

Pew Research Center

America's Image Slips, But Allies Share U.S. Concerns Over Iran, Hamas No Global Warming Alarm in the U.S., China

Released: 06.13.06

Favorable Opinions of the U.S.

	1999/ 2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Great Britain	83	75	70	58	55	56
France	62	63	43	37	43	39
Germany	78	61	45	38	41	37
Spain	50	--	38	--	41	23
Russia	37	61	36	47	52	43
Indonesia	75	61	15	--	38	30
Egypt	--	--	--	--	--	30
Pakistan	23	10	13	21	23	27
Jordan	--	25	1	5	21	15
Turkey	52	30	15	30	23	12
Nigeria	46	--	61	--	--	62
Japan	77	72	--	--	--	63
India	--	54	--	--	71	56
China	--	--	--	--	42	47

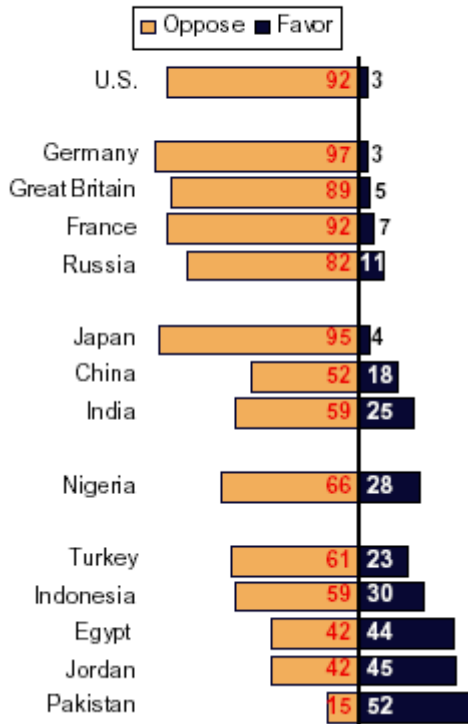
1999/2000 survey trends provided by the Office of Research, U.S. Department of State

America's global image has again slipped and support for the war on terrorism has declined even among close U.S. allies like Japan. The war in Iraq is a continuing drag on opinions of the United States, not only in predominantly Muslim countries but in Europe and Asia as well. And despite growing concern over Iran's nuclear ambitions, the U.S. presence in Iraq is cited at least as often as Iran - and in many countries much more often - as a danger to world peace.

A year ago, anti-Americanism had shown some signs of abating, in part because of the positive feelings generated by U.S. aid for tsunami victims in Indonesia and elsewhere. But favorable opinions of the United States have fallen in most of the 15 countries surveyed. Only about a quarter of the Spanish public (23%) expresses positive views of the U.S., down from 41% last year; America's image also has declined significantly in India (from 71% to 56%) and Indonesia (from 38% to 30%).

Yet the survey shows that Americans and the publics of major U.S. allies share common concerns, not only over the possible nuclear threat posed by Iran but also over the recent victory by the Hamas Party in Palestinian elections. In contrast, the predominantly Muslim populations surveyed generally are less worried about both of these developments.

Iran Acquiring Nuclear Weapons?



Nearly half of Americans (46%) view the current government in Iran as a "great danger" to stability in the Middle East and to world peace, up from 26% in 2003. Concern over Iran also has risen sharply in Western Europe, especially Germany. Currently 51% of Germans see Iran as a great danger to world peace, compared with just 18% three years ago.

Opposition to Iran developing nuclear weapons is nearly unanimous in Germany, Japan, France, and Great Britain, as well as in the U.S. Opinion in predominantly Muslim countries varies widely: solid majorities in Turkey (61%) and Indonesia (59%) oppose Iran acquiring nuclear weapons, but people in Egypt and Jordan are divided, and most Pakistanis (52%) favor Iran acquiring nuclear weapons. In addition, more people in major industrialized nations than in Muslim countries believe that Iran wants a nuclear program to develop weapons, not nuclear energy.

