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Global Governance Survey 2023

Finding Consensus in a Divided World

June 2023

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Charney Research is an international polling firm established in New York in 1997. It has worked in more than 50 countries for inter- and non-governmental groups, leaders, media, and corporations.

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June 2023

Global Governance Survey 2023

Finding Consensus in a Divided World

This survey explores public attitudes to global governance, conflict, pandemic, and climate issues in the G7 and BRICS countries.

By Craig Charney

*This report is an attempt to do something novel: rather than explore how many people think the world is in trouble, it looks at the willingness of people in key countries around the world to support real, credible, and global solutions. The Global Governance Survey examines attitudes to the state of the world, revealing deep concern over conflict, economics, corruption, and other global issues, as well as potential global governance responses to issues of peace and security, pandemics, climate change, and institutional reform. It looks at views in twelve major countries: the Group of 7 (the U.S., Canada, U.K., France, Germany, Italy, and Japan) and the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). It finds a surprisingly broad agreement about responses to aggression, war crimes, and international law and justice. Pandemic response is seen as a bright spot, and there is wide support for measures to prevent another while providing for Universal Health Care. There is also consensus for action on climate, including the Loss and Damage fund agreed to, in principle, in 2022 to compensate for climate impacts, as well as policies to push for further action. There are substantial majorities for creating an international anti-corruption court, broadening permanent membership and restricting the veto in the UN Security Council, and strengthening linkages between the UN and the G20, as well as with national parliaments. The citizens of the twelve countries display a marked preference for multilateral action on security, climate, global health, and human rights issues. The survey also shows the spread of a sense of global citizenship. The most important finding lies in its conclusion: *that the peoples of the countries surveyed are well ahead of their leaders in their willingness to accept innovation in global governance to confront the world's challenges.**

RESEARCH TEAM AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Foreword

Today, academic and popular discussions are filled with foreboding over a divided world beset by conflict, climate change, pandemics, corruption, resource competition, and other threats. What is almost never asked is whether the people of our planet can agree on ways to resolve these crises. This report is intended as a first look at that essential question.

I am pleased to present this Global Governance Survey, which explores how citizens in many of the world's leading countries perceive the challenges facing humanity, and how they might converge around workable solutions. The survey focuses on twelve countries, the Group of 7 (the U.S. Canada, U.K., France, Italy, Germany, and Japan) plus the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). Together they account for the majority of the world's population and economic output. They are also important politically, militarily, technologically, and ecologically. They represent a world that is educated and urbanized, but with rising powers much younger in population than established ones.

The survey asked novel questions—how citizens of these countries judge the state of the world and ideas for its improvement. Despite reams of polling on individual countries, there is little data on where people think the world is headed, whether its direction is right, or why. Nor is there anything that explores global views on how to resolve the crises of global governance.

By asking new questions, this survey also reaches an unconventional conclusion: *the people are ahead of elites when it comes to fundamental issues of global governance and concrete ideas for improving it.* There is a consensus across the countries surveyed around peace and security issues, UN reform, international law, climate change, and pandemic protection. The survey reveals a chance to bring global citizens together around a common agenda.

This survey launches a new, multi-year Global Governance Innovation Project. That project forms part of a larger effort at the Stimson Center and with its Global Governance Innovation Network partners, including the Academic Council on the UN System, Plataforma CIPÓ, and Leiden University. The initiative also includes a Global Governance Index, measuring action by governments through multilateral institutions, and the *Global Governance Innovation Report*, examining trends, opportunities for collective action, and initiatives to drive change.

We thank this study's principal author Dr. Craig Charney and our Stimson colleagues, including the indefatigable Dr. Richard Ponzio, for their work. Above all, looking to the September 2024 UN Summit of the Future, we hope the Global Governance Innovation Project will offer a glimpse of a world built upon common hopes rather than shared despair.

Brian Finlay
President and CEO
Stimson Center
June 8, 2023

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Executive Summary

The world today is widely seen as split, perilous, and darkening, which this survey underlines. Yet while these findings are cause for concern, they also contain reasons for hope: a broad awareness of global problems and a willingness to consider answers. The Global Governance Survey shows a broad swathe of the global public responsive to issues facing the whole world, not just their own countries.

The Global Governance Survey explores attitudes on key global issues and potential solutions across leading countries in the developed and developing worlds. It was conducted online in 12 countries from January 27 to February 28, 2023, with a total sample of 4,800. Representative samples of 400 per country were drawn from adult citizens of the Group of Seven (the U.S., Canada, U.K., France, Germany, Italy, and Japan), and the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). These countries account for 51% of the world's population and 70% of its economic output. Full details are in the Methodology Appendix.

This unique survey reveals a surprising and substantial degree of consensus on major global issues across the nations polled. It shows unexpected similarities on responses on war, peace, and conflict resolution among people in almost all G7 and BRICS countries, including a hostility to aggression and a willingness to penalize it. The consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic have forged a shared commitment to avoiding a repetition and promoting health care for all. On climate issues, the long-term result of advocacy, leadership, and disasters is a readiness to back major initiatives to respond to the crisis. There is also a willingness to fill in gaps in international institutions—such as the lack of an international anti-corruption court, making the Security Council more inclusive, or connecting UN bodies to other stakeholders, including parliamentarians.

Key findings include:

PART I

Megatrends—The Global Mood: Divided, Dangerous, and Worsening

- “Divided,” “dangerous,” and “worsening” are the most frequent descriptions of the state of the world.
- The general view is that the world is headed in the wrong direction, and worry is widespread.
- There is particular concern about conflict, economics, and corruption.
- Discontent is also widespread on climate, rights, governance, resources, and cooperation; COVID-19 and refugees are the only issues where most say the world is doing well.
- On most global issues, the world is seen as doing worse than a decade ago.
- The respondents in the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) countries and the young are more optimistic on global issues.

PART II

International Peace and Security: Hostility to Aggression, Support for International Law

- There is broad support for strong international responses to aggression, including non-recognition of territorial conquest, economic sanctions, and reparations from aggressors.
- International consequences for Russian aggression are favored by citizens everywhere (except Russia), even where governments have taken neutral stances or leaned toward Russia during the Ukrainian war.
- War crimes should include attacks on power grids, rape and sexual violence, and the use of autonomous killer drones, in the view of large majorities.
- Most people say their countries should cooperate in bringing war crimes suspects to the International Criminal Court in every country polled, except Russia.
- A greater role for international courts and arbitration in dispute resolution is massively favored.

PART III

Pandemic Response and Socio-Economic Development: Progress and Desire for More

- The vast majority of adults in the G7 and BRICS countries say they have received vaccination against COVID-19, and nearly half report having the disease, so almost all have some immunity to it.
- The survey reveals general satisfaction with national COVID-19 vaccination and treatment programs, as well as broad if lesser approval of countries' economic and, social recovery efforts from the disease.
- There is extensive support polled for measures to prevent future pandemics, including boosting World Health Organization authority, establishing funding, and building vaccine factories, as well as early warning systems.
- There is also broad support for public-private partnerships to promote Universal Health Care.

PART IV

Environmental Governance and Climate Action: A Broad Consensus for Change

- The Paris Climate Accord is known to majorities in most countries polled, and almost half of the publics have heard of the Conference of Parties (COP) 27.
- Opinions are split on whether voluntary national pledges, as recommended in the Paris Climate Accord, or mandatory carbon emissions limits are the best way to encourage countries to reduce their emissions.
- Compensation from a Loss and Damage fund for global warming damage in developing countries, adopted, in principle, at COP 27 draws substantial support but also considerable uncertainty.
- Policy measures to encourage or require climate action, or punish climate damage, are favored by large majorities of the respondents polled.

PART V

The Rule of Law and Inclusive International Governance: Readiness for Bold Measures

- Most respondents favor the creation of an international anti-corruption court for cases which national tribunals are unable to handle.
- Substantial majorities view the United Nations and Group of 20 (G20) favorably.
- Sentiment broadly favors making the Security Council more inclusive by adding Brazil, India, and South Africa as permanent members and limiting permanent members' use of the veto.
- Better connecting international bodies, through G20/General Assembly economic summits and an international UN parliamentary network, gets a favorable reception.

PART VI

Global Collective Action, Citizenship, and Leadership: Multilateralism and a Shared Identity

- There is a widely shared preference for multilateral leadership to deal with security, climate, pandemic, and human rights issues.
- The majority of respondents consider themselves global citizens, but this perspective is more common in the G7 countries than in the BRICS.
- Humanity represents a common bond: in every country polled, the prevailing view is that they would help even their worst enemy fight an (imagined) invasion by aliens from outer space.

CONCLUSION

- Overall, support for strengthening global governance is widespread in the survey countries.
- Attitudes on global citizenship, COVID-19 vaccination, and cosmopolitanism strongly correlate with support for more effective global governance.
- The public is ahead of their leaders on global governance innovation and strengthening.

In short, the survey reveals a shared readiness for action on global governance across the divides of North versus South or East versus West. Collective action and multilateral institutions are seen as the best ways to advance the common interests of citizens in all nations, whether on conflict, rights, climate, or health. People feel they are stakeholders in a connected world, not just individual countries. There is a sense of global citizenship and an awareness of a common humanity which underlie these beliefs. The Global Governance Survey shows that there is an option besides an anarchic world beset by war and crisis. It is a positive, hopeful, and truly global vision that the peoples of leading nations are ready to support, if their leaders can find a willingness to embrace it.



Photo by Marcus Yam, Los Angeles Times/Shutterstock

PART I

Megatrends—The Global Mood: Divided, Dangerous, and Worsening

This overview of global opinion begins with a look at megatrends of the global mood. To do this, the Global Governance Survey posed polling questions typically asked of individual countries about the world as a whole instead. Thus, it sought views on the state of the world, its direction of travel, overall performance—including that of multilateral institutions—on key issues, and changes over time.

The results are illuminating—and important. Widespread fears are prevalent about the state of the world today, and people in most countries polled see it as headed in the wrong way. Apart from pandemics and refugees, the world is seen as doing poorly on most of today's global challenges and as having regressed over the past decade. Yet the widespread concern revealed is also a reason for hope: publics in the world's leading nations are engaged with global issues and use them to judge global performance. Together with the greater optimism found among the young across the board and citizens of the emergent BRICS (compared to the G7 countries), the broad awareness of the world's problems the survey reveals is a necessary condition and essential first step for addressing them.

“Divided,” “dangerous,” and “worsening” are the most frequent descriptions of the state of the world.

Respondents were offered 10 words, 5 positive and 5 negative, and asked which two they would use to describe the state of the world (see the word cloud in Figure I-1). “Divided” (35%), “dangerous” (32%), and “worsening” (30%) topped the poll. People in both the rich G7 and emerging BRICS countries agree on this. Next come “chaotic” (26%) and “pandemic” (15%). All the positives rank lower: just 10% to 13% say the state of the world is “improving,” “growth,” “hyper-connected,” “cooperation,” or “prosperity.”

Figure I-1 STATE OF THE WORLD

Word sizes in proportion to frequency



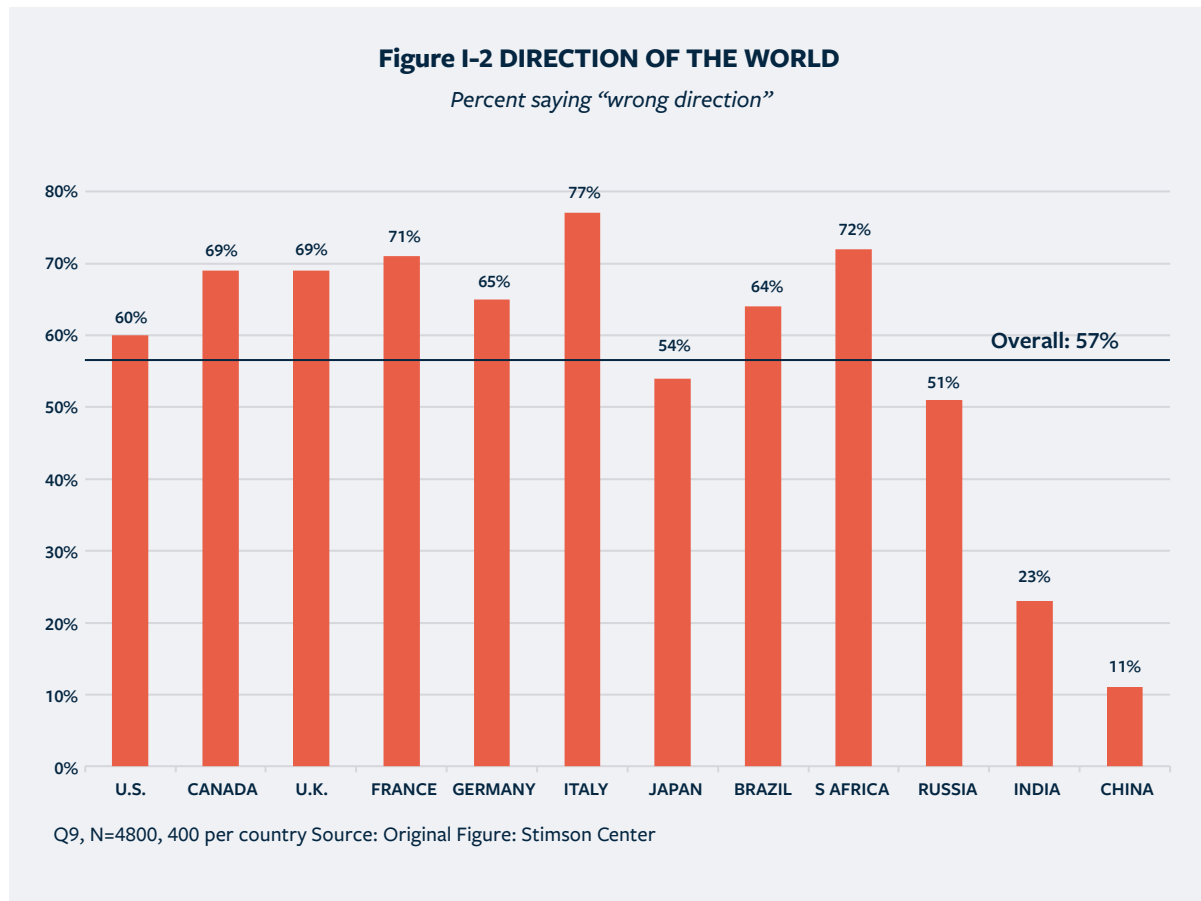
Q14, N=4800 Source: Original Figure: Stimson Center

Worry tops optimism by almost three to one: 58% of members of the publics choose negative descriptions of the state of the world, compared to just 20% who choose positives. (The remaining 23% are mixed in their assessment, choosing one negative and one positive term.) Substantial majorities in all but two countries are worried; the proportion is highest in Russia at 79%.

The only countries where people polled are predominantly hopeful about the world are India and China, a pattern that recurs in many of the survey results. In both these emergent Great Powers, “growth” and “cooperation” ranked in the three top terms chosen. In India the third was “improving,” while in China it was “prosperity.”

The general view is that the world is headed in the wrong direction, and worry is widespread.

Most people polled across the G7 and BRICS countries (57%) say the world is headed in the wrong direction, reflecting the widespread anxiety about world affairs (see Figure I-2). Just 30% say the world is moving in the right way. Negative views again predominate among the public in 10 of the 12 countries in the survey. The gloomiest are in Italy (77% wrong direction), South Africa (72%), and France (71%). Majorities hold similar views in North America (US 60%, Canada 69%) and other European countries polled (69%, Germany 65%), as well as Japan (54%). Gloom is also widespread in Brazil (64%), and Russia (51%).

