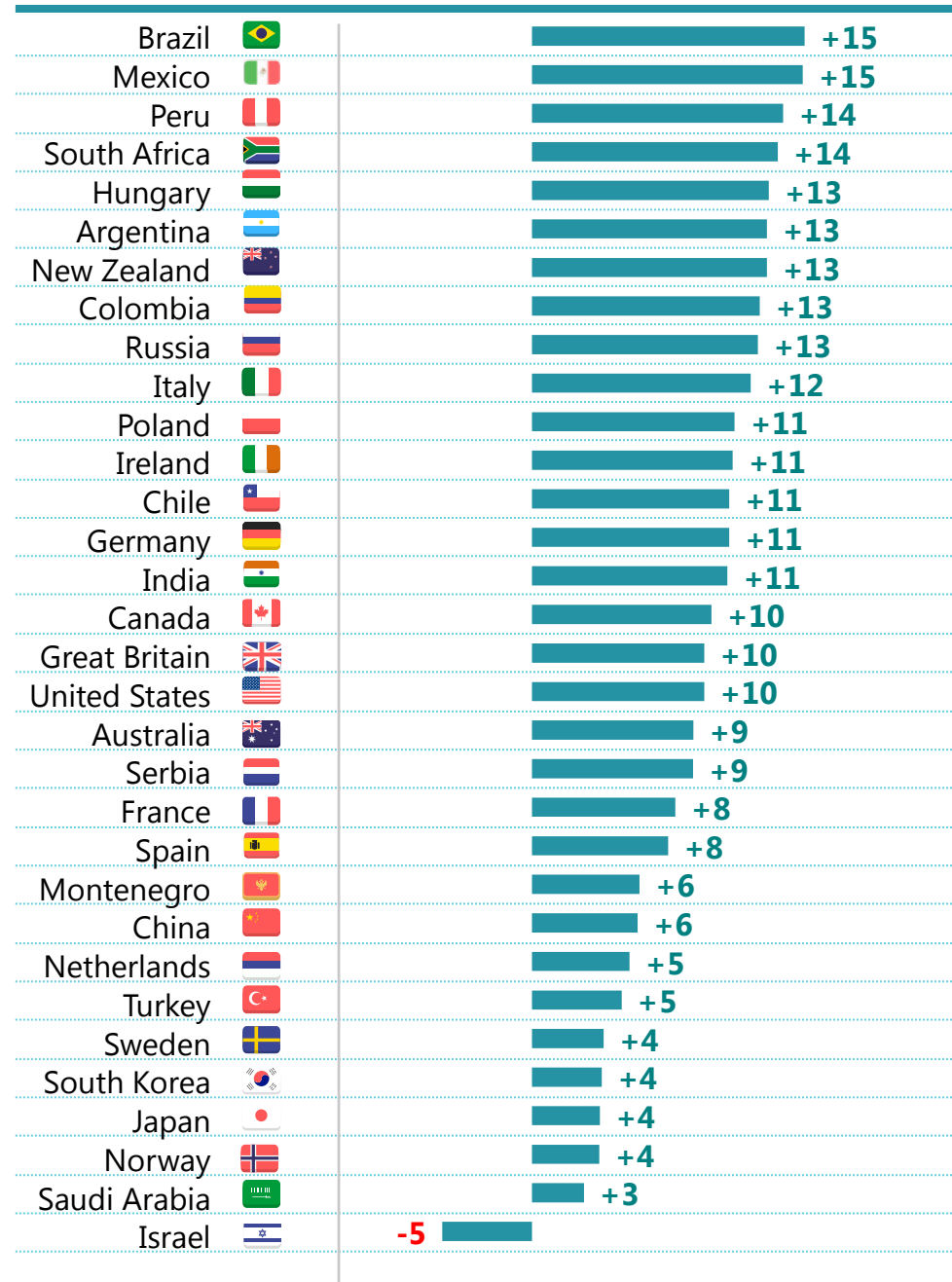


Q. Out of every 100 people, about how many do you think are aged 14 or under?

In almost every country in the study people over-estimate the proportion of people aged 14 or under in their country.

