WHAT WORRIES THE WORLD?

PREVIEW EDITION

May 2026

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What Worries the World?

Ipsos' What Worries the World survey tracks public opinion on the most important social and political issues across 30 countries today, drawing on over ten years of data to place the latest scores in context.

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

For the **full report**, please contact **Joseph.Nadler@Ipsos.com**.

What Worries the World? MAY 2026

Top five worries

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

		change vs. last month	change vs. last year
Inflation	32%	-1	-1
Crime & violence	31%	=	-2
Unemployment	29%	+1	+2
Poverty & social inequality	29%	+1	=
Financial/political corruption	27%	+1	+1

State of the 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?

	change vs. last month	change vs. last year
◀ 39% RIGHT DIRECTION	+1	+2
◀ 61% WRONG TRACK	-1	-2

State of the economy

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

	change vs. last month	change vs. last year
◀ 37% GOOD	+1	+1
◀ 63% BAD	-1	-1

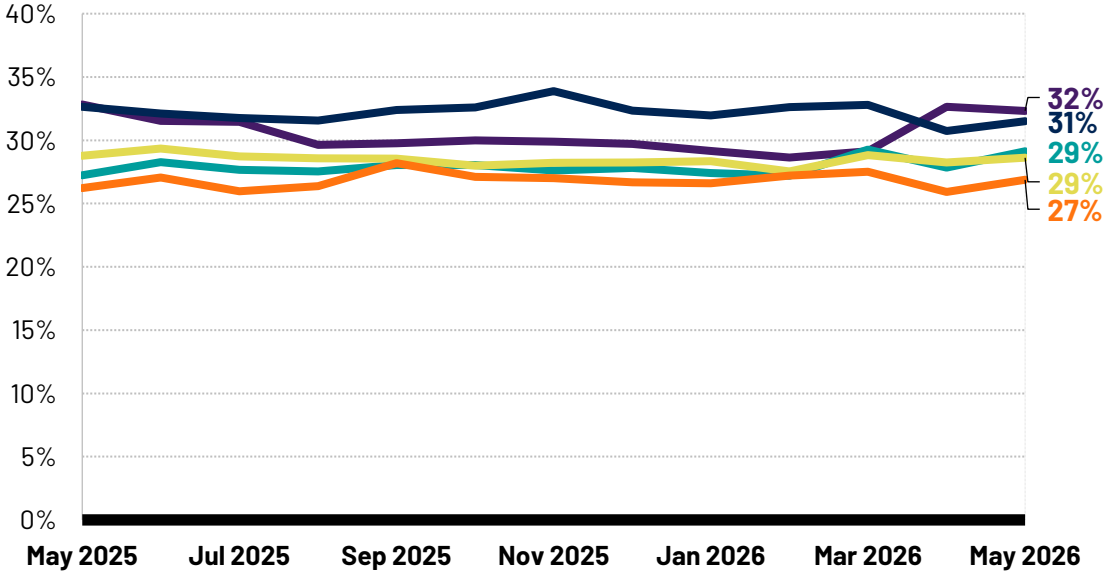
Base: Representative sample of 23,523 adults aged 16-74 in 30 participating countries, April 24th 2026 - May 8th 2026.

Source: Ipsos Global Advisor. Global score is a 30-country average. See methodology for details. **Filter:** Country: World | Current Wave: May 26

What Worries the World? 12 MONTH TREND

Top five worries

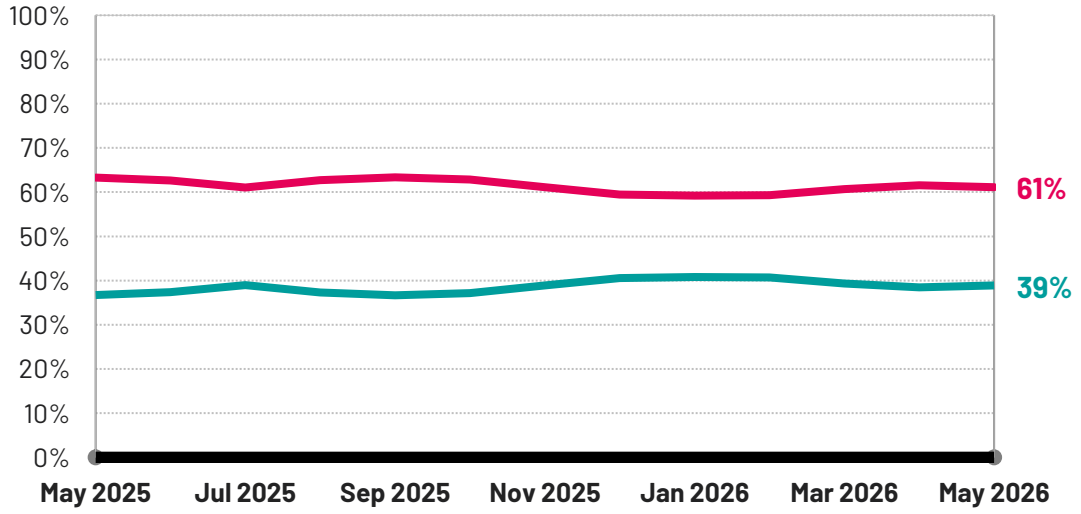
Q: Which three of the following topics do you find the most worrying in your country?



Inflation | Crime | Jobs | Inequality | Corruption

State of the 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?



Right Direction | Wrong Track

Base: Representative sample of 23,523 adults aged 16-74 in 30 participating countries, April 24th 2026 - May 8th 2026.