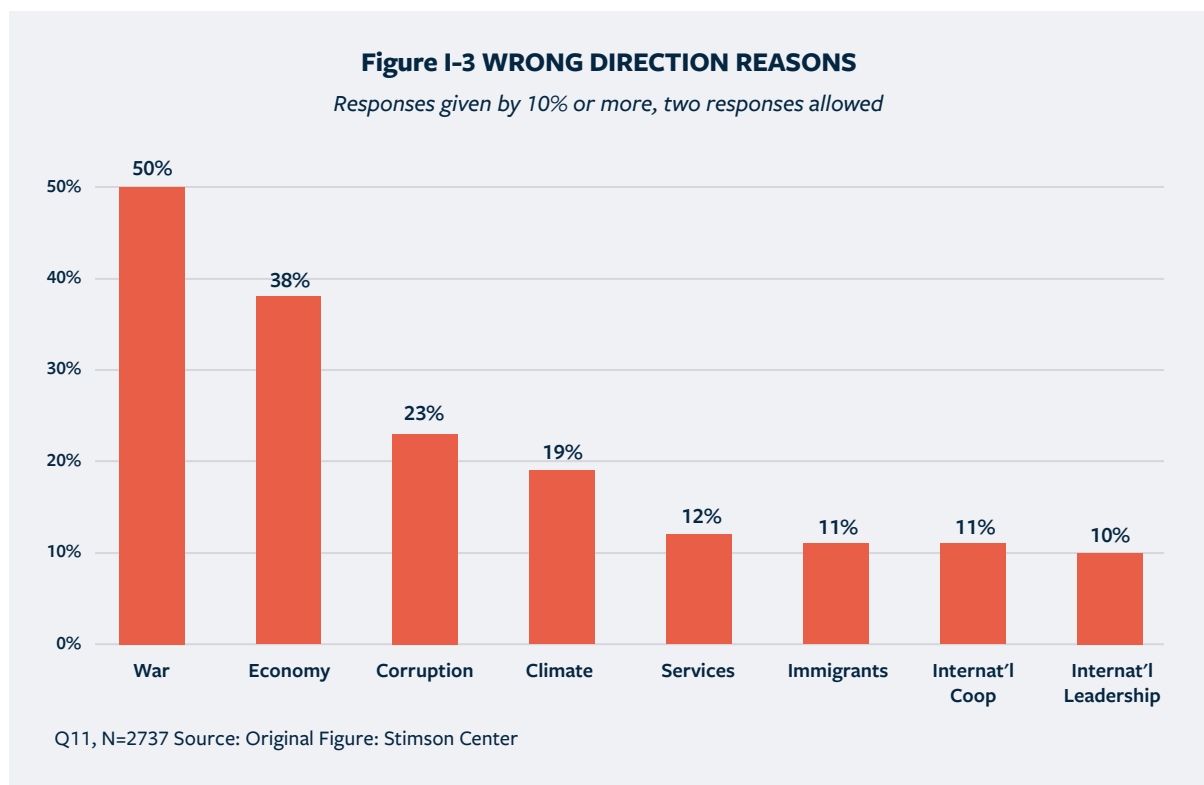


The only countries where majorities say things globally are headed in the right direction are again India (23% wrong, 64% right) and China (11% wrong, 82%). Some 13% are unsure; uncertainty is highest in Japan (31%) and Russia (24%). As groups, the BRICS split almost evenly (43% right direction, 44% wrong), while the G7 countries are far gloomier (66% wrong, 21% right).

■ **There is particular concern about conflict, economics, and corruption.**

There are three main reasons why people say the world is headed the wrong way: above all, war and conflict (50%), followed by the economy (38%) and rising corruption (23%)—see Figure I-3.

Other problems pessimists cite include climate change (19%), basic services (12%), immigration (11%), and lack of international cooperation (10%) or leadership (also 10%). A few mention growing anti-democratic forces (9%), weakening of the rule of law (7%), and the COVID-19 pandemic (7%). It should be noted that many of the issues that preoccupy the global public relate to issues of global governance. These include interstate war, immigration, global health, global cooperation, and leadership.



Broad agreement prevails across countries polled on why the world is in trouble: war is one of the three leading reasons offered in all but South Africa, while in every single country, economic problems rank among the top three. Concern about corruption is in the top three issues in several developing countries (China, South Africa, and Brazil). In contrast, in all the developed G7 countries, except the U.S. and France, climate change is ranked in the top three global problems, but in none of the BRICS. South Africans, plagued by power cuts and water shortages, also put basic services among their top three issues, the only country where people do so.

Among the minority of the sample saying the world is headed in the right direction, the decline of COVID-19 is the principal reason, cited by 27%. It is followed by peace and security (24%) and economic progress (22%). Next come explicitly international factors: international cooperation (20%), climate action (19%), and global leadership from the respondent's country (18%). Somewhat fewer mention basic services (17%), rule of law (16%), help to migrants (10%), and reduced corruption (10%).

There are some country variations among optimists too. Peace is among the top three reasons mentioned by citizens of war-scarred countries, including EU members France, Germany, and Italy, as well as Japan and China. People in those countries also rank international cooperation as one of their top three reasons for hope. Climate action is in the top three motives for optimism in several countries, including the U.S., where it is the leading one, along with Canada and South Africa. Stronger rule of law is mentioned among the three top factors in Italy, Brazil, and India, all with experience of corruption and criminality in high places.

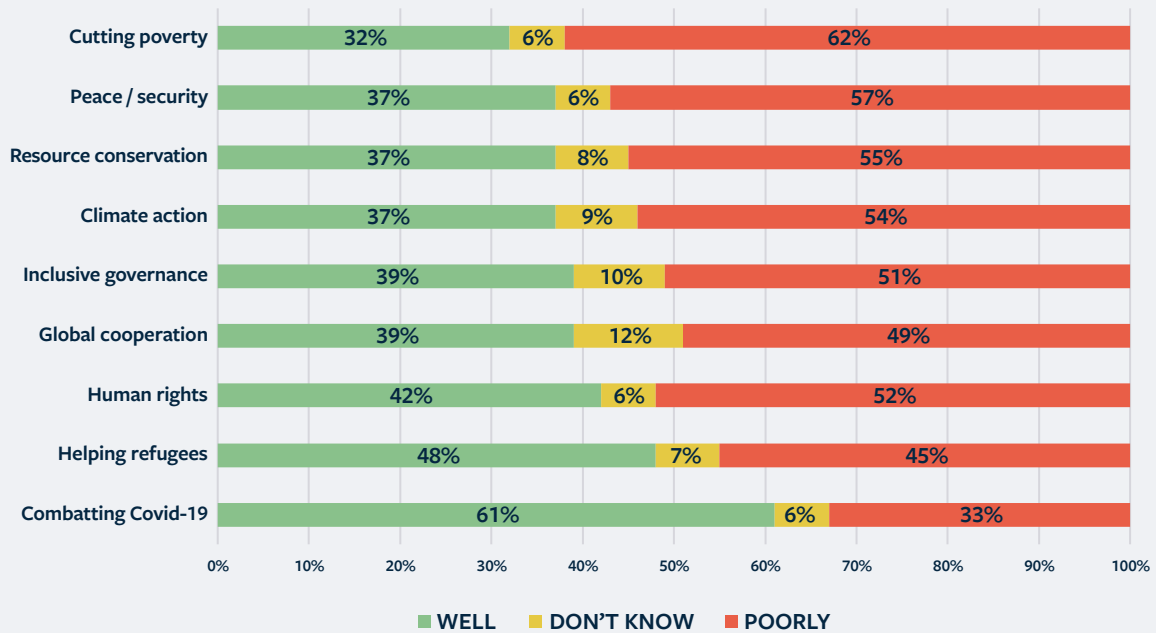
Discontent is also widespread on climate, rights, governance, resources, and cooperation; COVID-19 and refugees are the only issues where most say the world is doing well.

On most major issues tested, majorities or pluralities say the world is doing poorly: on reducing poverty (62%), peace and security (57%), protecting future generations (55%), climate change (54%), human rights (52%), inclusive governance (51%), and global cooperation (49%)— see Figure I-4. Once again, people in the G7 countries are on-balance negative on the world's performance on all these issues, as are Brazilians and South Africans. Majorities of Russians are critical of the world's performance on poverty reduction, peace and security, protecting human rights, and protecting future generations.

COVID-19 is the sole global issue where a majority of respondents (61%) say the world is doing well. This is the majority view in every country in the study except Japan, where a rare coronavirus surge occurred early this year at the time of the survey fieldwork. The other issue where a plurality (48%) is positive is helping refugees and displaced people. North Americans and BRICS residents, including Russians, hold this view. However, among Europeans, who are closer to the Ukrainian conflict, those in the U.K., France, and Italy feel not enough is being done, while Germans split evenly on the issue.

Figure I-4 ISSUES: WORLD PERFORMANCE

How well the world is doing on each



Q12, N=4800 Source: Original Figure: Stimson Center

China and India are again the outliers on these questions, with consistently positive views of the world’s performance. In both countries, majorities are satisfied with the world’s progress on peace, refugees, human rights, inclusive governance, COVID-19, poverty, climate, resources, and global cooperation.

On most global issues, the world is seen as doing worse than 10 years ago.

Public perceptions of global trends on key issues over the past decade are as critical as those regarding the world today. There is just a single issue where perceived progress is evident over the last 10 years: combating pandemics, which is also the only one on which the world’s current performance is viewed as broadly satisfactory. The proportion that says the world is doing better now on pandemic response (39%) is substantially larger than the share perceiving worsening (19%). This view is widely shared: global performance on pandemics is seen as better everywhere, except in France and Japan. But it is also the only one for which this is true.

There are two issues where little net change is seen in the world’s performance compared to a decade ago: climate (28% better, 26% worse) and helping refugees (27% better, 26% worse). Climate trends split both the BRICS and G7 blocs. Global progress is seen by citizens of the U.S.,

Canada, and U.K., as well as South Africa, India, and China, countries where awareness and action have grown. On the other hand, publics see deterioration in the global response in G7 members France, Germany, Italy, and Japan, as well as in Brazil and Russia among the BRICS. Trends in refugee response, the other topic with a modest thumbs-up on global issue ratings, receive similar reactions, again apparently reflecting distance from the Ukraine war. Americans and Canadians see gains, while the U.K., France, Italy, and Japan see worsening, and Germany is again divided. Among the BRICS, citizens of all but Russia see gains, while Russians split evenly.

Looking at trends on other global issues, the most egregious failures are again seen as reducing poverty and peace and security. Reflecting perhaps the slowdown in poverty reduction since the 2000s, 36% say the world has done worse over the past decade, while just 20% say it did better. This is the prevailing view in every country save India and China, which have seen continuing if slower gains. Against the backdrop of rising Great Power tensions and war in Ukraine and elsewhere, global efforts to promote peace and security are also seen as less effective. This view predominates in all the G7 countries, as well as Russia and Brazil. Only people in China, India, and South Africa, all increasingly active in international fora, see efforts to promote peace becoming more effective.

Trends in inclusive governance and human rights are also subjects of disappointment. Some 28% see the world as doing worse on governance that gives a voice to all people and groups, compared to 20% who see gains. The peoples of the G7's developed democracies all seem to recognize a democratic recession, as do those of an increasingly authoritarian Russia and a Brazil ruled until recently by the far right. Gains are seen only by publics in South Africa, India, and China. Human rights and the rule of law are seen as worsening worldwide by 29%, but, at the same time among those surveyed, as improving by 25%. Deterioration is observed by citizens of all the G7 countries as well—and those of Russia, while people in the other BRICS countries say they have improved.

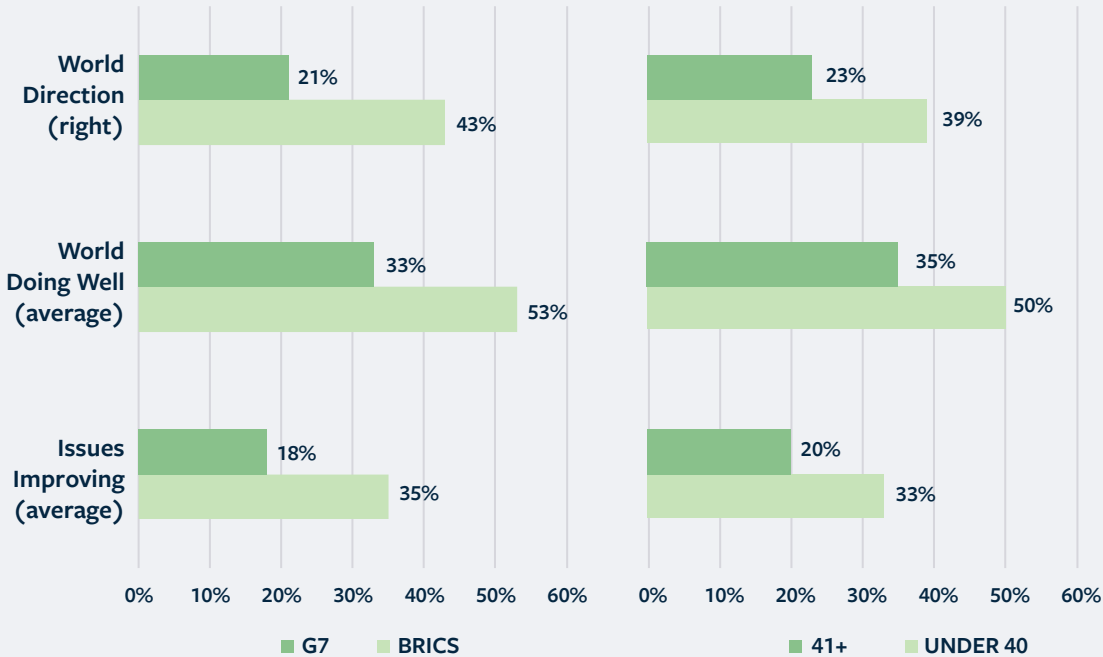
Finally, there is a sense that global institutions and concern for future generations have declined. When it comes to global cooperation, 28% say it is worse than a decade ago, while 21% say it is better. The only exceptions to this trend are in three of the BRICS, namely South Africa, India, and China. Similarly, concerning protecting the interests of future generations, 30% said the world is doing worse, while 24% signaled it is doing better. Nine countries' peoples held this view; the only exceptions were the U.S. in the G7 and India and China among the BRICS.

The respondents in the BRICS and the young are more optimistic on global issues.

Geography and generation are important influences on the global outlook (see Figure I-5). People in the rising BRICS countries are more positive about the state of the world than those in the developed G7. Likewise, the younger generations – Generation Z (18–24-year-olds) and Millennials (25–40) are more hopeful than the older ones, Generation X (41–55) and the Baby Boomers (56–75).

FIGURE I-5: THE OPTIMISM GAP

Results by geography on left, by generation on right



Q9, Q12, Q13, N=2000 BRICS, 2800 G7, 2088 18-40, 2712 41+

Source: Original Figure: Stimson Center

The BRICS publics consistently are more positive on global issues than those of the G7 countries. On the direction of the world, 43% of BRICS citizens surveyed feel it is headed the right way, nearly twice the proportion in the G7 (21%). Across the battery of questions about the world’s performance on nine key global issues, their responses are much more favorable: on average a majority (53%) of the BRICS publics say the world is doing well, compared to just 33% of those in the G7. Asked how the world’s performance on each of those issues has changed over the past decade, an average of 35% of people in the BRICS see improvement, again almost double the proportion who say the same in the G7 (18%). The gap between perceptions of improvement in the two sets of countries are greatest on peace (23%) and rights (21%), while smallest on climate action (12%) and resources for the future (13%).