% point difference

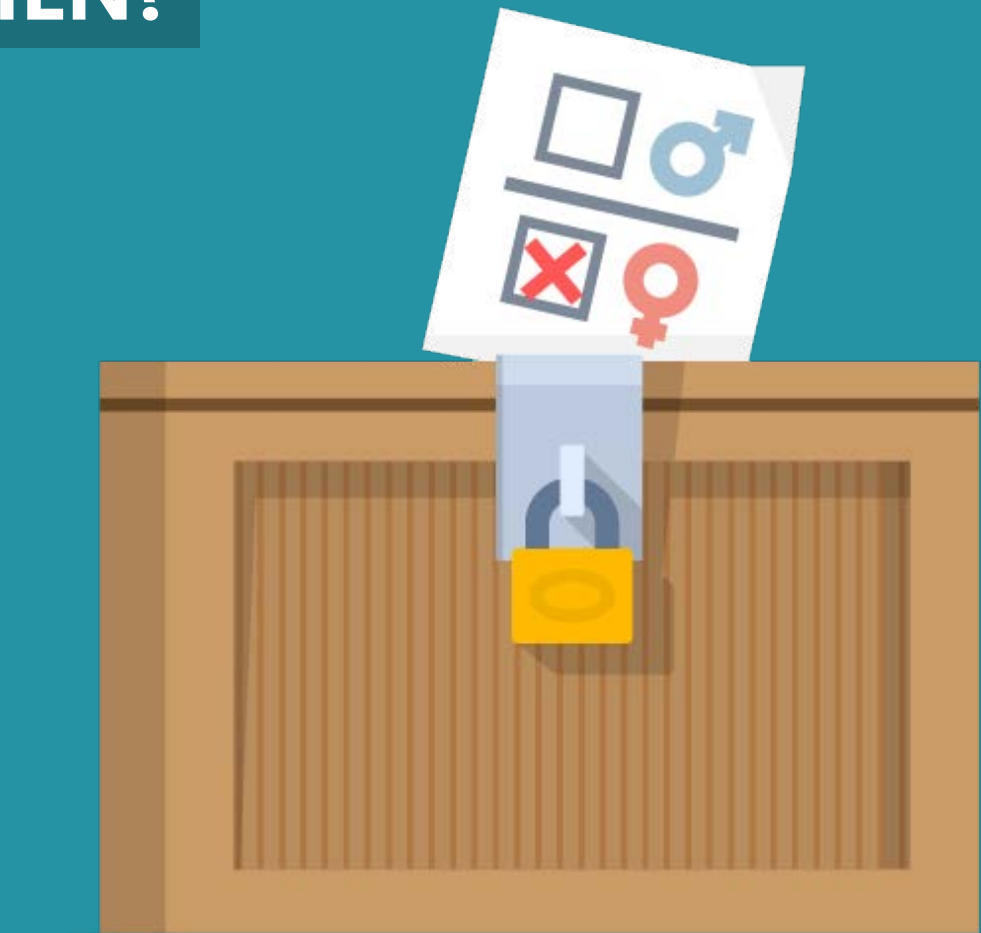
too low | too high

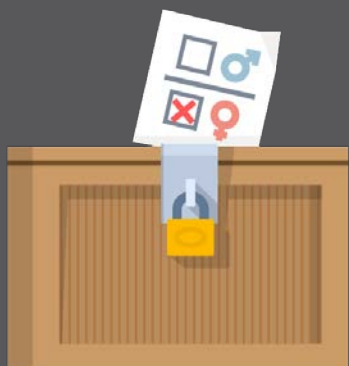


Avg. guess Actual

39	24
43	28
41	27
42	28
28	15
38	25
33	20
38	25
29	16
26	14
26	15
33	22
32	21
24	13
39	28
26	16
27	17
29	19
27	18
24	15
27	19
23	15
25	19
23	17
22	17
31	26
21	17
18	14
17	13
22	18
30	27
23	28

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF POLITICIANS ARE WOMEN?





Q. What percentage of politicians do you think are women?

There is a real mix of accuracy on the proportion of female politicians: a number of countries are very accurate, but others over- and underestimate significantly.