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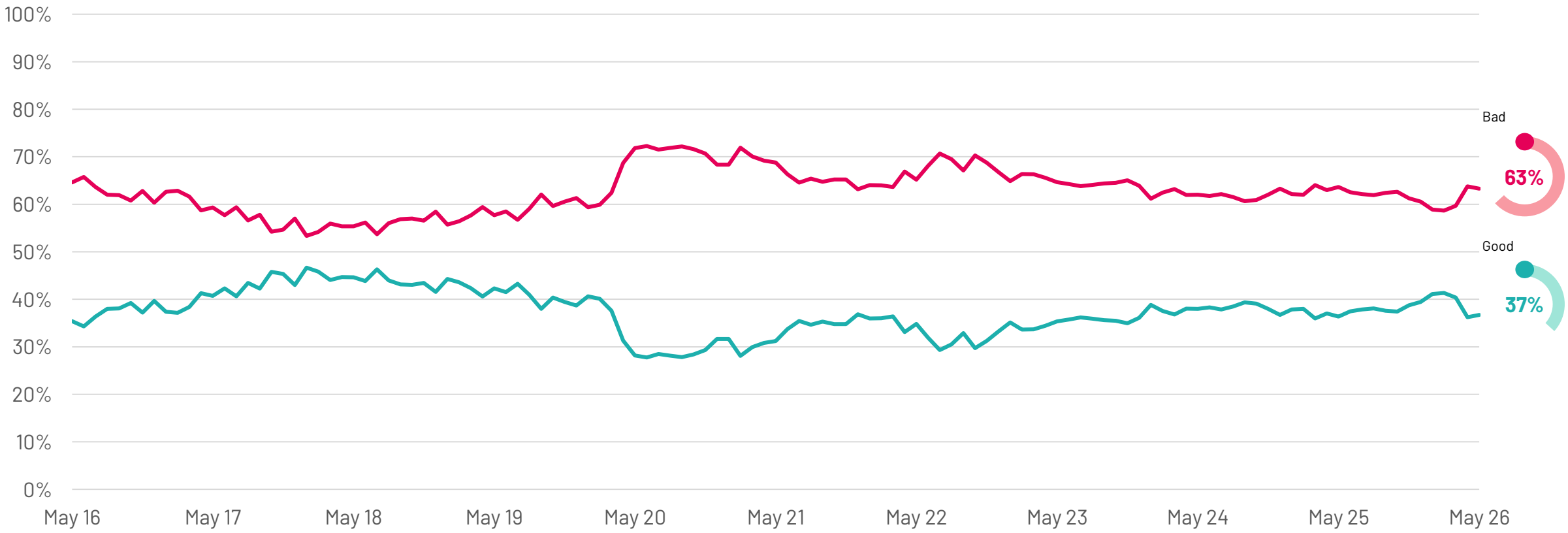
Global: Current Economic Situation

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

(% *'Very good'* or *'Somewhat good'* & *'Very bad'* or *'Somewhat bad'*)



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Key takeaways

1. Inflation concerns remain elevated

Last month's story was the return of inflation to number one position in the table. Four weeks into the Iran conflict, we recorded a four-percentage point (pp) increase in the proportion mentioning it as a key issue, up to 33%. But inflation worry has stabilised this month at 32% on average across 30 countries.

That said, concern in North America continues to increase. It's the top worry for Americans and Canadians, both recording a 5pp month-on-month rise in May (42% and 52%, respectively).

This decade has been dominated by two issues: inflation and Covid-19. Since January 2020, inflation has spent 29 consecutive months as the top concern, while Covid spent 18 months at number one.

2. Unemployment matters

Concern about unemployment has increased, albeit marginally, to 29% across 30 nations. Coupled with inflationary worry, this could indicate a general sense of unease.

In Canada, the proportion selecting unemployment has risen 8pp, the second biggest country increase this month, to 29% over the month.

Concerns about the job market are also being felt on the other side of the world. In APAC the proportion of Thais selecting unemployment has increased 9pp to 31%. In Singapore, the level of worry has risen 6pp to 54%.

3. Corruption concerns persist

The proportion of people selecting financial/political corruption across 30 countries has increased marginally to an average of 27%.

Worries about corruption in the US have reached a new milestone after the level of concern rose 6pp this month to 37%. This is not only 10pp higher than it was in May 2025, but it is the highest it has been in a decade.

Similar proportions of Democrats (38%) and Republicans (34%) currently consider it a top concern.

Corruption is currently the number one worry in three countries: Indonesia (65%), Malaysia (51%), & Thailand (50%).

Top concerns by country

Inflation

- Singapore (58%)
- Canada (52%)
- Australia (49%)
- Türkiye (49%)
- US (43%)
- France (35%)
- Germany (34%)
- Italy (34%)
- Japan (34%)

Unemployment

- South Africa (64%)
- Argentina (57%)
- India (46%)
- South Korea (44%)

Healthcare

- Hungary (67%)
- Poland (56%)
- Ireland (41%)
- Great Britain (36%)
- Spain (35%)

Crime & violence

- Peru (66%)
- Israel (58%)
- Mexico (57%)
- Chile (56%)
- Sweden (52%)
- Brazil (48%)
- Colombia (42%)

Financial/political corruption

- Indonesia (65%)
- Malaysia (51%)
- Thailand (50%)

Taxes

- Belgium (37%)

Immigration control

- Netherlands (34%)

Key figures by country

37%

in the US are worried about financial/political corruption – the highest level in 10 years.

52%

of Canadians say inflation is a concern – up 5pp from last month.

62%

of Hungarians say the nation is on the right track – the highest it has been in over 10 years.

58%

in Israel are concerned about crime & violence – up 25pp from last month.

56%

in Poland are worried about healthcare – up 10pp over the month.

29%

of Brazilians now cite taxes as one of the main issues facing them today.

Want to go deeper?

Individual country-level reports for all 30 countries in the survey are now available.

Contact: joseph.nadler@ipsos.com for details.

DIRECTION OF TRAVEL

All countries

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Right vs. Wrong Direction Monitor

Base: Representative sample of 23,523 adults aged 16-74 in 30 participating countries, April 24th 2026 - May 8th 2026.