Younger people are also consistently more optimistic about the state of the world than their elders. Regarding the world’s direction, 39% of 18-40-year-olds think it is in the right direction, against 23% among those 41 or older. On the world’s performance on the nine issues tested, on average 50% of Gen Z and Millennials are favorable, compared to 35% of Gen Xers and Boomers. Similarly, on the 10-year trend on these same issues, on average 33% of the younger group say things have improved, versus 20% of the older one. Differences

between the generations are greatest on gains on peace (19%) and global leadership (16%), while the divergence is least on pandemic response (8%) and climate change (9%).

The world today is seen in most leading countries as split, dangerous, and darkening. Descriptions of its state are mostly negative across all 12 countries surveyed. Moreover, it is seen as going in the wrong direction by people in most of the G7 and BRICS, excepting India and China. War, economics, and corruption are the principal worries, but the world is seen as doing poorly on most global concerns, including climate, rights, governance, and cooperation. Pandemic and refugee responses are the only bright spots. They are also among the few issues where the world is seen as doing better or as well compared to a decade ago.

Yet while these findings are cause for concern, they also contain reasons for hope in the widespread awareness of global issues and the reserves of optimism revealed. The Global Governance Survey shows a global public aware of and thinking about the most critical issues facing the world as a whole, as well as their own countries. Strikingly few people responded “don’t know” to these questions. The findings are not a portrait of a collection of parochial nations, each focused solely on their own concerns, but of a developing, albeit still nascent global community. The positive sentiments expressed in the BRICS, particularly India and China, as well as younger generations, represent antidotes to widespread feelings of impotence or despair worldwide. The survey shows global publics are deeply concerned about global issues. This genuine concern can translate into initiatives, support, and pressure from below that complements and empowers efforts by world leaders and international institutions to address the issues.



Photo by Kevin Schmid/Unsplash

PART II

International Peace and Security: Hostility to Aggression, Support for International Law

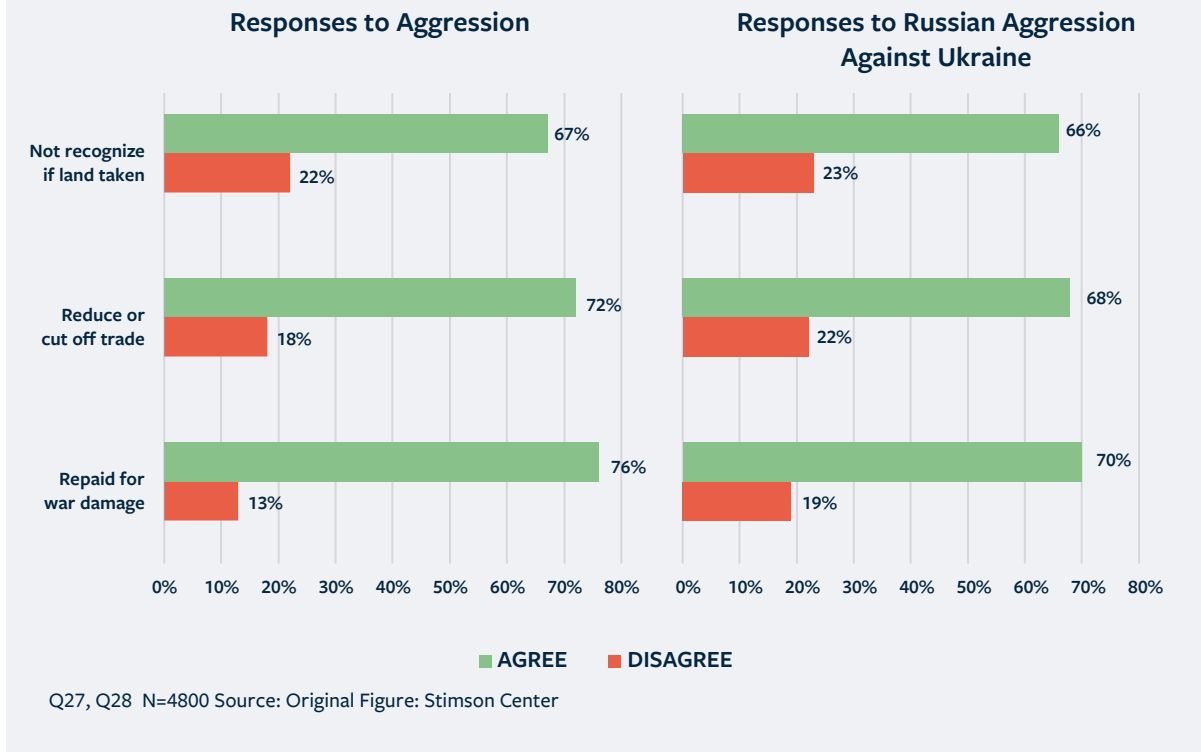
The Global Governance Survey reveals broad support for innovation to strengthen international peace and security. The polling finds a demand for accountability for aggressors, a willingness to apply the notion of war crimes to current and future threats, and a desire to rely more on international legal conflict resolution mechanisms. A particularly impressive aspect of this consensus is that it runs across the citizens of the G7 and BRICS blocs, irrespective of the positions of their governments (with even some adherents in Russia). Despite Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and other armed conflicts involving Ethiopia, Somalia, Myanmar, Azerbaijan, and Armenia, as well as rising nationalism and Great Power tensions, the desire for a more orderly world persists. Indeed, it may be the very shadow of war that disturbs the public in the many influential countries polled (see Part I), which impels their willingness to provide disincentives for launching it and to empower institutions intended to restrict it.

There is broad support for strong reactions to aggression, including non-recognition of territorial conquest, economic sanctions, and reparations from aggressors.

Most people across the countries polled favor severe diplomatic and financial consequences for aggression (defined as starting a war; see Figure II-1). Non-recognition of territory taken by aggressors in principle is supported by 67%, reducing or cutting off trade with them by 72%, and reparations for war damage they cause by 76%. Opposition is limited on all these issues, ranging from 22% to just 13%. In every nation polled except Russia, a large majority favors each of the three measures, between 60% (in Japan, on non-recognition) and 92% (in China, still scarred by World War II, on reparations). Similar majorities are found in every social and demographic category in the poll. The breadth of agreement on this issue is striking and impressive.

Unsurprisingly, Russian opinion on these issues differs from elsewhere—but even in Russia many accept the principle that aggressors should be penalized. A plurality of Russians favors non-recognition of aggressors' land gains by 39% to 28% opposed. They split almost evenly on sanctions, 37% for, 38% against, while favoring compensation for war damage by 49% to 23% (perhaps mindful of their country's World War II losses).

Figure II-1 RESPONSES TO AGGRESSION



International consequences for Russian aggression are favored by citizens elsewhere, even where governments have taken neutral stances or leaned towards Russia during the Ukrainian war.

Harsh responses to aggression are almost as widely favored when the same questions are posed in the context of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Refusal to recognize Russian taking of Ukrainian land receives 66% agreement, trade sanctions against Russia gets 68%, and compensation from Russia for war damage is supported by fully 70%. Once more, except for Russia, large majorities support each of the three measures in every country, ranging from 65% (in Canada, on non-recognition) to 83% (in South Africa, for reparations).

Particularly significant is the extensive support for vigorous responses to Russian actions in Ukraine among the public in China, India, South Africa, and Brazil, where formally neutral governments have been pro-Russian in practice.

- China: 68% support non-recognition, 70% trade sanctions, 72% reparations.
- India: 77% support non-recognition, 71% trade sanctions, 74% reparations.
- South Africa: 75% support non-recognition, 74% trade sanctions, 83% reparations.
- Brazil: 71% support non-recognition, 77% trade sanctions, 81% reparations.

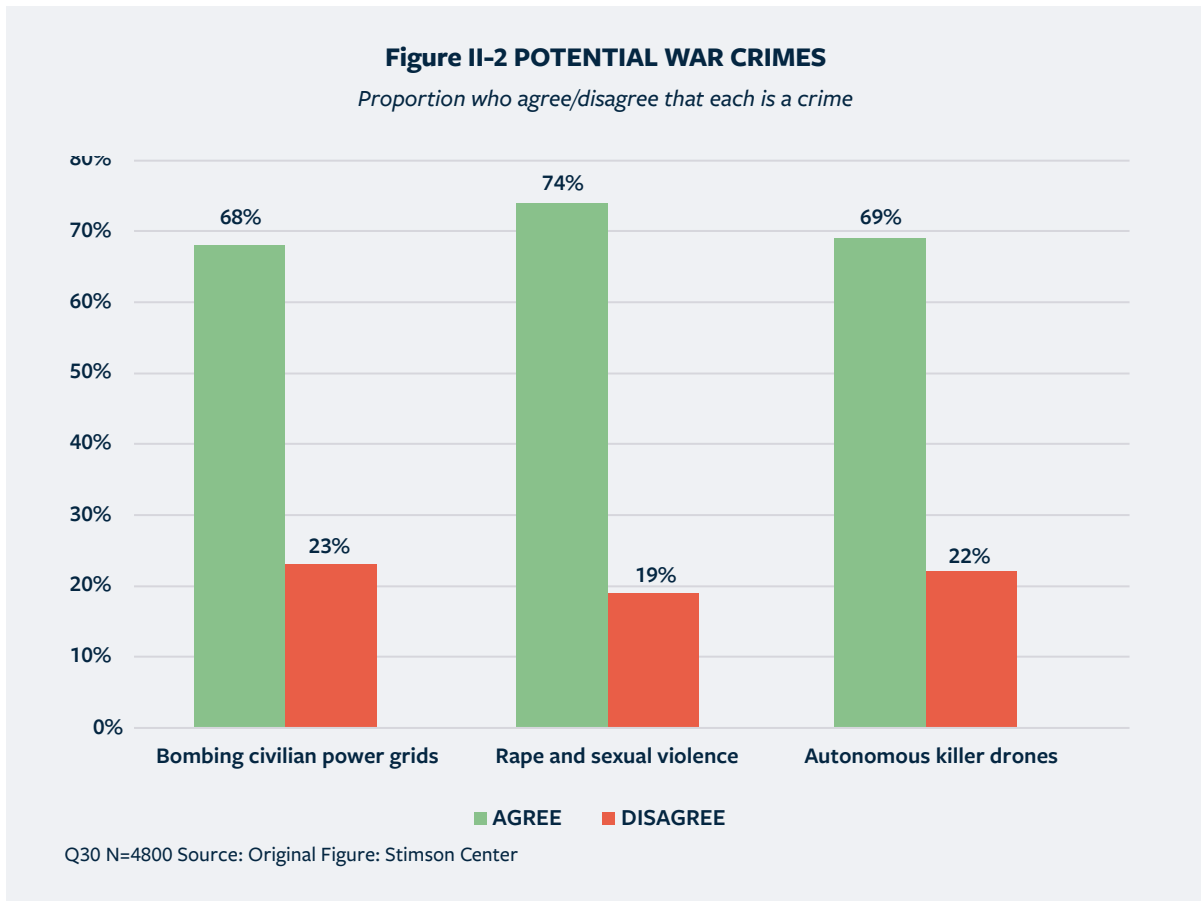
These figures strongly suggest that it should not be assumed that there is substantial public support for Russia's invasion or the equivocation of governments in the other BRICS countries. Instead, the consensus that Russia's aggression should not be rewarded extends across the citizens of the G7 countries and the BRICS, except in Russia.

However, in the context of the war against Ukraine, most Russians reject penalizing their country for its actions, although a brave minority dissents in the poll. Some 59% oppose non-recognition of Russia's gains, 69% reject trade sanctions, and 65% oppose reparations. Those favoring these measures number 18%, 14%, and 17%, respectively. Somewhat more say they don't know how to respond (23%, 17%, and 17%, respectively). Thus, in Russia, most side with the government regarding consequences for the Ukraine invasion, though even then many recognize the principle that aggression toward another country is wrong.

War crimes should include attacks on power grids, rape and sexual violence, and the use of autonomous killer drones, in the view of large majorities.

Most respondents also affirm that acts in wartime such as bombing civilian electric power grids, rape and sexual violence by soldiers, and using autonomous killer drones (where humans do not pull the trigger) should be regarded as war crimes (see Figure II-2). There is also broad consensus on these issues. Bombing power grids is seen as a war crime by a margin of 68% to 23%, rape by 74% to 19%, and killer drones by 69% to 22%. Once again, there are substantial majorities who feel this way in almost all countries polled, ranging from 66% (bombing power grids, in India) to 86% (regarding rape in Germany, where memories of Nazi and Russian atrocities in World War II are still strong). The unanimity across social and demographic groups is also quite strong.

The only exceptions are Russia and Japan, although in both pluralities or majorities regard each of these measures as a war crime. In Russia, targeting power grids is seen as criminal by 42% to 36%, rape by a margin similar to that elsewhere, 74% to 11%, and autonomous drones by 54% to 24%. In the case of Japan, 46% see electricity grid attacks as a crime while 37% do not, 50% regard rape as such and 36% do not, and 47% say autonomous drones would be criminal and 36% disagree. These responses may reflect hard right reactions to the country's World II experiences, when air raids on cities were widespread, controversies exist over "comfort women" (soldiers' sex slaves), and kamikaze attacks were common.



Although there were no specific questions about potential war crimes by Russia in Ukraine, the broad view that bombing power grids and sexual violence are such crimes would suggest there may be considerable sentiment in many countries for a reckoning on these issues after the war. Even in Russia, the findings suggest there may be guilty consciences about such actions.

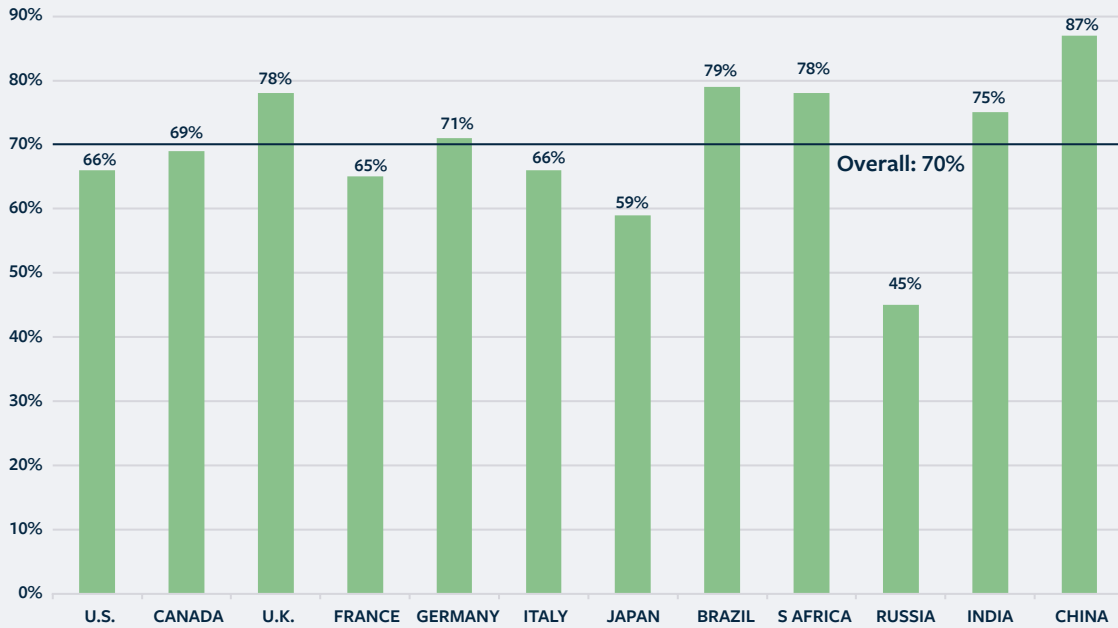
Public hostility is also extremely widespread to autonomous killer drones, despite the headlong rush among many powers to develop such weapons. In international public opinion, countries that deploy them may well be regarded in many countries as engaging in criminal activity.

Most people say their countries should cooperate in bringing war crimes suspects to the International Criminal Court in every country polled, except Russia.