Divisions between the West and Muslim nations in opinions of the Hamas Party's victory are even wider. Fully 71% of Germans and 69% of the French feel the Hamas triumph will be bad for the Palestinian people, among those who are aware of the issue. Somewhat fewer Americans (50%) express this view, although just 20% think the Hamas triumph will be a good thing for the Palestinians. Among major U.S. allies, only the British are divided on Hamas' election - 34% say it will be bad, while 32% take a positive view.

Hamas Victory for the Palestinian People...

	<u>Good</u>	<u>Bad</u>	<u>DK</u>
	%	%	%
United States	20	50	30
Great Britain	32	34	34
Spain	28	47	25
France	24	69	7
Germany	11	71	17
Russia	24	32	44
Pakistan	87	4	9
Egypt	76	13	11
Jordan	68	16	16
Indonesia	61	23	16
Turkey	44	23	33
India	48	30	22
Nigeria	47	39	14

Based on those who heard about
Hamas victory in Palestinian elections

By contrast, large majorities in Pakistan (87%), Egypt (76%), Jordan (68%), and Indonesia (61%) feel that the Hamas Party victory will be good for the Palestinian people, among those who had heard about the election. In addition, the Muslim publics surveyed generally feel the Hamas triumph will increase chances of a fair settlement of the Mideast conflict - a view that is roundly rejected in the West.

The latest survey by the *Pew Global Attitudes Project*, conducted among nearly 17,000 people in the United States and 14 other nations from March 31-May 14, finds that the U.S.-led war on terror draws majority support in just two countries - India and Russia. In India, support for the U.S.-led war on terror has increased significantly over the past year - from 52% to 65% - even though opinions of the U.S. have grown more negative over that period.

But in most other countries, support for the war on terror is either flat or has declined. In Japan, barely a quarter of respondents (26%) now favor the U.S.-led war on terror, down from 61% in the summer of 2002. Only about four-in-ten Indonesians (39%) back the war on terror, compared with 50% a year ago. And in Spain, the site of a devastating terrorist attack two years ago, four times as many people oppose the war on terror as support it (76% vs. 19%).

The survey shows that the Iraq war continues to exact a toll on America's overall image and on support for the struggle against terrorism. Majorities in 10 of 14 foreign countries surveyed say that the war in Iraq has made the world a more dangerous place. In Great Britain, America's most important ally in Iraq, 60% say the war has made the world more dangerous, while just half that number (30%) feel it has made the world safer.

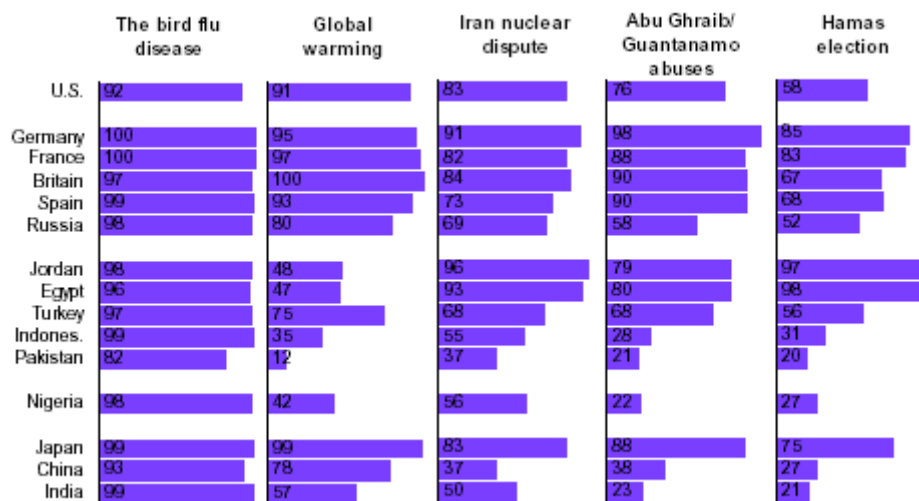
Dangers to World Peace

% saying 'great danger'	Israeli- Palestinian conflict			
	Iran	US in Iraq	North Korea	
U.S.	46	31	34	43
Great Britain	34	41	19	45
France	31	36	16	35
Germany	51	40	23	51
Spain	38	56	21	52
Russia	20	45	10	41
Indonesia	7	31	4	33
Egypt	14	56	14	68
Jordan	19	58	18	67
Turkey	16	60	6	42
Pakistan	4	28	8	22
Nigeria	15	25	11	27
Japan	29	29	46	40
India	8	15	6	13
China	22	31	11	27