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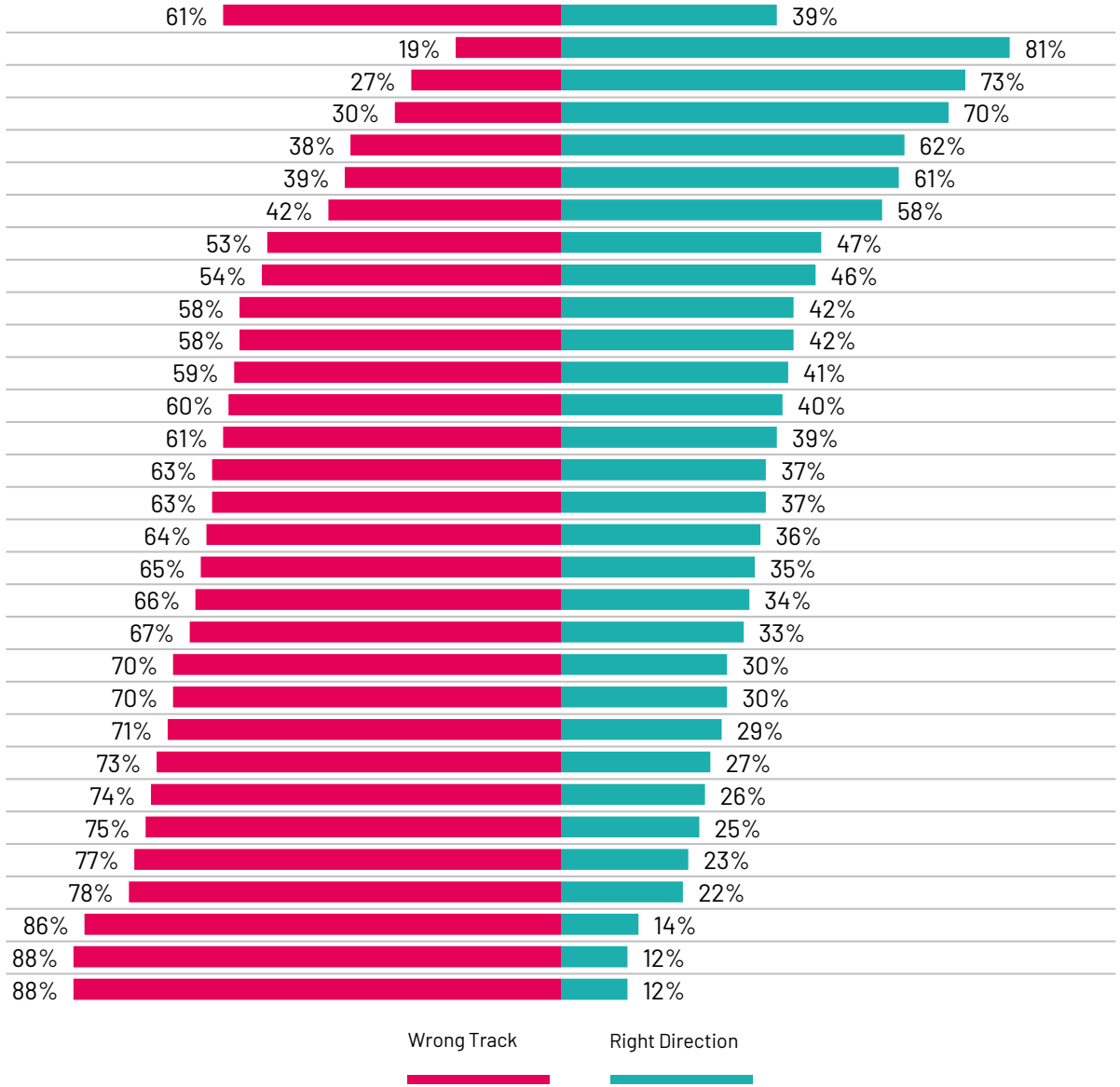
Filter: Country: World | Current Wave: May 26

Q: Would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track? (May 2026)



Country	Wrong Track	Right Direction	Change from last month	12-month change
World	61%	39%	+1	+2
Singapore	19%	81%	+3	+4
India	27%	73%	=	NA
Malaysia	30%	70%	-1	+1
Hungary	38%	62%	+39	+43
South Korea	39%	61%	-2	+46
Indonesia	42%	58%	+1	-9
Thailand	53%	47%	+3	+2
Canada	54%	46%	+4	+2
Chile	58%	42%	-2	+13
Argentina	58%	42%	-4	-14
Australia	59%	41%	+3	-3
Poland	60%	40%	+1	=
Brazil	61%	39%	+7	+2
Colombia	63%	37%	-11	+8
Japan	63%	37%	-2	+18
Ireland	64%	36%	-2	-4
Mexico	65%	35%	=	-10
Israel	66%	34%	-11	+6
Spain	67%	33%	-4	-6
US	70%	30%	-5	-12
Sweden	70%	30%	=	+4
South Africa	71%	29%	=	-5
Belgium	73%	27%	-1	-6
Türkiye	74%	26%	=	=
Italy	75%	25%	=	-4
Great Britain	77%	23%	+1	-9
Netherlands	78%	22%	-6	+1
Germany	86%	14%	-4	-13
Peru	88%	12%	+1	+3
France	88%	12%	+3	-6

Global Right/Wrong Direction

Global country average score

Base: Representative sample of 23,523 adults aged 16-74 in 30 participating countries, April 24th 2026 - May 8th 2026.