Overall, 70% of respondents in the survey say their countries should cooperate in bringing accused war criminals to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Hague (see Figure II-3). This is another finding that reflects substantial agreement across national lines: majorities holding this view are consistently large, from a minimum of 59% in Japan to a maximum of 87% in China

Figure II-3 COOPERATION WITH THE ICC

Percent agreeing their country should help bring accused war criminals to the ICC



Q31 N=4800, 400 per country. Source: Original Figure: Stimson Center

Significantly, even in countries that have not ratified the Rome Statute, which created the ICC and gives it jurisdiction, most citizens favor cooperation with the court. This is true in the U.S. (which has worked with the Court in specific cases), India, and China. Even in Russia, the one state where this is not a majority view, it is supported by a plurality (45%, compared to 23% opposed).¹ It is true that in the non-signatory countries, the public may be unaware of the specific concerns that have kept their governments from joining or working with the ICC. Nonetheless, the extensive support that it receives is another element pointing to the global public's thirst for accountability for war crimes and respect for international law.

A greater role for international courts and arbitration in dispute resolution is massively favored.

The survey also reveals a popular mandate for greater use of international courts and arbitration to avert violent conflict. Across the countries polled, respondents favor greater use of such institutions by 66% to 14%, or a margin of more than four-to-one. The majorities in favor range from 61% in France to 88% in China. (This is particularly striking in view of the Chinese government's rejection of the 2013 arbitration finding against it in its territorial

dispute with the Philippines, though it may reflect at least, in part, unawareness of the Chinese government position on the issue.)

The one country where, by a narrow margin, more oppose than favor greater use of international legal institutions is, predictably, Russia. There 33% are opposed, 31% in favor, and, interestingly, 36% unsure. However, this is far from an outright rejection. It is noteworthy that clear opposition is confined to a minority, with two-thirds either in favor of courts and arbitration or unable or unwilling to state a position.

The survey results show important convergences on issues of war, peace, and conflict resolution among the citizenry of almost all G7 and BRICS countries. These publics share a hostility to aggressors and a willingness to impose consequences on their actions. This translates into support for measures to impose costs on Russia for launching its war against Ukraine. There is a belief that war crimes include destroying power grids and sexual violence—acts Russian forces have carried out—as well as the emerging menace of autonomous killer drones. Large majorities support cooperation with the ICC against war crimes, as well as using international courts and arbitration for conflict prevention. In short, in a period of growing international disorder, the peoples of the countries polled express clearly their desire for the re-establishment of international order, founded on law rather than force.

PART III

Pandemic Response and Socio-Economic Development: Progress and Desire for More

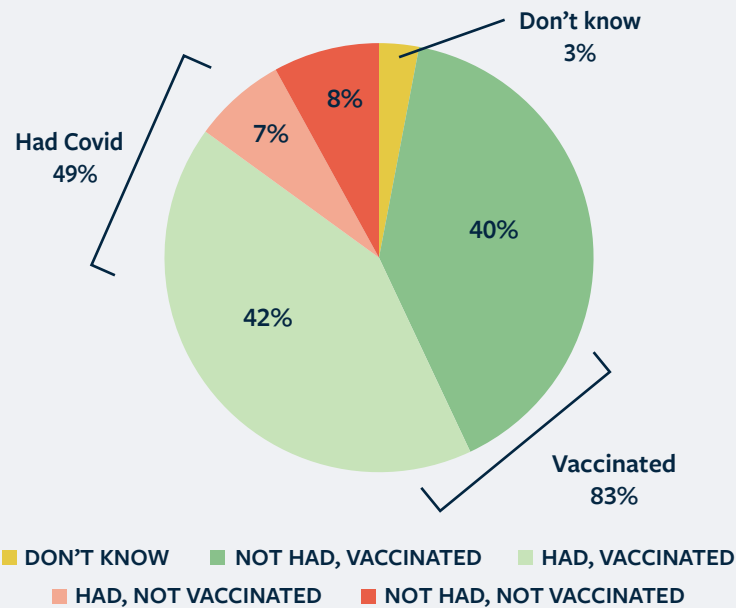
The COVID-19 epidemic touched the entire world, with a legacy of devastating loss mitigated by impressive global vaccination efforts and a determination to recover and avoid a repetition. The survey findings demonstrate that across the G7 and BRICS, the overwhelming majority of adults have acquired some protection against the disease from vaccination and/or recovery from infection. Due in good measure to this success, the public feels their countries have done well on vaccination and treatment, and to a lesser but substantial extent in social and economic recovery from the pandemic. Support is now very broad for policies to prevent or attenuate future pandemics, including institutional reform, medical capacity-building, and early warning. As humankind enters the post-pandemic world, there is also very extensive support for public-private partnerships to achieve the UN's goal of Universal Health Care (UHC).

The vast majority of adults in the G7 and BRICS countries say they have received vaccination against COVID-19, and nearly half report having the disease, so almost all have some immunity to it.

The poll indicates that 83% of the 12-country sample report they had received at least one vaccination against the disease that caused the global pandemic, as of February 2023, when the fieldwork was conducted (see Figure III-1). This is a remarkable achievement, in record time, compared to all preceding vaccination campaigns. There are important caveats: the data does not show whether respondents received the full sequence of injections or subsequent boosters, which have lagged in provision in many countries. What the survey data shows is that a large majority of adults in the G7 and BRICS countries have received at least some protection from the vaccines, which are particularly effective against severe illness or death.

Almost half (49%) of respondents across the 12 countries report that they themselves have had COVID-19. Most of them (seven in ten) had this confirmed by a COVID test; the remainder believe they had the ailment but did not obtain testing to prove this. Most of those who say they contracted the disease—42% of the total sample—also were among the vaccinated (whether before or after they were sick with COVID-19 was not asked). Some 7% report they were ill with the disease and never vaccinated. Thus, altogether those who have some degree of immunity to COVID-19 from vaccination or infection form 89% of the sample. However, this leaves 8% in the red zone: never having had either COVID-19 or vaccination against it, they have no protection at all against the disease.

Figure III-1 COVID-19 VACCINATION AND INCIDENCE



Q49, Q50 N=4800 Source: Original Figure: Stimson Center

In every country polled, a majority says they have been vaccinated, and the majority is substantial in all but Russia. In the G7 countries, the proportion vaccinated ranges from a low of 74% in the U.S. to 90% in Italy, averaging 85%. In the BRICS (outside of Russia), the percentages vaccinated rise from 71% in South Africa to 96% in China. In Russia, 55% report COVID vaccine shots, which brings the BRICS average down to 80%. There are modest differences by age, ranging from an average of 76% among Gen Z (18-25) to 85% among Boomers (56-75) and 91% among the oldest and most vulnerable (76+) group. Differences by income are also surprisingly small, rising from 79% among the relatively poor (under \$6,000 per year) to 89% in the upper income brackets (over \$50,000).

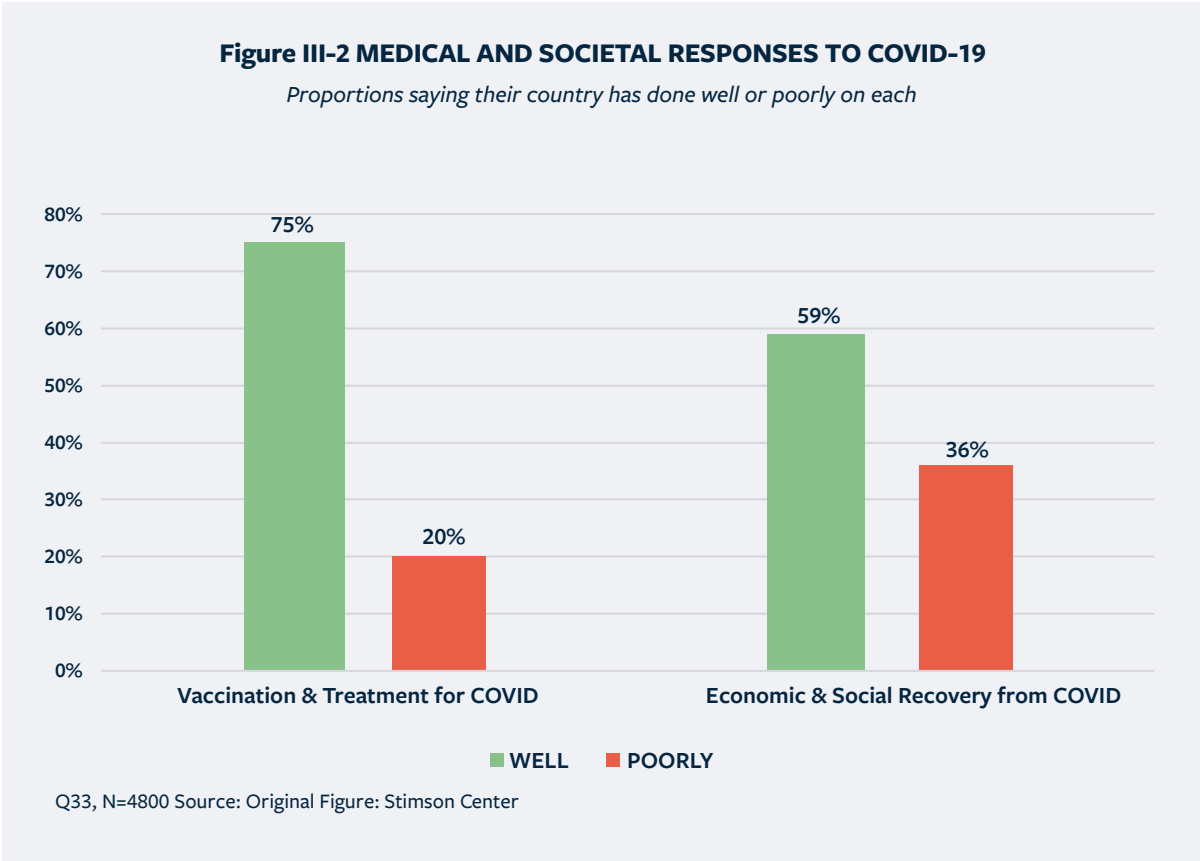
The claimed incidence of COVID-19 is highest in China at 60%, swept by a post-lockdown wave shortly before the research, and European G7 members, averaging 54%. The U.S. and India have similar reported incidence, at 52%. Reports of COVID-19 infection are fewest in Japan (22%), where widespread compliance with anti-COVID measures reduced spread, and in South Africa (33%), but the incidence of the disease in Africa is believed to be more under-reported than elsewhere.

In demographic terms, the highest frequency of COVID-19 infection is reported by women (54%, versus 44% for men) and the under-40s (55%, compared to 44% for those 41+).

Interestingly, the reported incidence is lowest among the poor (46%) and highest among the upper-income groups (59%). These differences may be explained by women’s lesser access to health care, as well as the greater mobility and perhaps a lesser sense of vulnerability among the young and well-off, which may have exposed them more to the disease.

The survey reveals general satisfaction with national COVID-19 vaccination and treatment programs, as well as broad if lesser approval of countries’ economic and social recovery efforts from the disease.

Fully three in four respondents (75%) say their country has done well on COVID-19 vaccination and treatment. Only 20% say their countries have done poorly. A substantial, if slimmer, majority (59%) say their countries have done well in terms of economic and social recovery from the pandemic. These findings are consistent with the poll’s results on COVID-19 responses worldwide, the one bright spot recognized by most people polled.



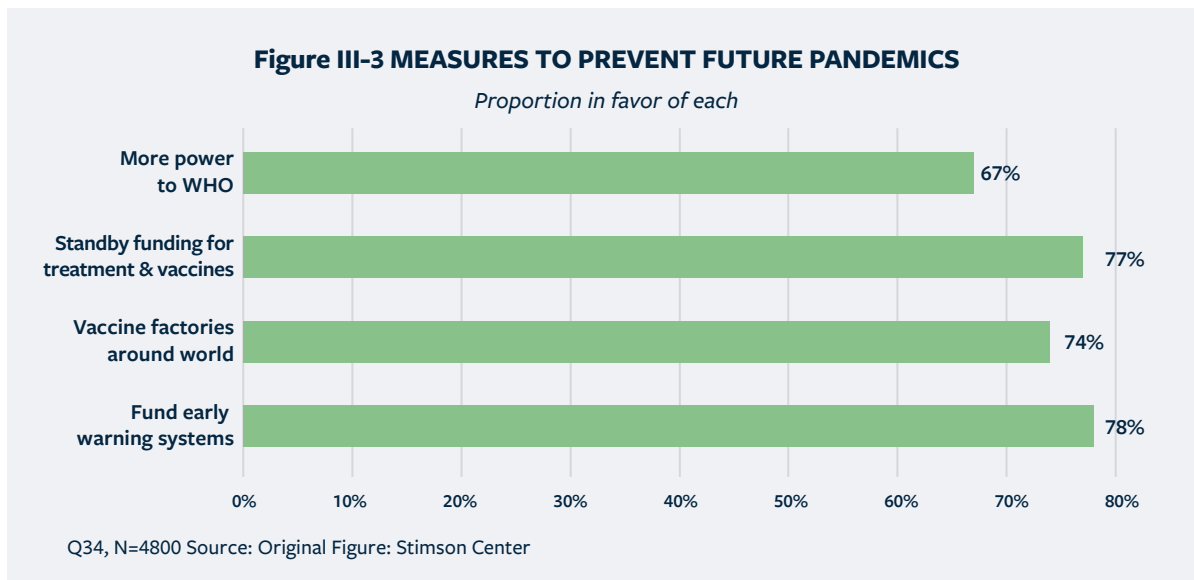
A majority of citizens say the fight against COVID-19 infection has gone well in every country surveyed. The proportions who report that range from 60% in Japan to 86% in Brazil. Overall,

publics in the BRICS are somewhat more satisfied than those in the G7, 80% to 71%. In demographic terms, the only factor significantly linked to response is age, with satisfaction rising from 70% among Gen Z to 91% in the 76+ group, in line with the claimed incidence of vaccination. Indeed, by far the strongest influence on satisfaction with the COVID-19 response is whether the respondent is vaccinated themselves: 80% of those who indicate they had shots say their country has done well, against 51% among those who have not. Still, it is striking that a majority say their countries have done well in COVID-19 vaccination and treatment in every social and demographic category in the survey.

In almost all countries polled, majorities or pluralities also say their country has done well in its economic and social response to the pandemic, if fewer than endorsed the medical response. The countries rating the response favorably on net range from Italy, with a 47% plurality, to China, with a whopping 87% majority following the lifting of tight COVID lockdowns in late 2022. The two countries where dissatisfaction prevails are Japan, 49% negative to 41% positive, where the late disease wave around survey time likely influenced responses, and the U.K., which had a worse medical response to COVID-19 (and less satisfaction with it in the poll) than the other European countries in the G7. Overall, the share of BRICS respondents who rate their country's economic and social response to COVID-19 as having done well (71%) is substantially larger than the share among G7 citizens polled (50%). Men are somewhat more satisfied with these efforts, particularly those under 40 (68%), while women over 41 are the least content- (54%), despite similar reported COVID-19 incidence. There are no major differences by education or income. Vaccination is the strongest influence on views of social as well as medical recovery: 63% of the vaccinated say it has gone well, the unvaccinated say predominantly it has gone poorly (49%, while only 41% say it has gone well).

There is extensive support polled for measures to prevent future pandemics, including boosting World Health Organization authority, establishing funding and building vaccine factories as well as early warning systems.