% point difference

too low | too high

Avg. guess Actual

Russia		+17	31	14
Colombia		+17	37	20
India		+11	23	12
Brazil		+8	18	10
Chile		+6	22	16
Hungary		+2	12	10
Japan		+2	12	10
Peru		+2	24	22
France		+2	28	26
United States		+2	21	19
Ireland		+1	17	16
Norway		-2	38	40
Poland		-2	22	24
South Korea		-2	14	16
China		-3	21	24
Turkey		-3	15	18
Canada		-3	22	25
Montenegro		-3	14	17
Italy		-5	26	31
Israel		-6	19	25
Sweden		-6	38	44
Great Britain		-6	23	29
South Africa		-8	34	42
Netherlands		-9	28	37
Germany		-9	27	36
Australia		-10	17	27
Argentina		-10	26	36
Belgium		-12	27	39
Spain		-12	29	41
Serbia		-14	20	34
New Zealand		-14	24	38
Mexico		-16	26	42

OUT OF EVERY 100 WORKING-AGE
WOMEN, ABOUT HOW MANY
**DO YOU THINK ARE
IN EMPLOYMENT?**





Q. Out of every 100 working age women, about how many do you think are in employment?

Globally, people are generally pretty accurate when estimating the proportion of working age women in employment in their country.

% point difference

too low | too high

India		+16
South Africa		+12
Mexico		+11
Chile		+10
France		+5
Turkey		+4
Hungary		+3
Argentina		+3
Russia		+2
China		+1
Belgium		0
United States		0
Norway		0
Serbia		-2
Colombia		-2
Poland		-3
Brazil		-4
Italy		-4
Sweden		-4
Canada		-5
Ireland		-6
Peru		-6
Montenegro		-7
Japan		-8
Great Britain		-8
Spain		-9
Netherlands		-9
Australia		-11
New Zealand		-12
Germany		-13
South Korea		-13
Israel		-29

Avg. guess Actual

41	25
49	37
56	45
55	45
66	61
34	30
59	56
53	50
67	65
63	62
58	58
63	63
73	73
37	39
53	55
52	55
52	56
44	48
69	73
64	69
50	56
54	60
41	48
56	64
60	68
43	52
59	68
55	66
57	69
57	70
42	55
39	68

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE
IN YOUR COUNTRY
LIVE IN A RURAL AREA?