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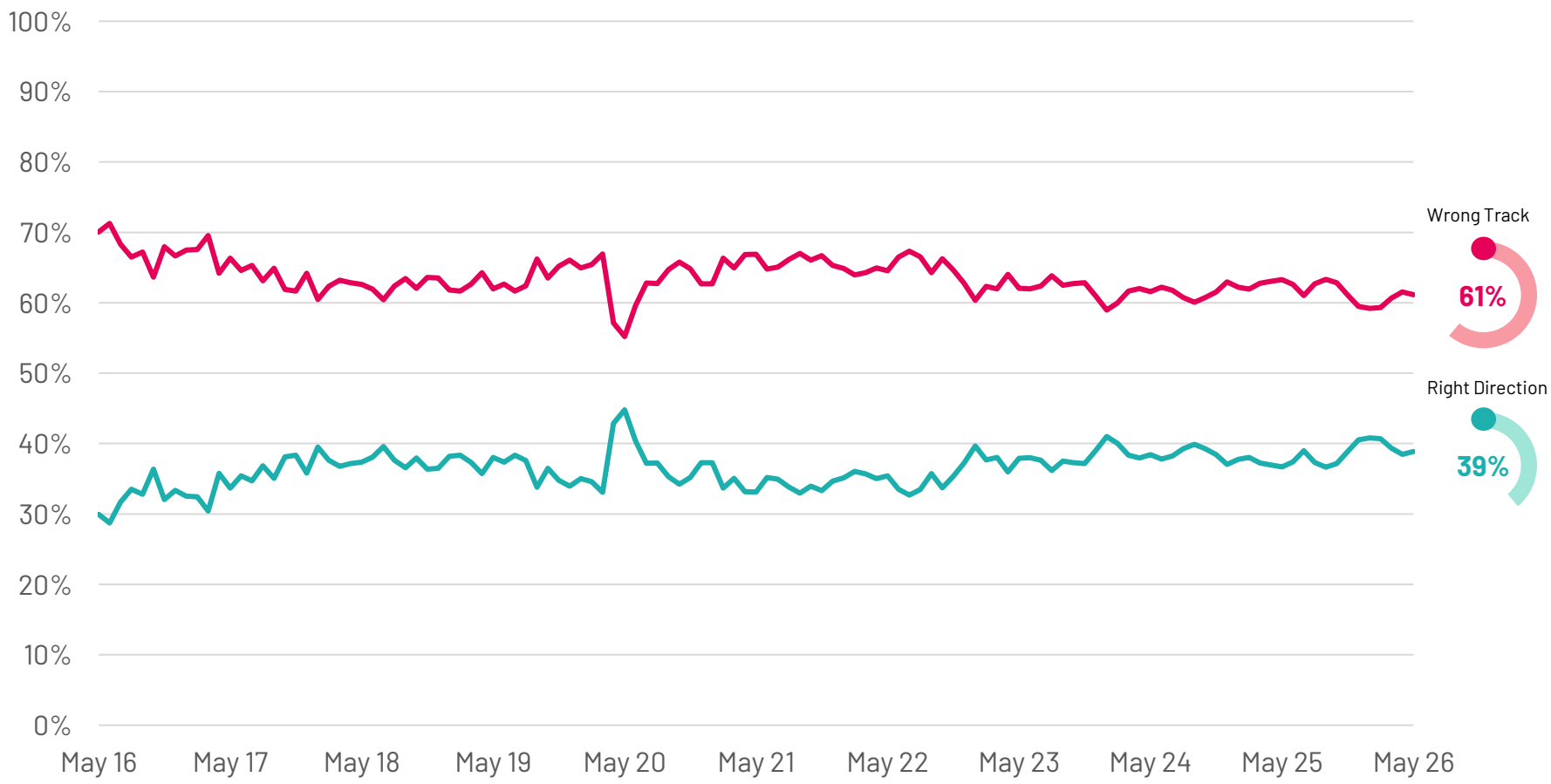
Q: Would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?



WHAT WORRIES THE WORLD?

Top issues ranked

World Worries: Full List

Base: Representative sample of 23,523 adults aged 16-74 in 30 participating countries, April 24th 2026 - May 8th 2026.

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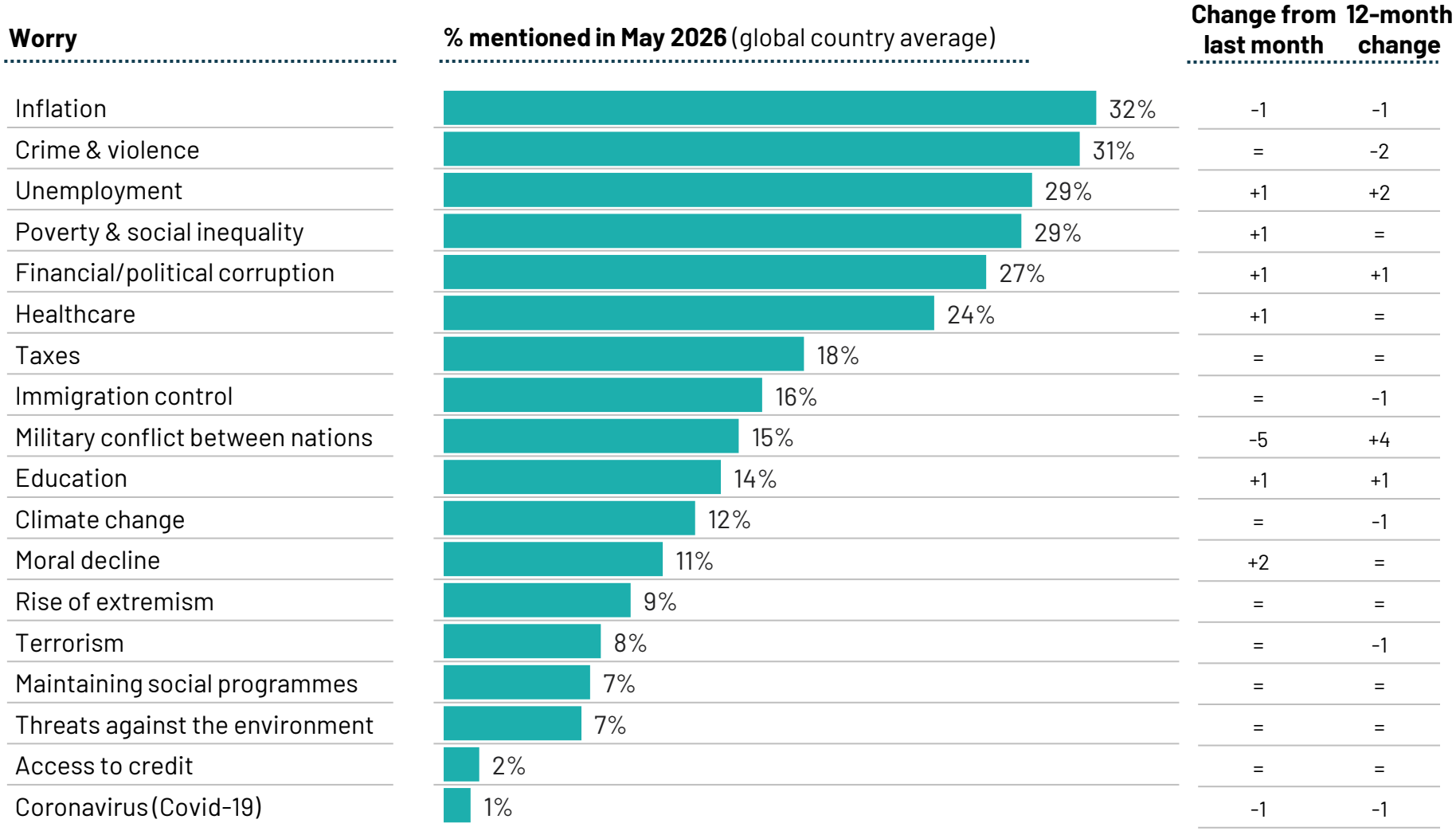
Filter: Country: World | Current Wave: May 26