Such proposals are supported by very large majorities in all countries polled. Giving the World Health Organization (WHO) greater power if it declares a global health emergency is supported by 67%. Creating a standby funding system that can pay for a global supply of vaccines and treatments for activation in a health emergency is favored by 77%. Building vaccine factories in all parts of the world, to ensure none are neglected in such an emergency, is supported by 74%. And funding early warning systems to spot pandemics anywhere on the globe is the most popular measure of all, backed by 78%. Opposition is minimal to all these ideas: 23% to more power for the WHO, 14% for funding vaccines and treatments, 17% to building vaccine factories, and 13% to early warning systems



The degree of consensus shown by these results on pandemic prevention is extremely broad. More authority for the WHO in health emergencies is supported by a majority in every country except nationalistic Russia—and even there a plurality is favorable. In the case of the other three measures, substantial majorities (from 60% to 90%) favor them in every country in the poll (including Russia). This is a degree of unanimity that is rare in international polling.

There is also broad support for public-private partnerships to promote Universal Health Care.

Beyond the COVID-19 crisis, the survey also gauged views on a proposal to promote a key component of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals, the establishment of Universal Health Care (UHC). The question asked about a global compact among governments, international organizations, and private business to provide the necessary funds. Nearly three-in-four respondents (74%) are in favor, and only 13% are opposed. This idea, too, is favored by large majorities in every country polled, running from 58% in Russia to 86% in South Africa. Some 69% support it in the G7 countries, along with 81% in the BRICS.

* * *

In the wake of the COVID-19 epidemic, the peoples of G7 and BRICS countries regard the global public health efforts against the disease favorably. Indeed, it is seen as the most positive aspect of current international efforts to address major global problems. No doubt this reflects the exceptional reach and speed of the vaccination campaign and broader recovery efforts, along with the vast spread and cost of the disease. Also evident as the pandemic passes into history is the broad agreement that now exists for international action to prevent or blunt a recurrence as well as to promote UHC. The losses of the recent past have forged a willingness in nations North and South to build a foundation for healthy lives for all.



**ACT NOW
BEFORE IT'S
TOO LATE**

Klima & Zukunft

Climate JUST

Earth

CHEIP NETEK

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PART IV

Environmental Governance and Climate Action: A Broad Consensus for Change

Climate change has become a central concern of the world—and, as the survey shows, of the world’s citizens as well. The findings indicate a relatively high degree of awareness of the policy-making conferences shaping key climate choices. They show that people around the world are willing to grapple with the difficult issues involved and support compensation for the ravages inflicted by past emissions. Even more important, they are supportive of aggressive policies favoring good environmental governance: establishing incentives for countries to behave responsibly regarding global warming and environmental protection and penalizing those lands and leaders that do not.

The Paris Climate Accord is known to majorities in most countries polled, and almost half of the publics have heard of the recently convened Conference of Parties (COP) 27.

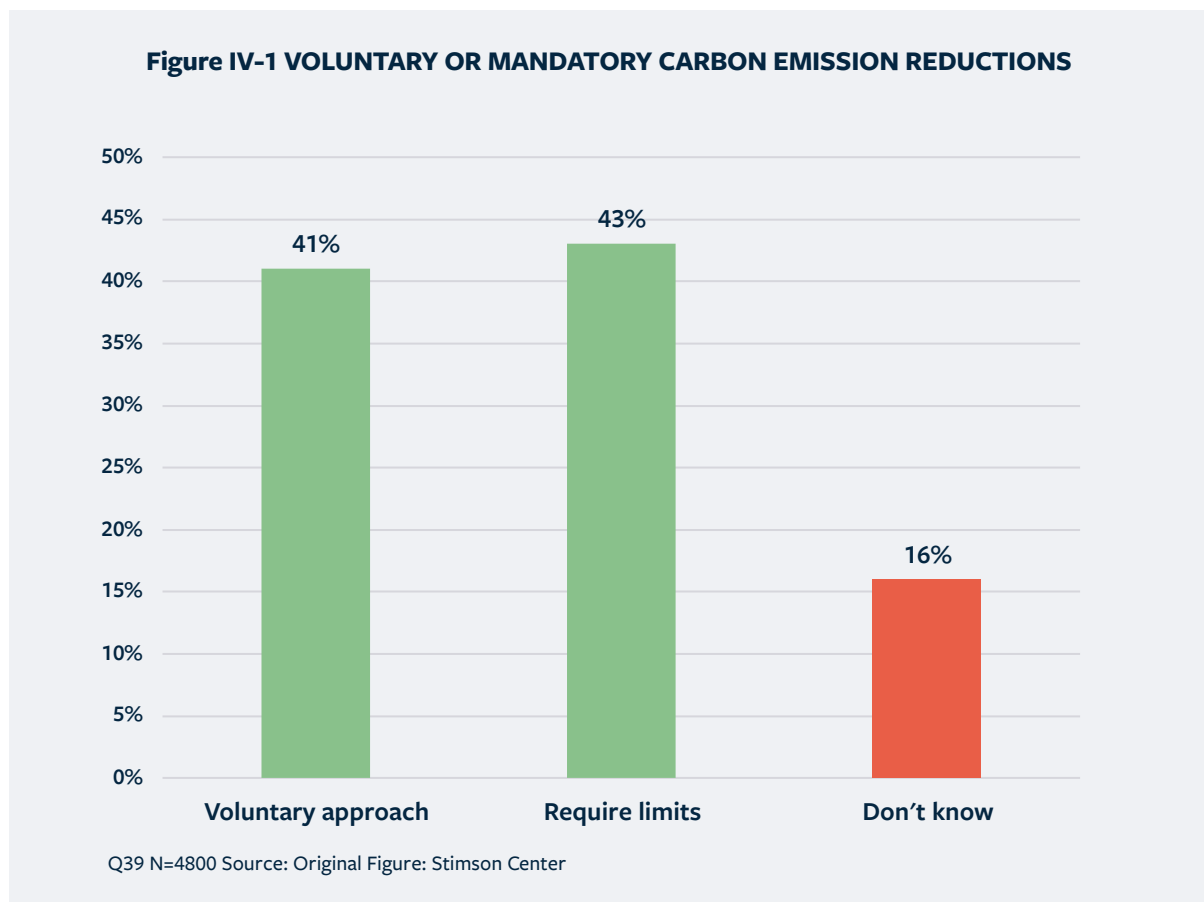
Much of the public in the G7 and BRICS countries is aware of the key forums where global environmental decisions are thrashed out. Some 57% of the survey respondents say they are aware of the Paris Climate Accord, the key international agreement to reduce the carbon emissions driving global warming adopted at COP 21 in 2015. Just under half (47%) say they have heard of COP 27, the climate conference in Egypt in November 2022, which agreed, in principle, to set up compensation (through a new Loss and Damage Fund) for climate damage.

Majorities know of the Paris Climate Accord in ten of the twelve countries polled—all but South Africa and Russia. The majorities aware of the agreement vary from 57% in the U.S. and Canada to 64% in Germany, while in South Africa only 37% and in Russia only 36% are. Awareness is less widespread for COP 27 but still noteworthy. Majorities or pluralities know of it in seven countries, including the U.K., France, Germany, Japan, Brazil, India, and China. They range in size from 49% in China to 69% in Britain and Germany. Awareness is lowest in Russia (16%), followed by the U.S. (30%).

Several demographic differences are evident concerning awareness of these decision points, including gender, age, education, and income. Men are more likely to say they know of the Paris Climate Accord than women (65% vs. 47%). Likewise, among under-40s, 50% are aware, compared to 60% of those 41+. People with college degrees are 20 points likelier to know of the Accord than non-college peers (70% vs. 50%). Similarly, 71% of upper-income respondents have heard of it, against 48% of the poor.

Opinions are split on whether voluntary national pledges, as recommended in the Paris Climate Accord, or mandatory carbon emissions limits are the best way to encourage countries to reduce their emissions.

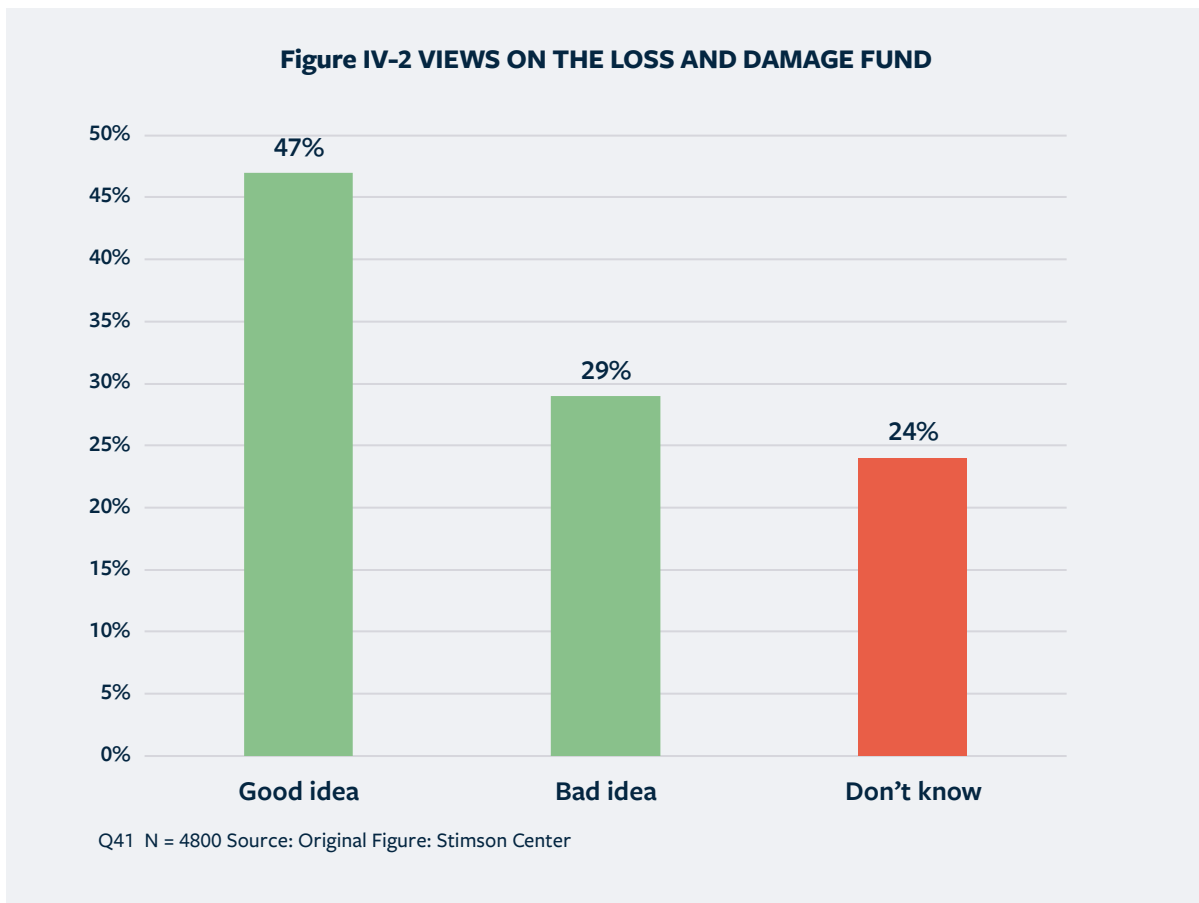
Overall, 41% of respondents agreed with the view that voluntary, specific, and increasing national pledges on carbon emissions reduction, the Paris Climate Accord approach, is the only way to get the whole world moving (see Figure IV-1). Slightly more (43%) take the stance that it would be better to require limits and reductions to greenhouse gas emissions, even if some countries reject them. The latter is the preponderant view in nine countries polled, though by fairly narrow pluralities in seven and with majority support in only Italy and Brazil. In contrast, the voluntary approach is supported by majorities in South Africa, India, and China. Some 16% of the sample have no opinion on the issue.



There are relatively modest demographic differences on this issue. Men favor voluntary pledges, 45% to 44%, while women prefer controls, 42% to 38%. Gen Z and Millennials back a voluntary approach by 49% to 38%, whereas their elders aged 41+ want mandatory limits, 47% to 36%. The non-college respondents slightly favor voluntarism, 42% to 41%; the college educated prefer mandatory limits, 48% to 39%.

Compensation from a Loss and Damage fund for global warming damage in developing countries adopted, in principle, at COP 27 draws substantial support but also considerable uncertainty.

After being informed about the Loss and Damage Fund idea, a plurality of respondents (47%) take the view that it is a good idea, since developed countries are known to have emitted most of the carbon now in the atmosphere (see Figure IV-2). Some 29% say they think it is a bad idea because the developed countries have too many other pressing commitments, including cutting their own future emissions, as well as war and pandemic recovery. Uncertainty about the idea is widespread, however: 24% say they don't know, among the most to say this on any question in the poll.



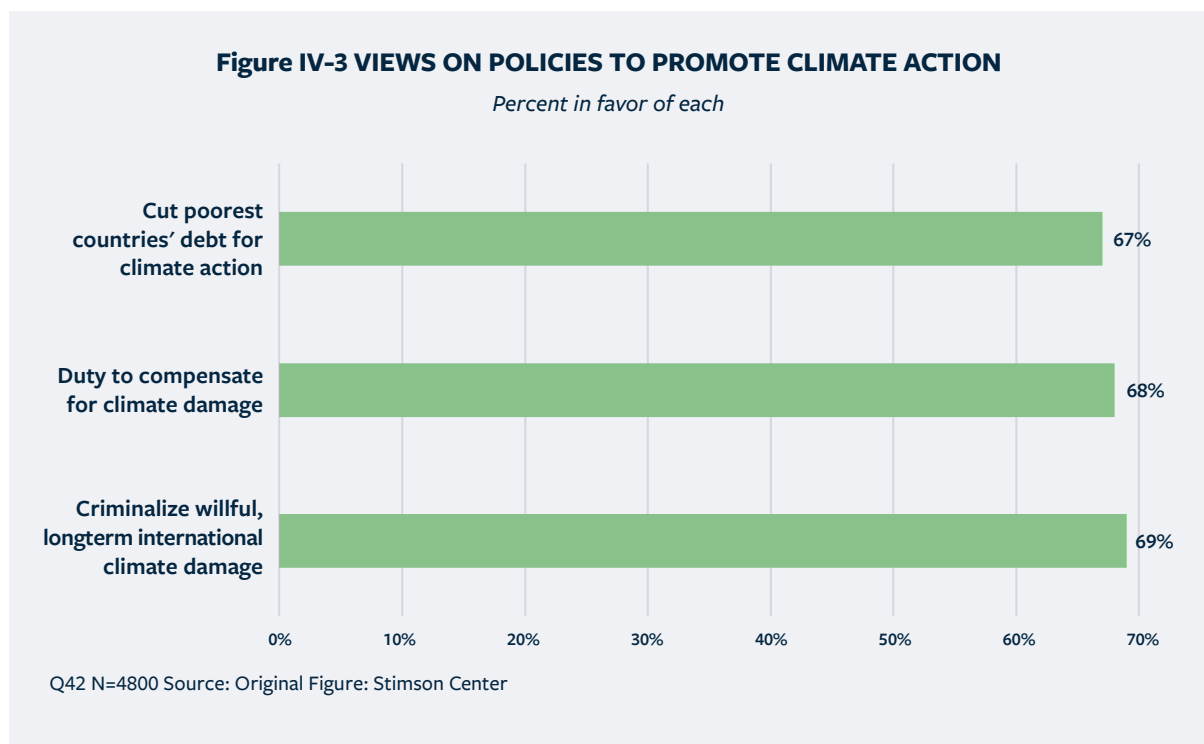
The Loss and Damage Fund receives plurality support across the G7, 43% for, 28% against, but uncertainty, at 29%, is even greater than opposition. In every G7 country, the proposal has a plurality—not a majority—of between 39% and 49% in favor. In the BRICS countries, the survey finds 51% in favor of the fund, 30% opposed, and 19% unsure. It receives between 50% and 61% support in BRICS other than Russia, where a plurality of 34% is in favor. In Russia, and in Japan, the proportion of their populations that are uncertain—43% and 44%,

respectively—are larger than both the groups (in the two countries) in favor of and opposed to the creation of the fund.