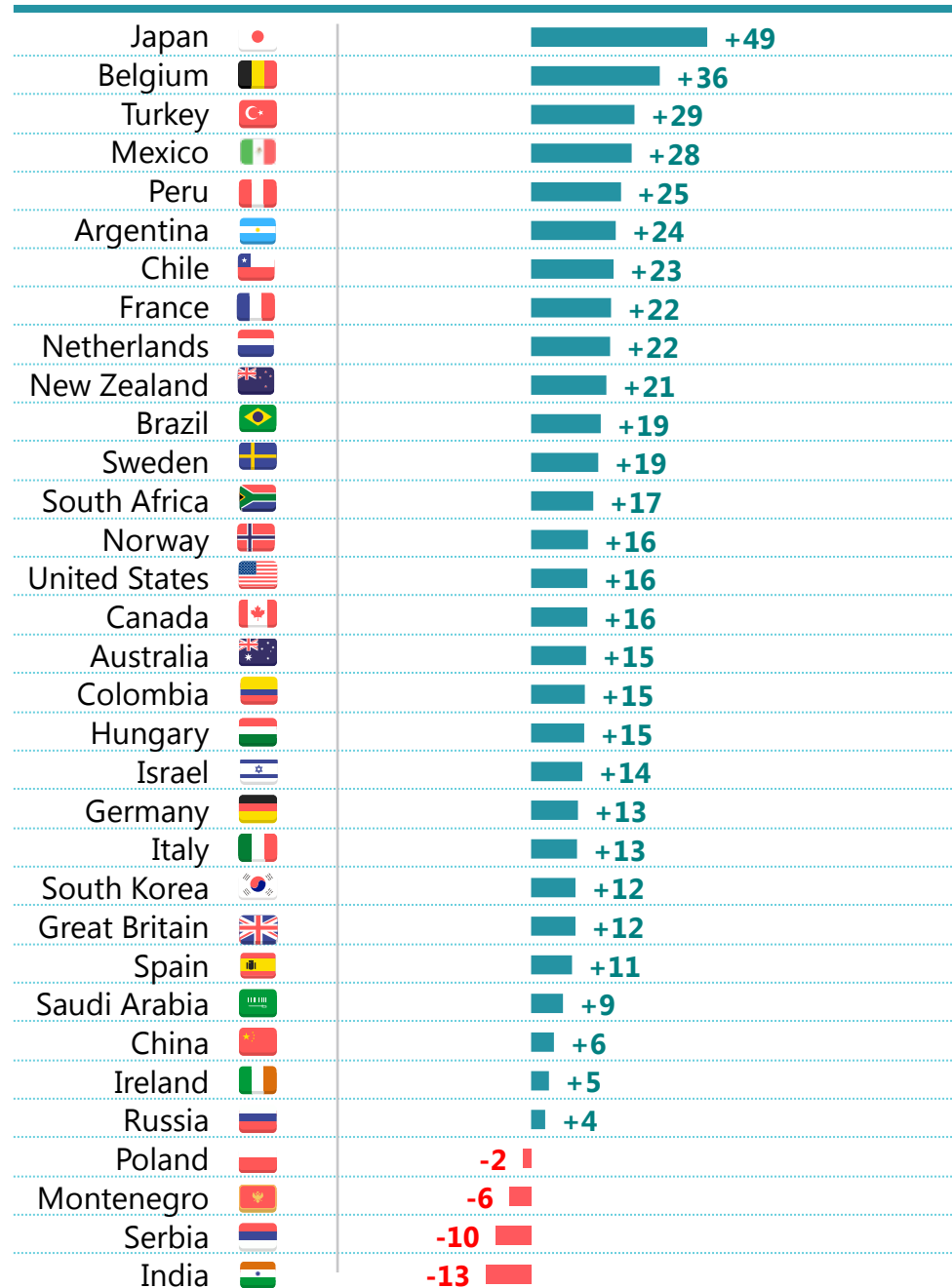


Q. What percentage of people in your country live in a rural area?

People generally overestimate the proportion of people who live in rural areas in their country.

% point difference

too low | too high



Avg. guess Actual

56	7
38	2
37	8
49	21
47	22
32	8
34	11
43	21
32	10
35	14
34	15
33	14
53	36
36	20
35	19
34	18
26	11
39	24
44	29
23	9
38	25
44	31
30	18
30	18
32	21
26	17
52	46
42	37
30	26
37	39
30	36
35	45
55	68

OUT OF EVERY 100 PEOPLE
ABOUT HOW MANY DO YOU THINK
**HAVE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET AT HOME
EITHER THROUGH A COMPUTER OR
MOBILE DEVICE?**





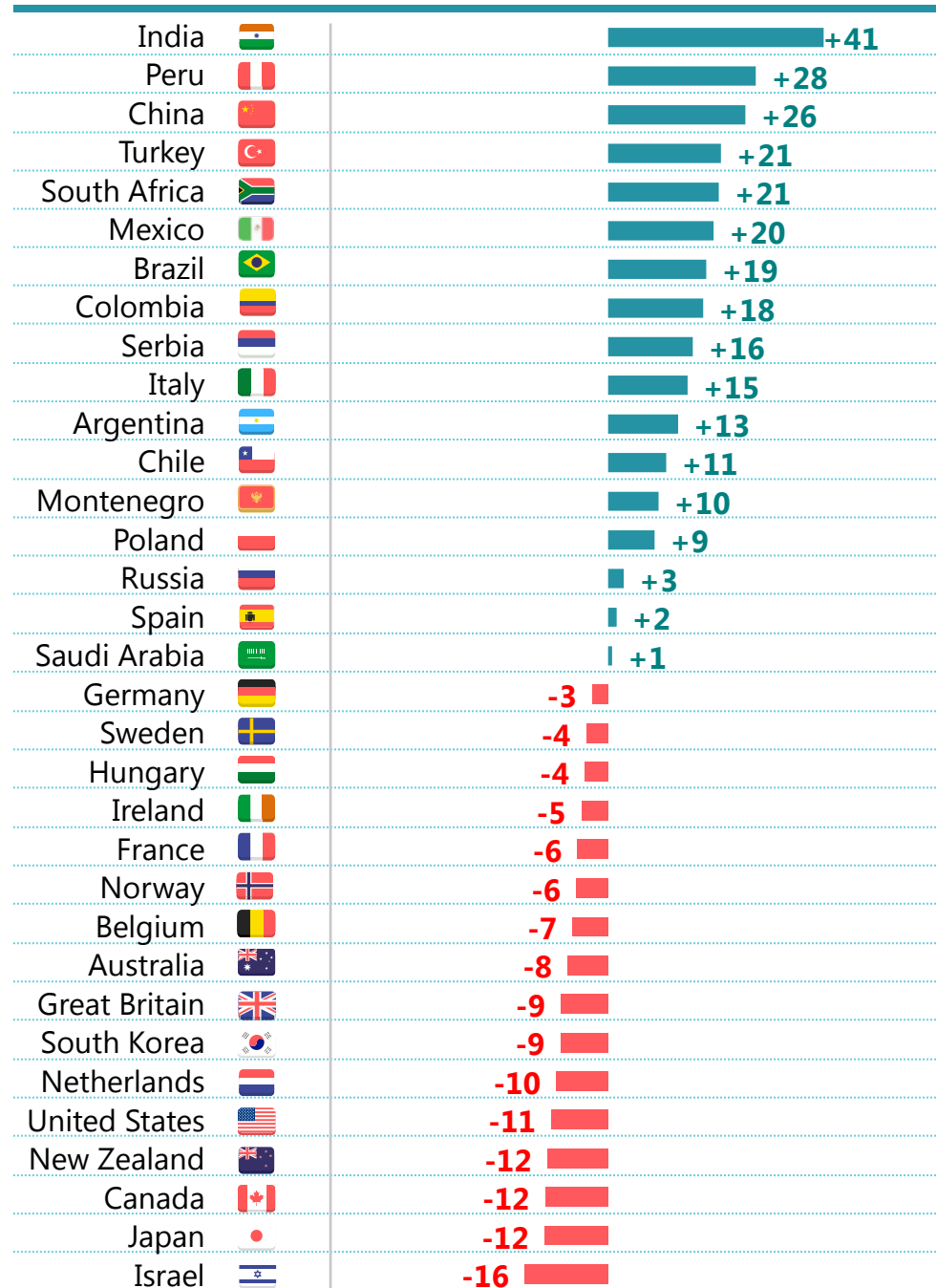
Q. Out of every 100 people, about how many do you think have access to the internet at home either through a computer or mobile device?