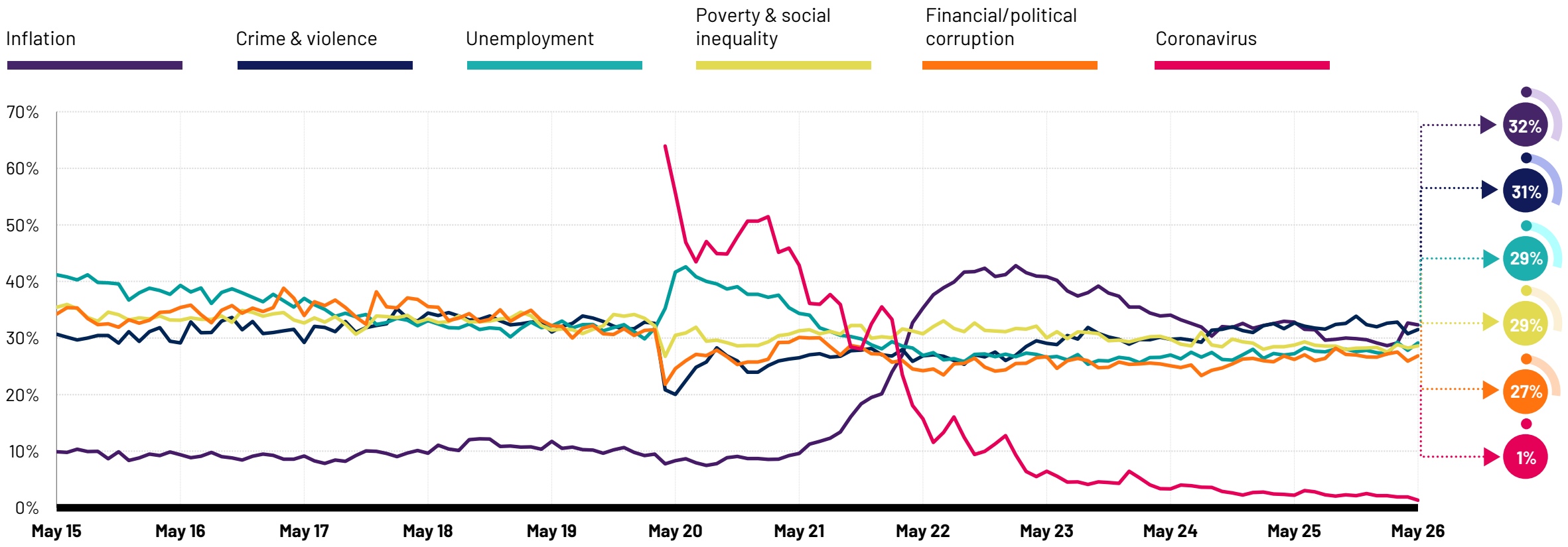
Q: Which three of the following topics do you find the most worrying in your country?



Worry	% mentioned in May 2026 (global country average)	Change from last month	12-month change
Inflation	32%	-1	-1
Crime & violence	31%	=	-2
Unemployment	29%	+1	+2
Poverty & social inequality	29%	+1	=
Financial/political corruption	27%	+1	+1
Healthcare	24%	+1	=
Taxes	18%	=	=
Immigration control	16%	=	-1
Military conflict between nations	15%	-5	+4
Education	14%	+1	+1
Climate change	12%	=	-1
Moral decline	11%	+2	=
Rise of extremism	9%	=	=
Terrorism	8%	=	-1
Maintaining social programmes	7%	=	=
Threats against the environment	7%	=	=
Access to credit	2%	=	=
Coronavirus (Covid-19)	1%	-1	-1