There is relatively little demographic variation on this issue, with the plurality in favor running through all social and demographic groups in the study.

Climate policy measures to encourage or require climate action, or punish climate damage, are favored by large majorities of the respondents polled.

Cutting the foreign debts of the poorest countries if they take action against climate change is supported by 67% of the respondents polled (see Figure IV-3). Action by the International Court of Justice to specify a duty for countries to act on climate change and compensate those hurt by it is backed by 68%. Making willful, widespread, or long-term damage to the environment across borders an international crime that could be prosecuted in international courts is favored by 69%.



Support for these measures is extremely broad: all three are favored by majorities in every country polled. In the G7 countries, on average, 63% favor the measures; in the BRICS, on average, 75% do. There is little demographic variation: the policies are supported across the board. These figures represent a striking degree of convergence in public opinion in the Global North and Global South regarding the need to push forward action on global warming.

* * *

The years of increasing public advocacy, recognition by leaders, and environmental disasters have had an impact: the publics in the G7 and BRICS nations are aware of the climate crisis and ready to support bold policies in response. The landmark meetings where decisions were made on the Paris Climate Accord and, in principle, the Loss and Damage Fund are widely known. Although the thorny question of voluntary versus mandatory emissions limits continues to divide the public, they are clear in their willingness to help compensate for the climate damage that has occurred and to support strong measures to encourage poor countries, and require all, to protect the environment against climate change and other forms of damage. In short, effective environmental governance is now accepted in the world's leading nations as a collective responsibility.

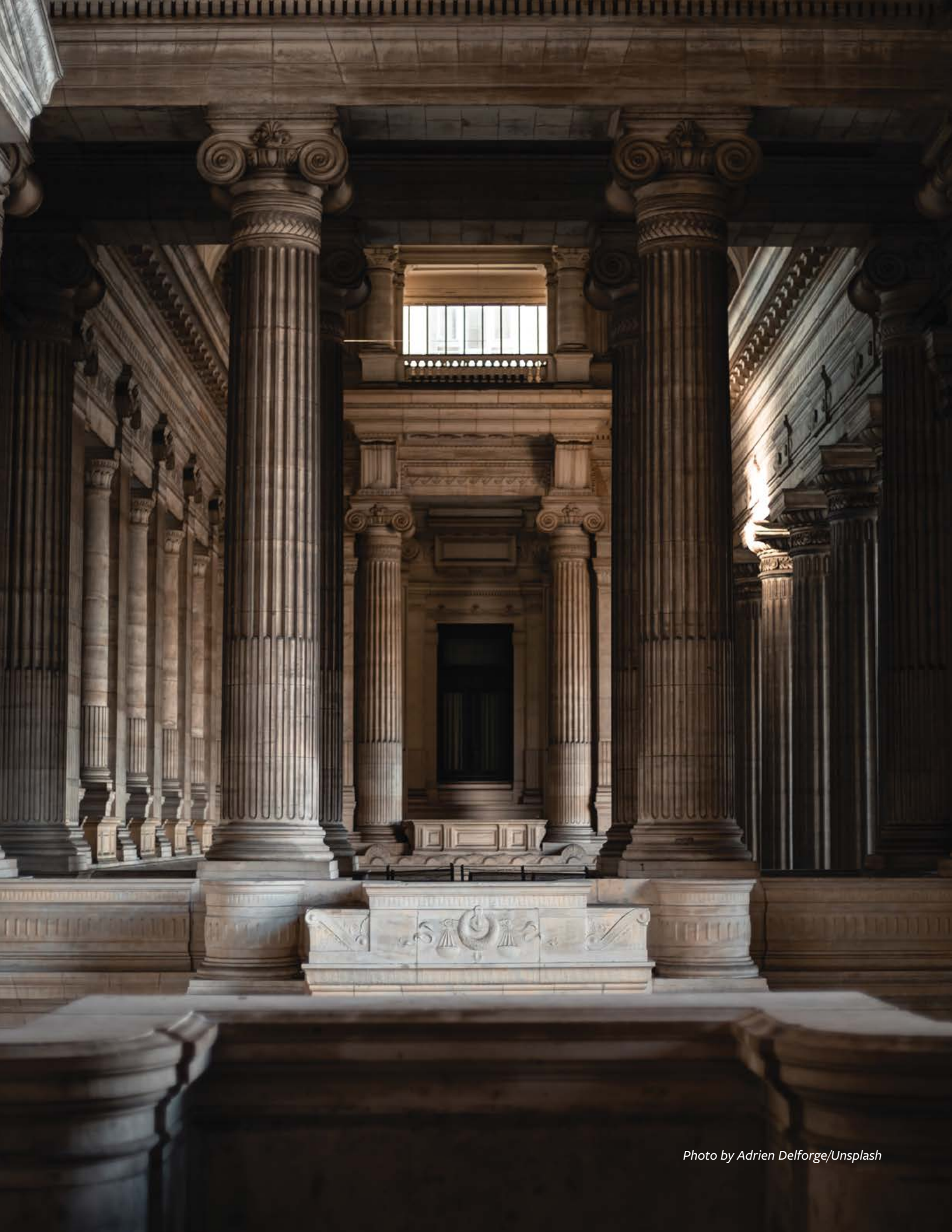


Photo by Adrien Delforge/Unsplash

PART V

The Rule of Law and Inclusive Global Governance: Readiness for Bold Measures

More effective global governance will demand improving the reach and workings of global institutions. Fortunately, the survey finds considerable support among the global public for initiatives to close gaps, reform structures, and expand the reach of international organizations. One indication is the broad support that exists for establishing an international anti-corruption court. Another is the widespread positive sentiment towards the UN and the Group of 20. This, in turn, can provide a political foundation for important UN reforms, concerning, for instance, permanent membership and veto power within the Security Council. It can also offer a basis for UN outreach, in the form of work between the G20 and the General Assembly, as well as with national parliaments. Public opinion can support changes that will promote the rule of law and make international institutions more inclusive, effective, and connected.

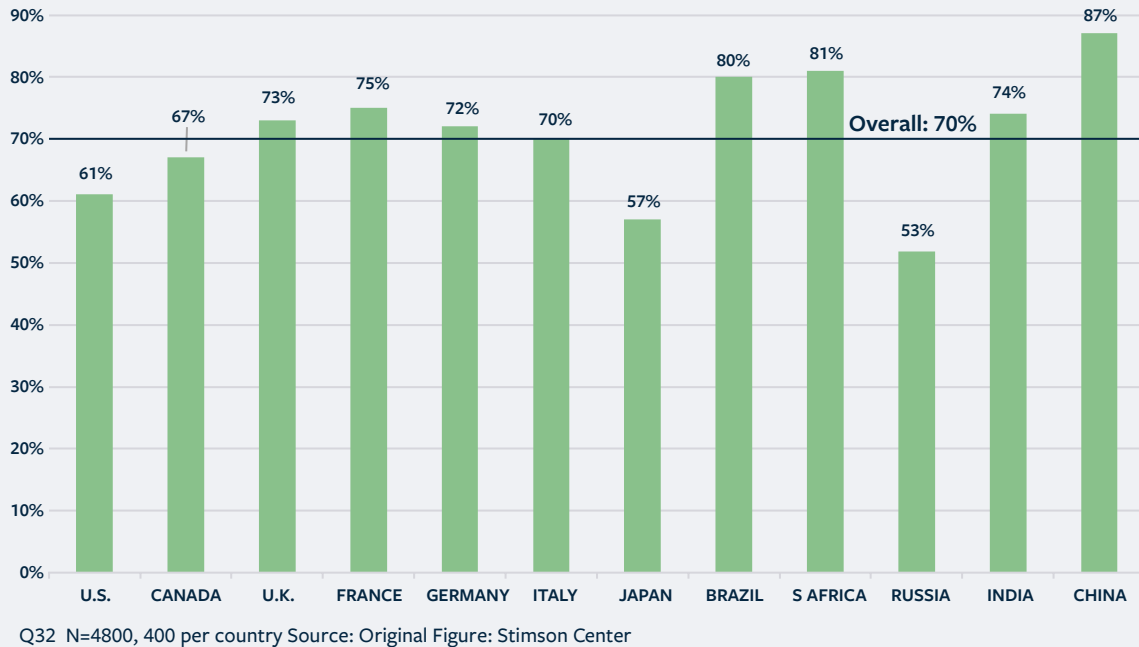
Most respondents favor the creation of an international anti-corruption court for cases which national tribunals cannot handle.

All told, 70% of those polled across the G7 and BRICS countries agree with the notion that an international court should be established to deal with corruption cases that national governments do not take on. Only 15% are opposed. A substantial majority is in favor in all twelve countries polled (see Figure V-1).

The highest proportions are found among the BRICS, where corruption is a huge issue: 87% in China, 81% in South Africa, 80% in Brazil, and 74% in India. In the European members of the G7, the percentage is also 70% or more. The least support is found in the U.S. (61%), Japan (57%), and Russia, though even there a 53% majority is in favor. Opposition is minimal, ranging from a low of 11% in the U.K. and China to a maximum of 23% (ironically, in both the U.S. and Russia).

Figure V-1 CREATING AN INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION COURT

Proportion who agree



On this issue, there is almost no variation between social and demographic groups. Simply put, almost everywhere polled most want a more effective legal approach to curbing corruption

Substantial majorities view the United Nations and Group of 20 favorably.

Across the sample, 60% of respondents have a favorable view of the UN and, once explained, 63% say the same of the Group of 20. Some 29% are unfavorable to the UN, as are 24% towards the G20. (All the countries polled are G20 members.²)

Majorities, ranging from 56% in the U.S. up to 64% in the U.K., favor the UN in all G7 countries except Japan (where unfavorable views outnumber favorable ones, 41% to 35%). Similarly, favorable views of the UN prevail among people in the BRICS, running from 72% in Brazil to 87% in China, again with one exception: Russia. (There, hostility to the UN is massive: 62% unfavorable to only 17% favorable.)

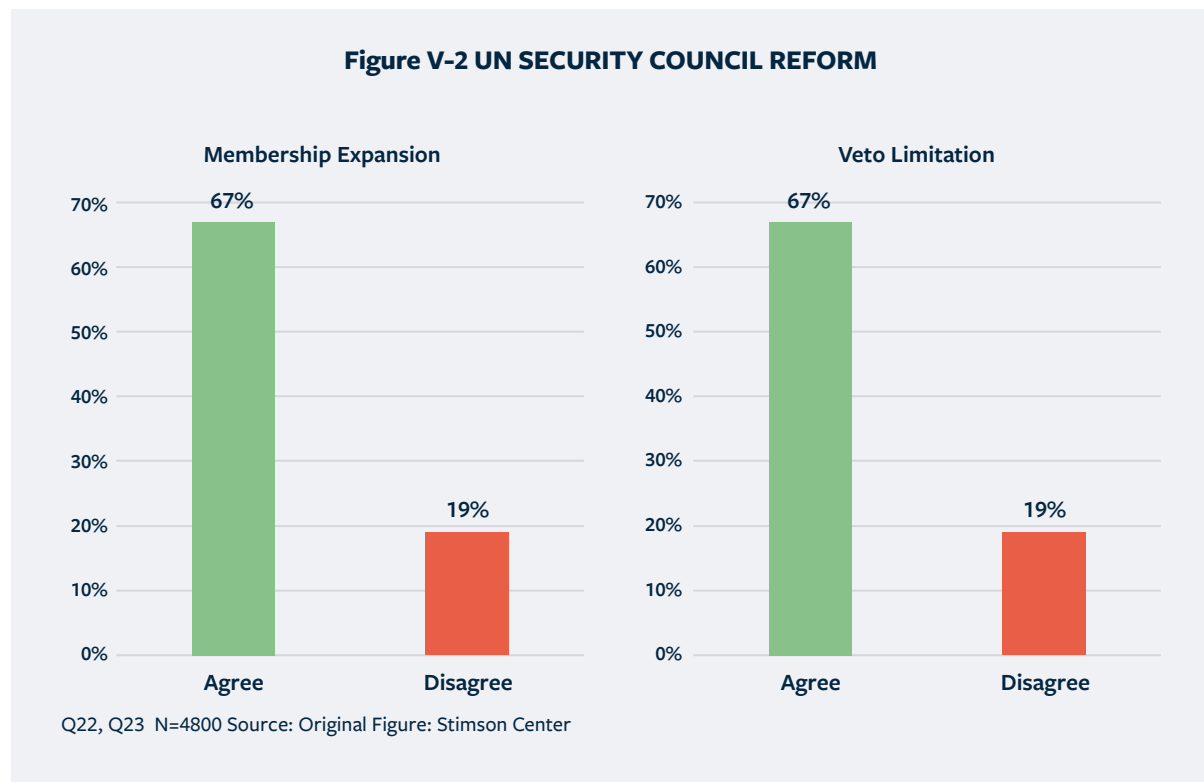
National views of the G20 are similar to those of the UN, but without the exceptions of Japan and Russia. In most countries in the poll, favorability to the G20 is very close to that of the UN, except in Japan and Russia, where sentiment to the G20 is more favorable than towards the

UN. In those two countries the G20 is viewed positively, by 56% in Japan and a plurality of 44% in Russia.

There are very few differences in social and demographic terms in favorability to these two international bodies.

Sentiment broadly favors making the Security Council more inclusive by adding Brazil, India, and South Africa as permanent members and limiting permanent members' use of the veto.

The survey finds a favorable response to the idea of adding Brazil, India, and South Africa as permanent members of the UN's key decision-making body, the Security Council, to better represent the developing world alongside the current five (the U.S., U.K., France, Russia, and China). Some 67% of those polled agree with this proposal, while just 19% disagree (see Figure V-2). The concept draws the support of substantial majorities in all G7 countries but Japan (where its citizens still signal a plurality of support), with an average of 59% in support across the entire group. Backing is even broader in the BRICS grouping, which includes three of the potential new members; 79% are in favor in those countries. What is particularly interesting is that even in China, which regards India as a potential rival, support for adding India (as well as Brazil and South Africa) to the Council runs at 85% among its citizens polled.