Moreover, even as concerns about Iran have increased, somewhat more Britons believe that the U.S. military presence in Iraq represents a great danger to stability in the Middle East and world peace than say that about the current government in Iran (by 41%-34%). In Spain, fully 56% say the U.S. military presence in Iraq is a great danger to the stability of the Middle East and world peace; just 38% regard the current government in Iran in the same way. Among America's traditional allies, Germany is the only country where more people say Iran is a great danger than offer the same view of the U.S. military presence in Iraq (by 51%-40%).

Opinions about threats to global peace also reflect regional concerns. While solid majorities in Jordan and Egypt see America's presence in Iraq as a great danger, even higher percentages in these countries view the Israel-Palestinian conflict as a great danger to regional stability and world peace. The Japanese are particularly concerned about North Korea - 46% say the government there represents a great danger to world peace. Those concerns are not shared nearly as much in China, which borders North Korea; just 11% of Chinese feel that the current government in Pyongyang poses a great danger to Asian stability and world peace.

International News Stories People Have -- and Have Not -- Heard About



Percent who have heard of each news item

The survey finds sizable gaps in public attentiveness to major issues and events. In this regard, the extraordinarily high level of attentiveness to bird flu disease is significant. More than 90% of the publics in 14 of 15 countries polled say they have heard of the disease; the only exception is Pakistan, where 82% say they are aware of the disease.

But attentiveness to other widely covered issues and events varies widely. There is nearly universal awareness of global warming in major industrialized countries; in addition, 80% of Russians and 78% of Chinese say they have heard of global warming. Yet global warming has drawn scant attention in Muslim countries, with the exception of Turkey (75%). And in India, just 57% say they have heard of global warming.

Reports about U.S. prison abuses at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo have attracted broad attention in Western Europe and Japan - more attention, in fact, than in the United States. Roughly three-quarters of Americans (76%) say they have heard of the prison abuses, compared with about 90% or more in the four Western European countries and Japan.

Global Warming Concerns

	A great <u>deal</u> %	A fair <u>amount</u> %	Only a little/ <u>Not at all</u> %	<u>DK</u> %
United States	19	34	47	1
Great Britain	26	41	32	1
Spain	51	34	14	2
France	46	41	14	0
Germany	30	34	36	1
Russia	34	31	34	*
Indonesia	28	48	23	1
Egypt	24	51	23	1
Jordan	26	40	34	*
Turkey	41	29	23	8
Pakistan	31	25	39	5
Nigeria	45	33	20	2
Japan	66	27	7	0
India	65	20	13	2
China	20	41	37	2

Based on those who have heard about the "environmental problem of global warming."

Among predominantly Muslim countries, large majorities in Egypt (80%), Jordan (79%), and Turkey (68%) say they have heard of the reports of prison abuse. But in Indonesia, Pakistan, and among Muslims in Nigeria, most people have not heard of this issue. Moreover, just 38% of Chinese and 23% of Indians say they are aware of the prison abuse story.

While there is extensive interest in bird flu, public alarm over the spread of the disease has been mostly limited to Asia. Nearly two-thirds of Indonesians (65%) say they are very worried that they themselves or a family member will be exposed to the bird flu; bird flu worries also are extensive in India (57% very worried), Nigeria (57%), and Russia (56%). But the disease has generated far less concern in Western Europe and the United States. Only about one-in-ten Americans (13%) say they are very worried about the bird flu; similar levels of concern are evident in France (13%), Germany (10%), and Great Britain (9%).

There also is a substantial gap in concern over global warming - roughly two-thirds of Japanese (66%) and Indians (65%) say they personally worry a great deal about global warming. Roughly half of the populations of Spain (51%) and France (46%) also express great concern over global warming, based on those who have heard about the issue.