World Worries: Long-Term Trend

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



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Inflation

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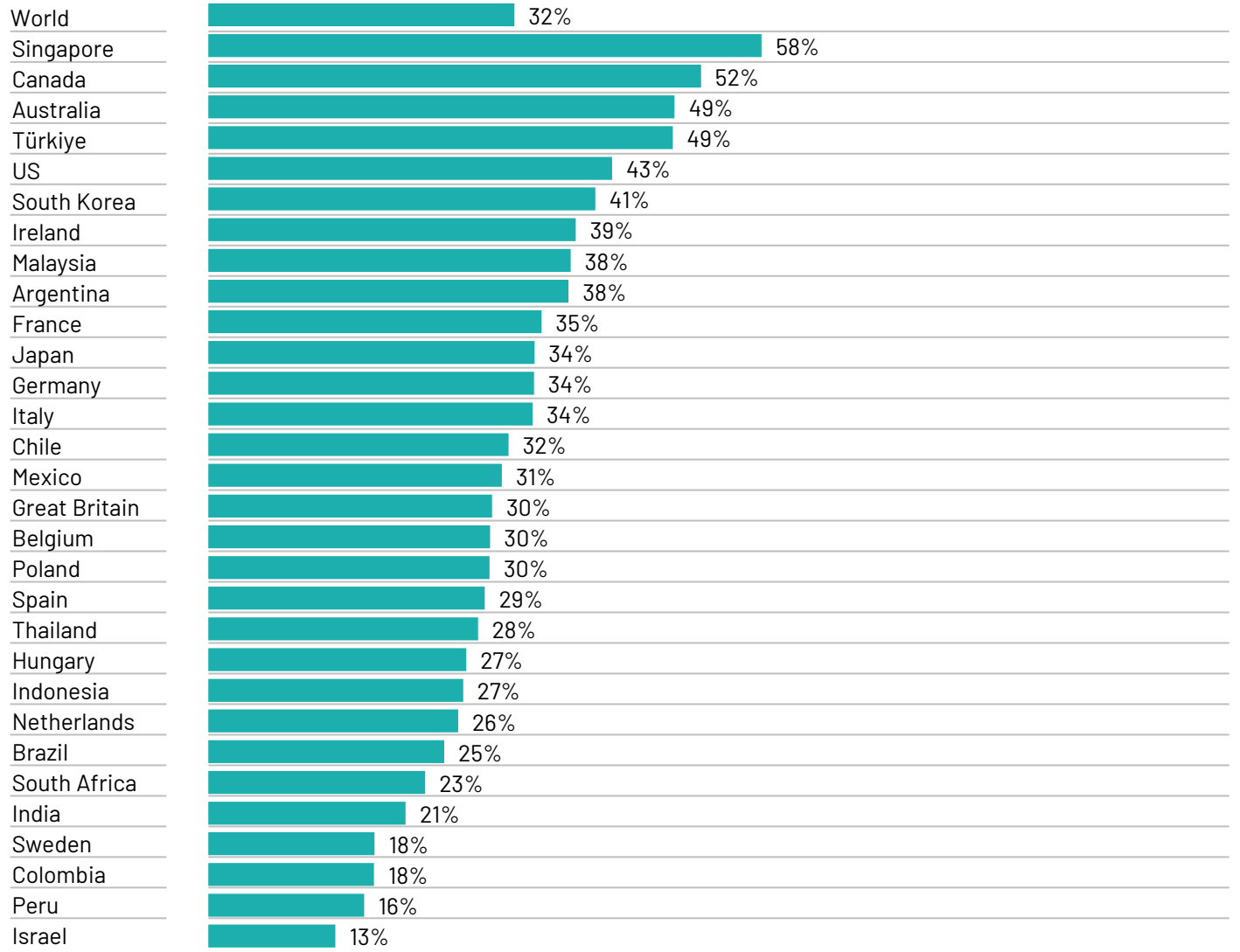
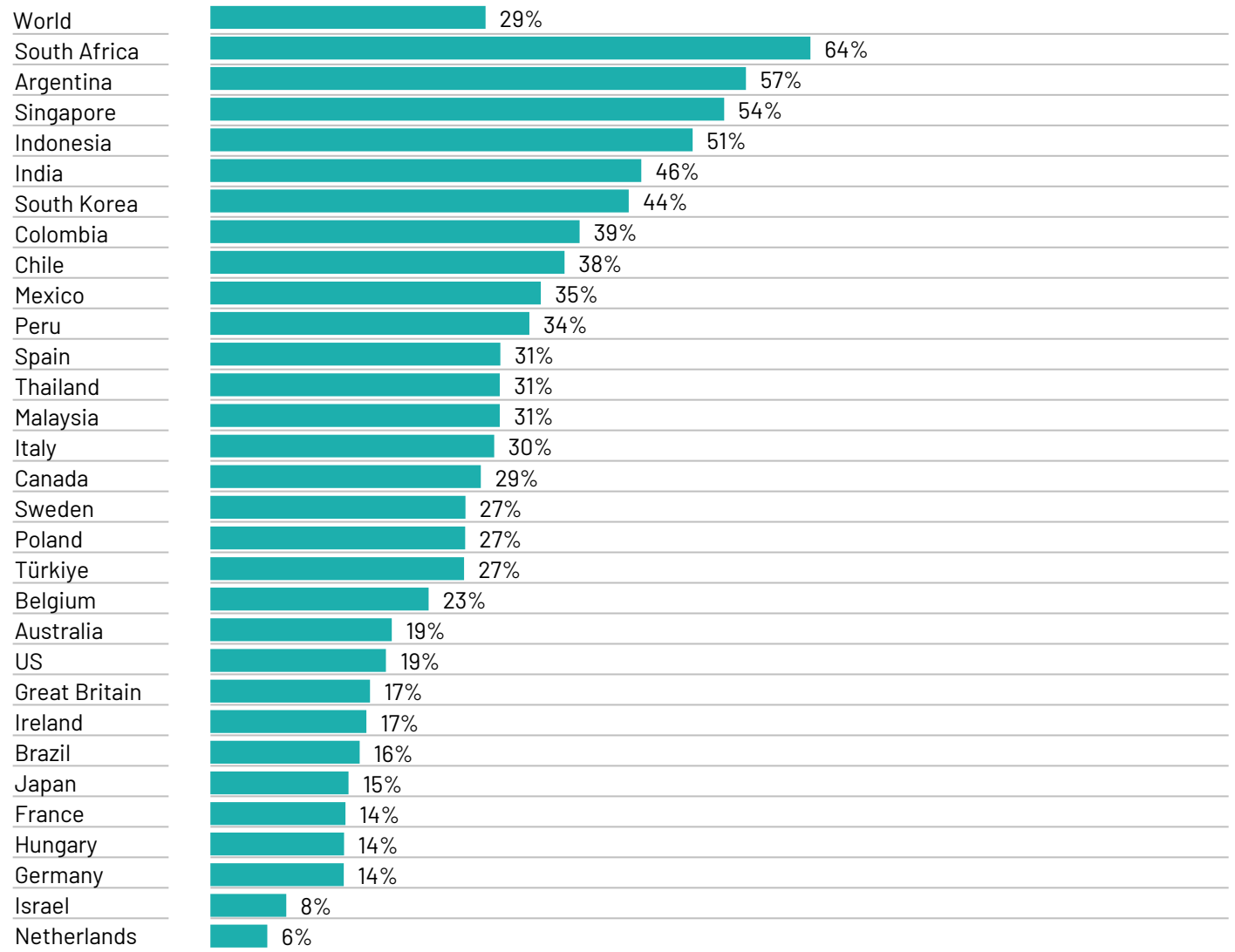