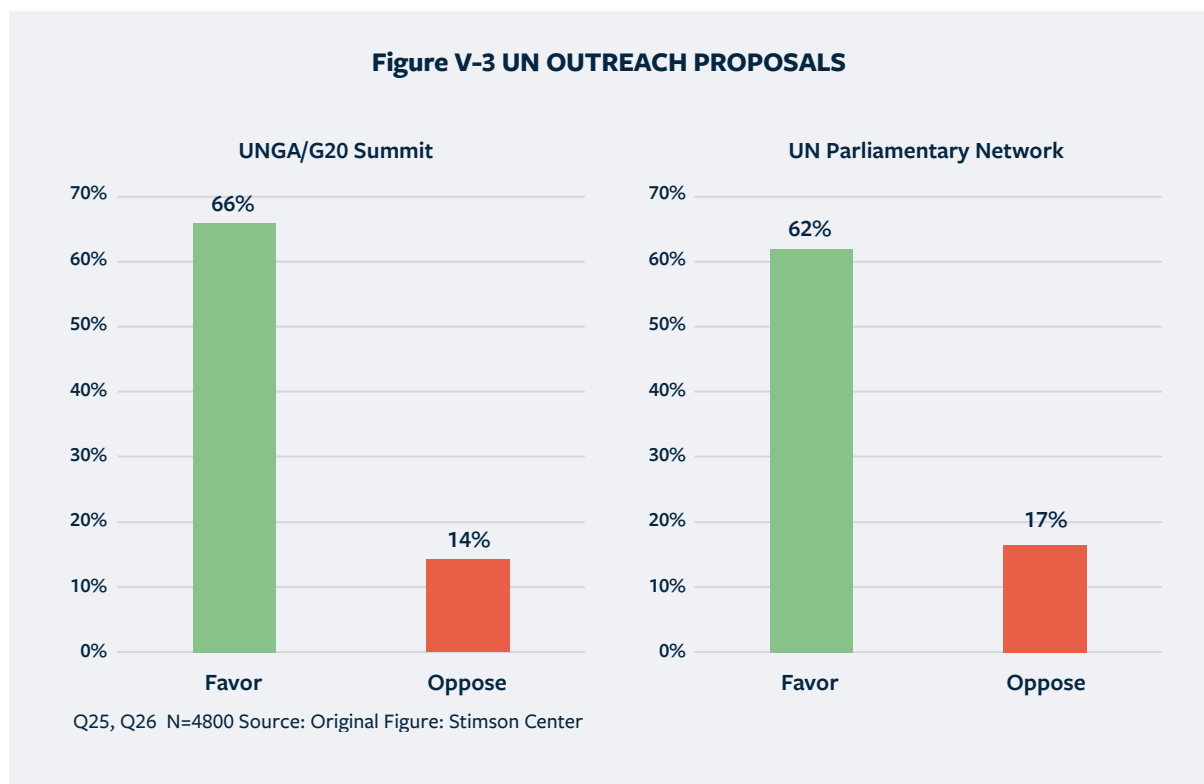


There is also support for limiting the use of the veto power, possessed by permanent Security Council members, over majority decisions, arguably the most controversial issue concerning the Council besides membership. Respondents were asked their view of an agreement among permanent members not to use the veto in cases of human atrocities or grave, life-threatening natural disasters. Some 67% agree with the idea and 19% disagree, which represents a margin identical to that on increasing permanent membership. This concept, too, is favored in every country, with majorities ranging from 56% in Japan to 86% in China. Even in Russia, a plurality (49%) is in favor.

Once more, on both of these UN Security Council reform issues, there are minimal differences when comparing social and demographic groups.

Better connecting international bodies through G20/General Assembly economic summits and an international UN parliamentary network gets a favorable reception.

Building a closer working relationship between the G20 and the UN General Assembly appeals to the survey respondents (see Figure V-3). The poll asked about establishing biennial summits between the G20 and the Assembly, which includes all Member States, to discuss how to strengthen the world economy. Fully 66% across the twelve countries polled are in favor, with just 14% opposed. The proposal enjoys a majority in support in eleven countries, rising from 57% in Canada to 86% in China, and a 50% plurality in Russia.



Another suggestion viewed favorably is to help connect the UN with member countries further by establishing an international UN parliamentary network, to inform parliamentarians of the UN's agenda and obtain their feedback on it. This is favored by 62% and opposed by 17% across the sample. This idea is also favored by majorities in eleven countries (ranging from 55% in the U.K. to 84% in China) and by a plurality of 47% in Russia.

Here, too, there is little variance by social or demographic factors.

Among the people around the world who took the survey, there is a readiness to make key bodies of global governance more inclusive, more effective, and more connected. Whether it involves filling gaps in fighting corruption, broadening the Security Council while limiting the use of the veto, or connecting the UN with the G20 and national parliaments, there is broad support for initiatives to make global organizations work better for people worldwide. What is particularly impressive and important is the breadth of this support among citizens of the world's leading nations, including among powers whose relationships are marked by tension and rivalry. So too is the fact that social and demographic cleavages within these countries, which normally mark their internal politics, have little bearing on attitudes on these issues. While elite discussions of these issues tend to get lost in the details, the survey makes visible the strong desire of the publics of key countries to see bold action to reform and strengthen the institutions of global governance.



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PART VI

Global Collective Action, Citizenship, and Leadership

Institutions and policies are important, but effective global collective action will require global leadership and citizenship too. Thus, it is encouraging that the Global Governance Survey shows that publics across the G7 and BRICS countries would like to see multilateral leadership in developing solutions to major global problems. Equally significant is the fact that most individuals in the G7 and BRICS consider themselves to be global citizens, not just citizens of their own countries. They can even envisage a situation where they might unite with their countries' greatest enemies in the name of a common humanity. Ultimately, a fundamental test for global governance is whether we recognize that we have more in common than what divides us. The findings of this survey suggest that people across the leading nations of the world know this to be true.

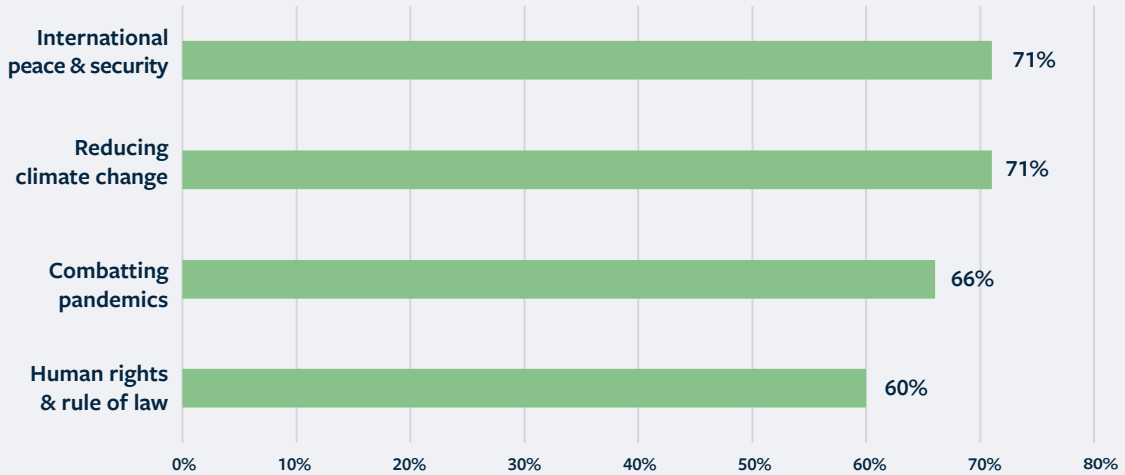
There is a widely shared preference for multilateral leadership and action to deal with security, climate, pandemic, and human rights issues.

Large majorities of those polled prefer that their countries work together with international organizations, rather than act unilaterally on these key topics. Fully 71% favor multilateralism to promote international peace and security, and a similar percentage prefers multilateral approaches to reduce climate change. Almost two-thirds (66%) would rather have multilateral responses to combat pandemics like COVID-19. Even on a more controversial subject, that of promoting human rights and the rule of law, three-fifths (60%) say working with international organizations is better than unilateralism.

Interestingly, in every country polled, a majority is in favor of multilateral action on all these major global issues, running as high as 84%. This is true even in the case of countries that have displayed more skepticism about global governance, including Russia, Japan, and the U.S. Results are also similar between the G7 and BRICS countries. Nor are there major differences by social and demographic groupings in the poll. These important findings underline the broad consensus among citizens of the world's leading powers that cooperative international action in the framework of global institutions, rather than unilateralism, is the best way to advance their own countries' interests and values vis-à-vis these common global challenges.

Figure VI-1 MULTILATERALISM FOR KEY ISSUES

Proportion in favor



Q44 N=4800 Source: Original Figure: Stimson Center

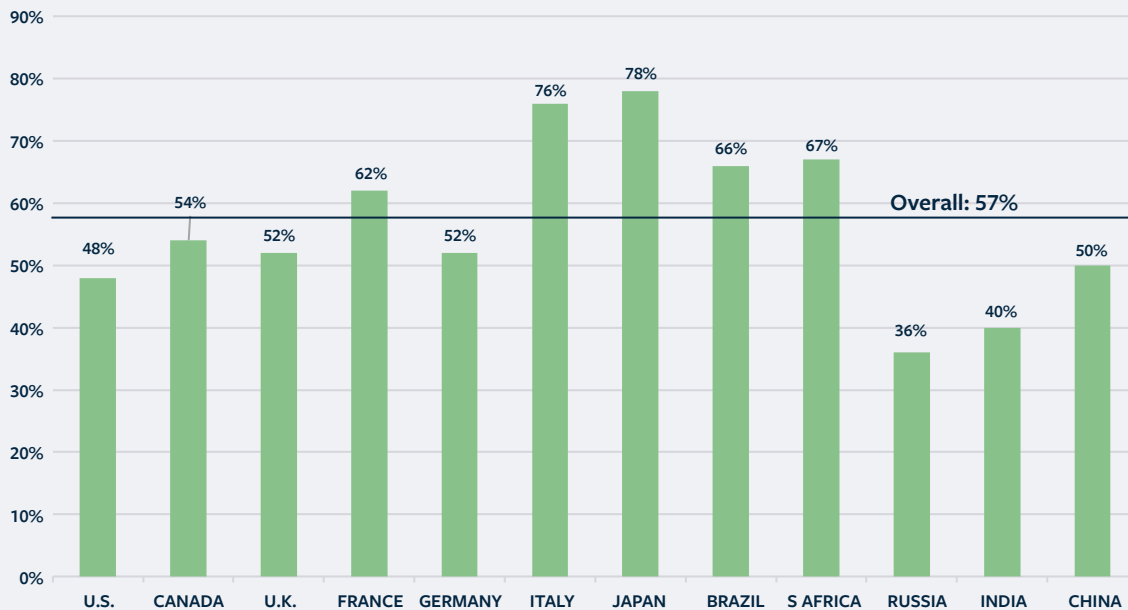
The majority of respondents consider themselves global citizens, but this perspective is more common in the G7 countries than in the BRICS.

In total, 57% of the sample say they believe they are both global citizens as well as citizens of their own countries, while 35% agree more with the view that they are only citizens of their own countries and that global citizens do not exist.

The global citizen view is predominant in all the developed G7 countries, with majorities ranging from 52% in the U.K. and Germany to 78% in Japan and 76% in Italy. As on other issues, support for a global perspective is predominant in the U.S., but somewhat weaker than in other rich democracies on this issue as well, with a 48% plurality declaring themselves global citizens. On average, 60% of adults in the G7 countries consider themselves global citizens.

Figure VI-2 GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

Proportion who consider themselves global citizens



Q 43 N=4800, 400 per country. Source: Original Figure: Stimson Center

The global citizen perspective is somewhat weaker in the more nationalistic BRICS, despite their citizens' generally supportive views on multilateralism. In Russia and India, where the global citizen label is accepted by only 36% and 40%, it is rejected by majorities of 56% and 52%, respectively. People in China split down the middle, 50-50, on this question. In contrast, majorities call themselves global citizens in South Africa (67%) and Brazil (66%). Across the BRICS as a whole, on average a narrow 52% majority accepts this view.

There are some differences by education on this issue, with the primary educated almost equally split (global citizen 46%, country only 44%), while majorities of the secondary and tertiary educated call themselves global citizens. There are also age differences that run somewhat contrary to expectations: those under 40 are the most likely to reject global citizenship compared to those older, 37% to 30%, though majorities in both groups say they are global citizens. Significantly, rural-urban differences and those based on income are minor. Indeed, the strongest predictor of views on global citizenship is not demographic but rather COVID-19 vaccination status: the unvaccinated are the only social group in the survey to split evenly on whether they are global citizens or not, 44% taking each view. This is a hint that views of global identity are linked to acceptance of global policy measures—which will be discussed further in this report's Conclusion.

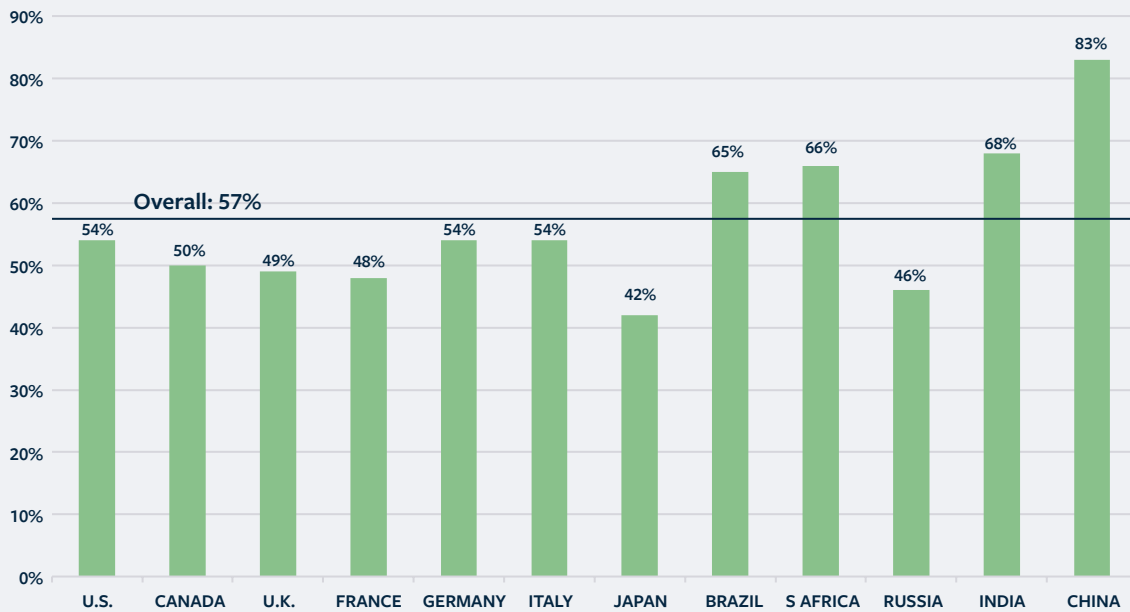
Humanity represents a common bond: in every country polled the prevailing view is that they would help even their worst enemy fight an (imagined) invasion by aliens from outer space.

To wrap up the survey, respondents were asked a version of the famous question posed by Ronald Reagan to Mikhail Gorbachev at the Reykjavik Summit in 1985: “If we were attacked by space aliens, would you help us fight them?”³ While the question is somewhat light-hearted, it contains a serious point: is there a common identity among humans that unites us? To get at this, the poll asks whether people would help their country’s greatest rival or enemy fight back against an alien invasion.

Reassuringly, some 57% across the G7 and BRICS citizens polled say they would help their greatest earthly opponent against attacking aliens. Just 21% would refuse to do so (the remaining 23% were unsure). Majorities or pluralities in every country took this view. In the G7 countries, the share willing to do so varied between 42% in Japan (whose constitution forbids war) to 54% in the U.S., Germany, and Italy. Across the G7 countries, the proportion willing to help their worst enemy was 50%, but this was more than twice the share who were unwilling (22%).

Figure VI-3 RESPONSE TO ALIEN INVASION

Proportion willing to help their country’s greatest enemy fight back



Q45 N= 4800, 400 per country. Source: Original Figure: Stimson Center

On this issue, the BRICS countries would be more willing to join the fray: the majorities in four willing for their countries to join such an alliance range from 65% in Brazil to 83% in China. Russians, on this as on many other issues, are more reluctant; even so, a 46% plurality would help their enemies to fight aliens, compared to 19% who would not. In the BRICS grouping as a whole, on average, 66% would be willing to join fellow humans, even their fiercest opponents, to fight to save the planet.

* * *

The survey findings in this section are important: they point to a shared desire for collective action and a sense of self that encompasses the globe. Despite the divides of North and South, or East and West, people across the twelve countries polled regard multilateralism as the best way to advance on some of the major issues that touch all nations, including peace and security, human rights, combating climate change, and dealing with pandemics. Moreover, as individuals, the majority are willing to identify as citizens of the globe as well as their own countries, which suggests an ability to garner support for attaining global goals. Hopeful, too, is the finding that most people in the G7 and BRICS would help even their greatest enemies or rivals to protect the Earth. This is important because humans must come together across national and bloc lines if the world is to face the myriad dangers of the 21st century. Of course, these are not extraterrestrial menaces; rather, as Pogo put it, “We have met the enemy and he is...us.”