Chinese Optimism, Western Discontent

	<i>Satisfied w/ state of nation</i>			
	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>
	%	%	%	%
United States	50	39	39	29
China	48*	--	72	81
Egypt	--	--	--	55
Jordan	42	59	69	53
Spain	45	--	51	50
Turkey	19	40	41	40
Pakistan	29	54	57	35
Great Britain	46	38	44	35
Russia	28	26	23	32
India	9*	--	41	31
Germany	25	20	25	29
Japan	12*	--	--	27
Indonesia	15	--	35	26
France	44	32	28	20
Nigeria	19	--	--	7

*Summer 2002

But there is no evidence of alarm over global warming in either the United States or China - the two largest producers of greenhouse gases. Just 19% of Americans and 20% of the Chinese who have heard of the issue say they worry a lot about global warming - the lowest percentages in the 15 countries surveyed. Moreover, nearly half of Americans (47%) and somewhat fewer Chinese (37%) express little or no concern about the problem.

The survey finds the most publics surveyed are dissatisfied with national conditions. But China is a notable exception - 81% of Chinese say they are satisfied with the way things are going in their country, up from 72% in 2005. Majorities in only two other countries - Egypt (55%) and Jordan (53%) - express satisfaction with national conditions.

Only about three-in-ten Americans (29%) say they are satisfied with the way things are going in the U.S., down from 39% last year and 50% in 2003. Levels of national satisfaction in France have followed a similar downward trajectory - from 44% in 2003 to just 20% today. Public discontent is even higher in Nigeria, which has been wracked by internal strife. Just 7% of Nigerians have a positive view of the state of the nation, compared with 93% who express a negative opinion.

Other Major Findings

- There has been a marked change in views of the Middle East conflict in both Germany and France. In both countries, increasing numbers sympathize with Israel; Germans now side with Israel over the Palestinians by about two-to-one (37%-18%).
- German Chancellor Angela Merkel is enormously popular in France as well as in Germany. Fully 80% of the French express at least some confidence in Merkel.
- Positive views of the American people - along with the U.S. - have declined in Spain. Just 37% of the Spanish feel favorably toward Americans, down from 55% last year.
- Turks are increasingly turning away from the war on terror. More than three-quarters of Turks (77%) oppose the U.S.-led war on terror, up from 56% in 2004.
- Negative views of France have increased over the past year, especially in Muslim countries. In Turkey, 61% feel unfavorably toward France, up from 51% last year.

About the Pew Global Attitudes Project

The *Pew Global Attitudes Project* is a series of worldwide public opinion surveys encompassing a broad array of subjects ranging from people's assessments of their own lives to their views about the current state of the world and important issues of the day. The *Pew Global Attitudes Project* is co-chaired by former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, currently principal, the Albright Group LLC, and by former Senator John C. Danforth, currently partner, Bryan Cave LLP. The project is directed by Andrew Kohut, president of the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" in Washington, DC, that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world. The *Pew Global Attitudes Project* is principally funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts.

Pew Global Attitudes Project Public Opinion Surveys

<u>Survey</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Interviews</u>
Summer 2002	44 Nations	38,263
November 2002	6 Nations	6,056
March 2003	9 Nations	5,520
May 2003	21 Publics*	15,948
March 2004	9 Nations	7,765
May 2005	17 Nations	17,766
Spring 2006	15 Nations	16,710

* Includes Palestinian Authority

Since its inception in 2001, the project has released 13 major reports, as well as numerous commentaries and other releases, on topics including attitudes towards the U.S. and American foreign policy, globalization, democratization, and terrorism.

Pew Global Attitudes Project team members include Mary McIntosh, president of Princeton Survey Research Associates International, and Bruce Stokes, an international economics columnist at the National Journal. Contributors to the report and to the *Pew Global Attitudes Project* include Richard Wike, Carroll Doherty, Paul Taylor, Michael Dimock, Elizabeth Mueller Gross, Jodie T. Allen, and others of the Pew Research Center. For this survey, the *Pew Global Attitudes Project* team consulted with survey and policy experts, regional and academic experts, and policymakers. Their expertise provided tremendous guidance in shaping the survey.

Following each release, the project also produces a series of in-depth analyses on specific topics covered in the survey, which will be found at pewglobal.org. The data are also made available on our website within two years of publication.