Country	% choosing inflation as a worry	Change from last month	12-month change
World	32%	-1	-1
Singapore	58%	=	-4
Canada	52%	+5	+2
Australia	49%	=	=
Türkiye	49%	-1	-5
US	43%	+5	+1
South Korea	41%	-1	+7
Ireland	39%	+3	+4
Malaysia	38%	+2	+4
Argentina	38%	+2	-2
France	35%	-3	+2
Japan	34%	-2	+2
Germany	34%	+3	+3
Italy	34%	+2	+7
Chile	32%	-10	+7
Mexico	31%	+2	=
Great Britain	30%	-5	-6
Belgium	30%	=	+4
Poland	30%	-4	-5
Spain	29%	-4	+3
Thailand	28%	+1	-5
Hungary	27%	-9	-18
Indonesia	27%	-1	+1
Netherlands	26%	+5	+2
Brazil	25%	+2	-8
South Africa	23%	+2	+5
India	21%	-3	NA
Sweden	18%	+1	-1
Colombia	18%	+1	+1
Peru	16%	-2	+3
Israel	13%	+1	-6

Unemployment



Country	% choosing unemployment as a worry	Change from last month	12-month change
World	29%	+1	+2
South Africa	64%	-4	=
Argentina	57%	=	+11
Singapore	54%	+6	+7
Indonesia	51%	=	=
India	46%	+3	NA
South Korea	44%	+1	-1
Colombia	39%	=	-3
Chile	38%	+3	+2
Mexico	35%	+3	+3
Peru	34%	+5	-1
Spain	31%	+5	-1
Thailand	31%	+9	+7
Malaysia	31%	+4	-1
Italy	30%	-1	-2
Canada	29%	+8	+5
Sweden	27%	+6	+2
Poland	27%	+4	+9
Türkiye	27%	=	+4
Belgium	23%	+2	+3
Australia	19%	-2	-1
US	19%	+2	+2
Great Britain	17%	-2	+4
Ireland	17%	-2	-3
Brazil	16%	-1	-2
Japan	15%	+1	-3
France	14%	+1	+2
Hungary	14%	-4	+2
Germany	14%	=	+5
Israel	8%	-3	-2
Netherlands	6%	=	+1

Base: Representative sample of 23,523 adults aged 16-74 in 30 participating countries, April 24th 2026 - May 8th 2026.

Source: Ipsos Global Advisor. Global score is a 30-country average. See methodology for details.
Filter: Country: World | Current Wave: May 26

Financial/ Political Corruption

Country	% choosing financial/political corruption as a worry	Change from last month	12-month change
World	27%	+1	+1
Indonesia	65%	+7	+2
Hungary	52%	=	+4
Peru	52%	-2	-3
Malaysia	51%	+3	+4
South Africa	51%	+1	+8
Thailand	50%	+1	+2
US	37%	+6	+10
Brazil	37%	-2	=
Colombia	35%	+1	-2
Mexico	32%	+2	+6
Spain	31%	+2	+4
India	30%	+1	NA
Argentina	28%	=	+6
Israel	27%	+1	-3
Türkiye	26%	+2	-5
South Korea	26%	-1	-18
Poland	25%	+3	+1
Chile	25%	-4	-4
Belgium	15%	+3	+2
Germany	13%	+4	+5
Great Britain	12%	+3	+1
Japan	11%	=	-7
Ireland	11%	+1	=
Australia	11%	-1	-1
Italy	11%	+1	+1
Canada	10%	-3	-1
France	10%	-1	+2
Sweden	8%	=	+1
Singapore	7%	+2	-1
Netherlands	6%	-2	-4

Base: Representative sample of 23,523 adults aged 16-74 in 30 participating countries, April 24th 2026 - May 8th 2026.

Source: Ipsos Global Advisor. Global score is a 30-country average. See methodology for details.
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Military Conflict Between Nations

Base: Representative sample of 23,523 adults aged 16-74 in 30 participating countries, April 24th 2026 - May 8th 2026.

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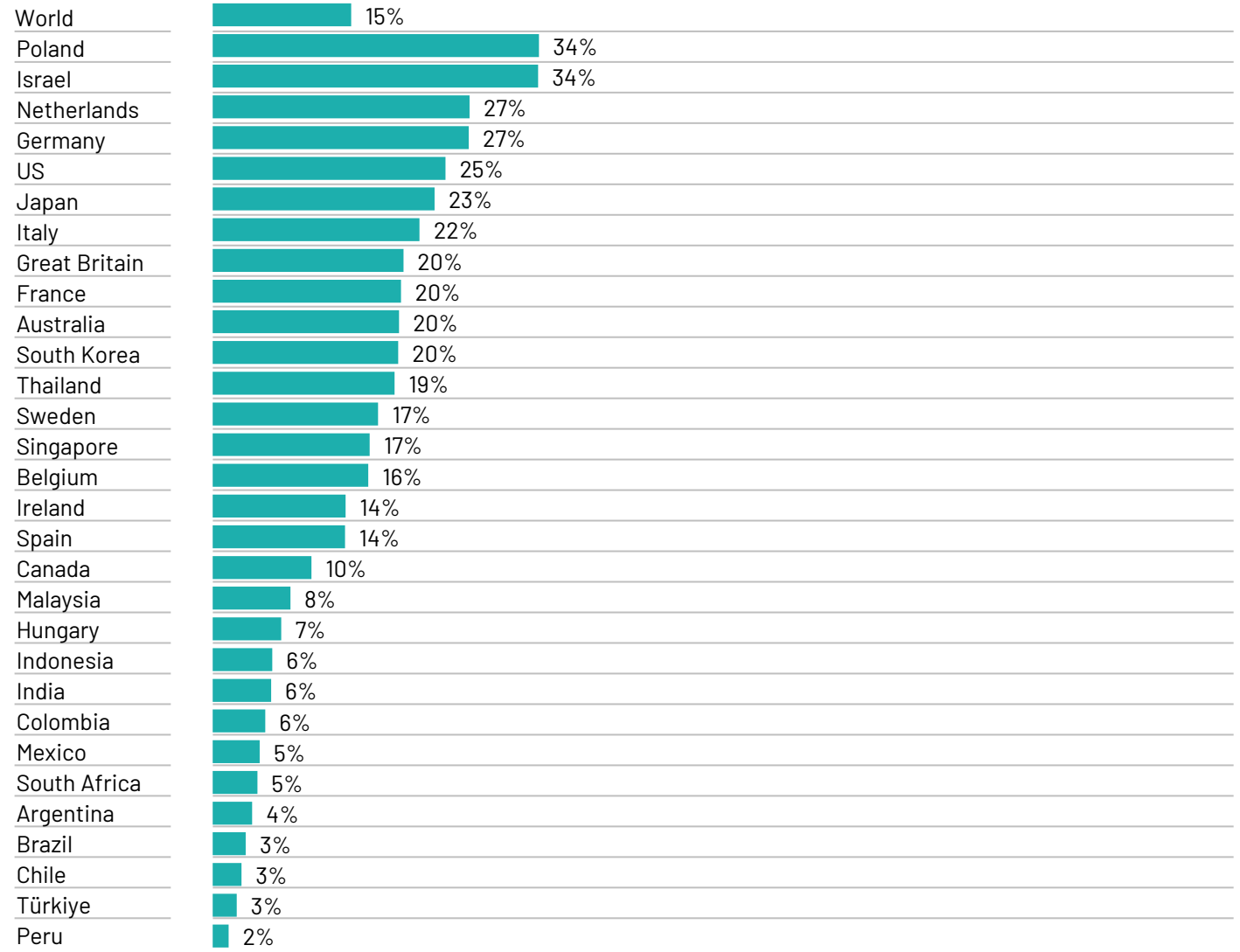