Photo by Marco Oriolesi/Unsplash

Conclusion

This final section moves from looking at discrete issue areas to an overview of the support for change in global governance in general that this survey has revealed. Aggregating the various ideas and proposals tested, the results point to extensive support for initiatives to reform the global system. This support is connected to a sense of global citizenship, the rejection of anti-science vaccination conspiracy theories, and a degree of cosmopolitanism in the population. Together, these findings point in a more positive direction than prevails in relatively gloomy, current discussions of the state of the world. They point to a potential for a hopeful shared future—one in which the attitudes revealed in this report can provide a springboard for action.

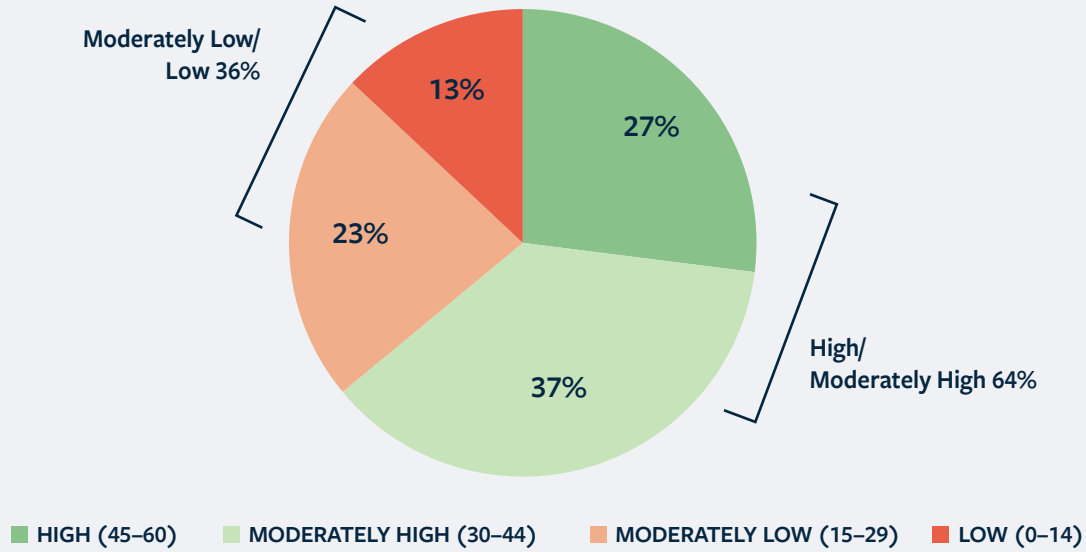
Overall, support for strengthening global governance is widespread in the survey countries.

When the 15 major proposals regarding improved global governance tested in this report are put together into a Global Governance Scale, almost two-thirds (64%) of the publics in the G7 and BRICS countries fall into the top half of the scale (see Figure C-1).⁴ Some 27% are in the top quarter of the scale (scoring 45-60), while another 37% scores in the second quarter (30-44). Just over a third of the overall sample (36%) falls into the bottom half on the Global Governance Scale. Among them, 23% have moderately low scores (15-29) and just 13% are in the lowest quarter (0-15), with little desire for more global governance.

Most G7 countries score close to the average on this scale, with the proportions of their populations in the top half ranging from 50% in Japan to 66% in Germany and the U.K. Two of them, however, have low shares in the top quarter, representing smaller shares of those individuals most oriented to global governance innovation and strengthening: just 13% in Japan, where this and other surveys have noted an isolationist streak, and 20% in France.

Figure C-1 GLOBAL GOVERNANCE SCALE

Proportions scoring in each quarter



Global Governance Scale, N = 4800 Source: Original Figure: Stimson Center

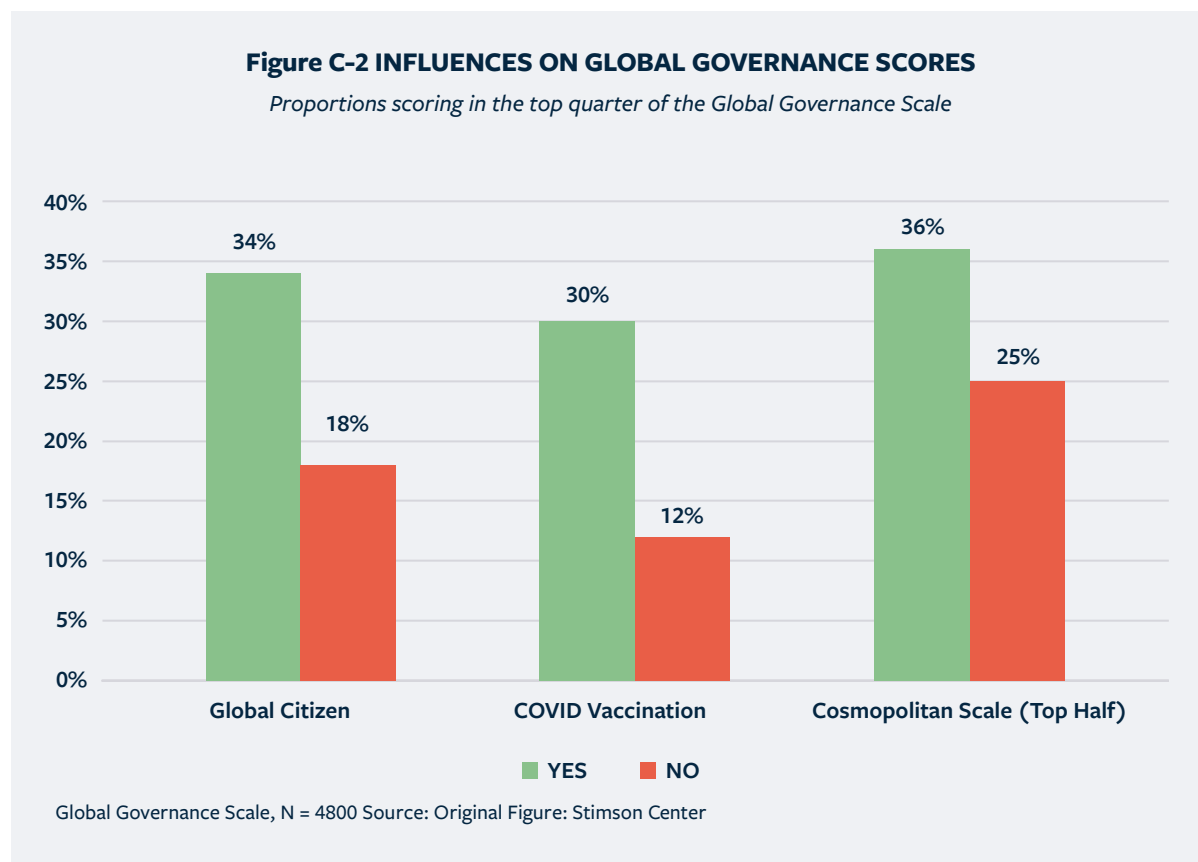
There is more enthusiasm for global governance innovation in four of the BRICS countries—those besides Russia. Their proportions scoring in the top half of the Global Governance Scale are much larger than in the more developed G7, running from 71% in India to 85% in South Africa. The proportions scoring in the top quarter of the scale, the most supportive, run very high in India (44%), Brazil (43%), and South Africa (41%).

The exception is Russia, where the prevailing mix of war fever, nationalism, and anti-Western feeling in public sentiment substantially undercuts support for improving global governance. Russia is the only country polled where under half (39%) of the population scores in the top half of the Global Governance Scale. It also has the smallest proportion of any country in the top quarter, 11%. This is an important difference. However, it should be noted that the two-fifths of the Russian population favorable to change on global governance is not a trivial share. It could grow, as well, if the country's situation (and leadership) were to change. In short, Russia should not be written off.

Attitudes on global citizenship, COVID-19 vaccination, and cosmopolitanism strongly correlate to support for more effective global governance.

Looking at factors related to support for global governance strengthening, the survey data shows they are not mainly demographic realities, but rather attitudes: identification as a

global citizen, willingness to accept COVID-19 vaccination, and exposure to international influences (cosmopolitanism). This is clear in the data on the most demanding test of global governance support, the proportion placing in the top quarter of the Global Governance Scale, which means support for most of the reforms tested in the poll (see Figure C-2).



Among those who consider themselves global citizens, 34% are in the top quarter of the governance scale, against just 18% of those who do not self-identify globally. Of those who took a COVID-19 vaccine, 30% score in the top quarter, compared to only 12% of those who did not (Indeed, the group that did not receive vaccination is one of the least supportive of global governance innovation in the entire survey population.) On an index of cosmopolitanism—based on education, media use, urbanization, and foreign connections—scoring in the top half means a 36% likelihood of scoring at the top of the Global Governance Scale, versus 25% among those who score in the bottom half on cosmopolitanism.⁵ Coming in the top quarter on the Cosmopolitanism Scale has a particularly strong impact: 53% of this group scores in the top quarter of the Global Governance Scale as well, although it forms only 3% of the total sample. In short, accepting oneself as a citizen of the world, rejecting conspiracy theories surrounding the COVID-19 vaccine, and opening oneself up to less parochial influences are all strongly associated with support for better global governance.

The public is ahead of their leaders on global governance innovation and strengthening.

In conclusion, the arc of this report runs from fear to hope: from the very real crises arousing worries around the globe to the equally real and surprising willingness of citizens in the world's leading nations to support common endeavors to resolve them by, in part, improving global governance. The Global Governance Survey uncovered shared concerns about international divisions, along with worries about the world's handling of the immediate concerns of war, economics, and corruption and of longer-term anxieties such as climate, pandemics, and human rights. Yet it also shows an unexpected consensus—even in some surprising places—around responses to aggression and strengthening international law.

Alongside a widely shared view of the global response to COVID-19 as the great success story of recent years, the data shows massive support for measures to avoid a repeat and for a compact for Universal Health Care. The consensus for change extends to climate governance. Engaged publics support international action to compensate for past damage and to prevent or punish future harm to the environment by carbon emitters. The survey also shows support for making existing institutions of global governance—notably the UN and G20—more inclusive and effective, and for filling gaps on prosecuting corruption. All this rests on a foundation of widespread support for multilateral action on the world's most pressing problems, as well as broad identification with global citizenship and humanity as a whole.

What all this means is that the global public is largely ahead of the world's leaders when it comes to improving global governance. The barrier to change is not popular opposition. Indeed, public support could, if effectively mobilized, help to inspire and drive initiatives to innovate in global governance and provide multilateral responses to critical global problems. The challenge, in a world of divided nations marked by Great Power competition, is to provide opportunities for this consensus to express itself and offer cooperative alternatives toward achieving more effective and inclusive global governance. Political elites need to open the “Overton window” of the politically thinkable to include the sorts of collective solutions that this report shows the publics of the world's most powerful countries would be willing to back. The alternative to a world that is divided, dangerous, and worsening is one where nations work together to shape a different, shared future—one that is more collaborative, peaceful, and hopeful.

Appendix: Methodology and Sample Characteristics

The Global Governance Survey was conducted, from January 27 to February 28, 2023, among citizens 18 and older in twelve countries belonging to groups of leading developed and developing countries:

- Group of Seven: U.S., Canada, U.K., France, Germany, Italy, and Japan.
- BRICS: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.

These countries were selected because of their global importance in political, economic, and population terms. The survey includes the majority (51%) of the world's population and 70% of its gross domestic product (GDP), and gives roughly equal weight to important blocs of the Global North and South.

The online survey included 400 respondents from every country, for a total sample size of 4,800 individuals. Interviews were conducted in the principal language (or languages) in each country. The survey was conducted by Toluna, a leading and well-respected global survey research firm, drawing on its massive international respondent panel.

The individual country datasets accurately represent each country's population. Quota controls on national or UN data on gender, age, highest level of education completed, urbanization, and where relevant, race, religion, or language were used as sampling guides for each country sample. In addition, the data were weighted at country level to closely match the relevant national population data. Key demographics are presented in the table below. (Those who did not say their race are omitted.)

The aggregated (twelve country) data represents each country equally. This means that overall figures for the sample represent an average view across the twelve countries. The approach under-weights the very populous countries (India and China), but it was chosen because a strictly proportionate respect for population would have made the data from those two countries dominate every finding.

Resource limits meant that other important countries could not be included in the poll. In particular, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and the Muslim world are under-represented. It is hoped that future editions of the Global Governance Survey will be more inclusive of those regions.

For this study, global governance denotes a particular *telos* and a particular *modus*. Its overarching goal is the steering of institutions and resources to provide for global public

goods and tackle global challenges effectively. For global governance to be legitimate and authoritative, it needs to be conducted in an evidenced-based, inclusive, networked, equitable, and future-oriented way.

In the concluding section of the report, reference is made to two scales created based on the data, the Global Governance Scale and the Cosmopolitanism Scale. Their components are based on responses to the following questions:

- Global Governance Scale: UN favorability (Q21), UNSC expansion (Q22), Veto reform (Q23), G20 favorability (Q24), G20-UNGA meeting (Biennial Summit on the World Economy) (Q25), UN Parliamentary Network (Q26), Responses to aggression (Q27), International courts (Q29), War crimes (Q30), Help ICC (Q31), Multilateralism for peace and security (Q44a), Multilateralism for human rights (Q44b), Multilateralism on pandemics (Q44c), Multilateralism on climate (Q44d), and Fight aliens as a common enemy (Q46).
- Cosmopolitanism scale: Education (Q3), Urbanization (Q4), Foreign travel (Q6), Foreign contacts (Q7), International TV (Q8/15), and International radio (Q8/15).

Sample Characteristics	Total	US	Canada	UK	France	Germany	Italy	Japan	Brazil	South Africa	India	China	Russia
Gender													
Female	51%	51%	51%	50%	52%	51%	53%	52%	51%	50%	48%	49%	54%
Male	49%	49%	49%	50%	48%	49%	47%	48%	49%	49%	52%	51%	46%
Age:													
18-40	43%	38%	33%	40%	32%	36%	33%	29%	58%	67%	63%	60%	33%
41+	57%	62%	67%	60%	68%	64%	67%	71%	42%	33%	37%	40%	67%
Education													
Primary or less	10%	4%	3%	4%	6%	5%	2%	0%	24%	9%	37%	27%	2%
Secondary	64%	59%	62%	55%	63%	66%	78%	66%	53%	83%	48%	64%	66%
College Degree	26%	37%	35%	41%	31%	29%	20%	34%	23%	8%	15%	9%	32%
Urbanization													
Rural	24%	21%	18%	15%	18%	22%	28%	8%	12%	32%	56%	36%	25%
Urban	76%	79%	82%	85%	82%	78%	72%	92%	88%	68%	44%	64%	75%
Race													
White	55%	66%	77%	85%	86%	95%	93%	3%	47%	8%	10%	0%	94%
Black/African	9%	11%	3%	4%	4%	1%	0%	0%	8%	78%	2%	0%	0%
Asian	23%	3%	8%	7%	2%	2%	1%	92%	0%	3%	62%	97%	2%
Middle East / North African	1%	0%	3%	1%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	5%	1%	0%
Mixed	6%	3%	3%	2.5%	1%	2%	0.3%	0%	42%	9%	5%	0%	1%
Hispanics (US only)	1%	15%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Endnotes

- 1 It should be noted, however, that the fieldwork was conducted before Russian President Vladimir Putin was indicted by the ICC, which is likely to have reduced Russians' willingness to cooperate with the Court.
- 2 The members of the G20 are: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union.
- 3 Gorbachev replied, "Of course!"
- 4 For details of the items in the scale, see the Methodological Appendix.
- 5 For details on the Cosmopolitanism Scale, see the Methodological Appendix.

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