People in developing countries tend to overestimate the proportion of people who have internet access while in more developed countries the opposite is true.



% point difference

too low | too high



Avg. guess Actual

60	19
69	41
72	46
68	47
55	34
64	44
72	53
70	52
72	56
75	60
73	60
77	66
74	64
76	67
73	70
76	74
60	59
84	87
85	89
70	74
77	82
80	86
90	96
78	85
82	90
81	90
83	92
86	96
76	87
80	92
81	93
74	86
60	76

**Looking across all questions,
we have calculated a
measure of how accurate the
population of each country
is.**

**This gives us our
“Index of Ignorance”**

(least accurate at top)

Rank Country

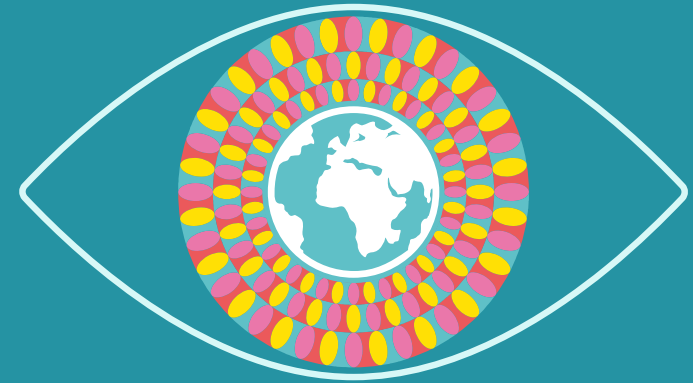
- 1  Mexico
- 2  India
- 3  Brazil
- 4  Peru
- 5  New Zealand
- 6  Colombia
- 7  Belgium
- 8  South Africa
- 9  Argentina
- 10  Italy
- 11  Russia
- 12  Chile
- 13  Great Britain
- 14  Israel
- 15  Australia
- 16  Japan
- 17  Canada
- 18  Germany
- 19  Netherlands
- 20  Spain
- 21  Norway
- 22  France
- 23  Sweden
- 24  United States
- 25  China
- 26  Poland
- 27  Ireland
- 28  South Korea



INDEX OF IGNORANCE



- These are the findings of the Ipsos Perils of Perception Survey. 25,556 interviews were conducted between October 1st – October 16th 2015.
- The survey was conducted in 33 countries around the world. The following countries used the Ipsos Online Panel system: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Great Britain, Turkey and the United States of America. In Ireland a telephone (CATI) methodology was used. In Serbia and Montenegro a face-to-face (CAPI) methodology was used.
- Approximately 1000+ individuals were surveyed in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Serbia, Spain, Great Britain Montenegro, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and the United States of America. Approximately 500+ individuals were surveyed in the remaining countries.
- Where results do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, multiple responses or the exclusion of don't knows or not stated responses.
- Data are weighted to match the profile of the population.
- For a full list of sources of actual data, please see [here](#)



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