Country	% choosing military conflict between nations as a worry	Change from last month	12-month change
World	15%	-4	+5
Poland	34%	-13	-2
Israel	34%	-2	+1
Netherlands	27%	-3	+5
Germany	27%	-4	+3
US	25%	-2	+15
Japan	23%	-6	+12
Italy	22%	-5	+10
Great Britain	20%	-11	+6
France	20%	-5	+6
Australia	20%	-3	+11
South Korea	20%	-9	+11
Thailand	19%	-8	+12
Sweden	17%	-3	+2
Singapore	17%	=	+8
Belgium	16%	-7	+2
Ireland	14%	-4	+6
Spain	14%	-7	-1
Canada	10%	-5	+5
Malaysia	8%	-10	+3
Hungary	7%	-4	=
Indonesia	6%	-5	+3
India	6%	-6	-5
Colombia	6%	=	-1
Mexico	5%	-4	+1
South Africa	5%	+1	+4
Argentina	4%	-4	+2
Brazil	3%	-3	+1
Chile	3%	=	+1
Türkiye	3%	-1	+1
Peru	2%	-2	=

Methodology

These are the results of a 30-country survey conducted by Ipsos on its Global Advisor online platform, between April 24th 2026 and May 8th 2026. For this survey, Ipsos interviewed a total of 500 adults aged 18 years and older in India, 18-74 in Canada, Republic of Ireland, Israel, Malaysia, South Africa, Türkiye, and the United States (US), 20-74 in Thailand, 21-74 in Indonesia and Singapore, and 16-74 in all other countries.

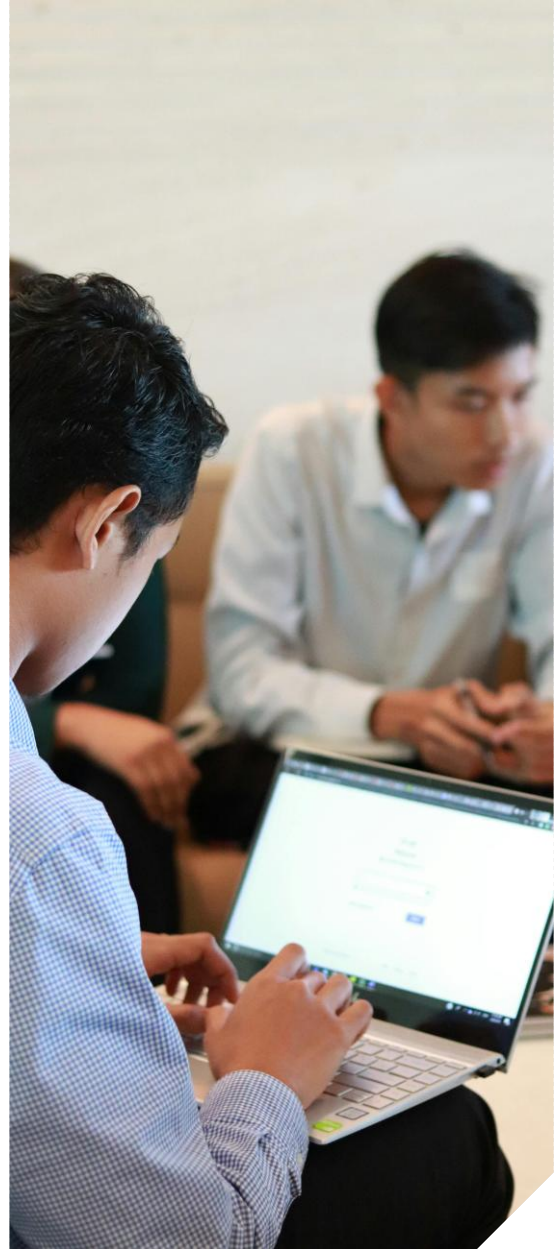
The sample consists of approximately 1,000 individuals each in Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain, and the US, and 500 individuals each in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Thailand, and Türkiye.

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 considered representative of their general adult populations under the age of 75. Samples in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, and Türkiye 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 the composition of each country's sample 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 in which 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.

When percentages do not sum up to 100 or the 'difference' appears to be +/-1 percentage point more/less than the actual result, 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 where N=1,000 being accurate to +/- 3.5 percentage points and of where N=500 being accurate to +/- 5.0 percentage points. For more information on Ipsos' use of credibility intervals, please visit the Ipsos website.



THANK YOU

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