

Further Findings

Climate Change Concern Drops

Climate change was rated as only the eighth most serious issue, with 56 per cent considering it a very serious global problem. The findings show that concern about climate change has diminished significantly in almost all of the world's major industrialised nations since the perceived failure of the Copenhagen summit at the end of 2009 - but that more people than before in key emerging economies like China, Brazil, India, and Russia now see climate change as a very serious global problem.

Compared to 2009, the proportions seeing climate change as very serious fell in countries including the UK (down 12 points), the USA (down 7 points), France (down 11 points), Canada (down 11 points), Germany (down 6 points), Spain (down 18 points), and Japan (down 12 points). However, the proportions seeing it as very serious climbed in developing nations including Brazil (up 7 points), China (up 9 points), Russia (up 10 points), and India (up 19 points).

China vs US

In China, 27 per cent said they had talked about climate change over the previous month, twice as many as the next most discussed issues (other environmental problems at 14%, corruption and the state of the global economy, both at 13%). In contrast, Americans were much more likely to have talked about the state of the global economy (33%), with 15 per cent saying they had discussed climate change with their friends and family over the previous month, 15 per cent mentioning terrorism, and another 15 per cent mentioning other environmental problems.

Country-by-Country Findings

NORTH AMERICA

Canada

Climate change is the most talked about global issue in Canada. Thirty-two per cent of Canadians said they discussed about it over the past month, significantly above the 20 per cent global average and twice the proportion in the US. Extreme poverty is ranked the most serious global problem and is rated as very serious by 72 per cent of Canadians, somewhat above the global average (69%). Corruption is comparatively less of a concern and is ranked the fourth most serious global problem with 54 per cent rating it as very serious, equal to the rating of human-rights abuses in the world, but behind environmental problems (65%) and armed conflicts (64%).

The United States

The state of the global economy is the most talked about global issue in the USA and was discussed by 33 per cent of Americans over the past month, almost three times more than the global average of 12 per cent. The state of the global economy is also ranked as the most serious global problem (72%, up 7 points since 2009). This is well above the 50 per cent global average and the second-highest ranking for this problem (behind only Mexico). Corruption is the second most important global problem in the US, rated as very serious by 68 per cent of Americans. This equals the global average, although only four per cent said they had discussed the topic in the past month. Terrorism ranks third among global problems, along with armed conflicts (both 67%) and has seen a 10-point increase since 2009.

EUROPE

France

The most talked about issue in France is the state of the global economy, discussed by 28 per cent of French respondents. Climate change and other environmental problems are the second and third most discussed issues (26% and 25% respectively—significantly above global averages). Extreme poverty is the most serious global problem according to French respondents (77%, 8 points above the global average), above armed conflicts (72%) and human-rights abuses (69%, up 10 points since 2009). Although they reported talking about climate change and the environment quite frequently, those issues are less a concern to French respondents than they were in 2009 (49%, down 11 points, and 59%, down 5 points, respectively).

Germany

Environmental problems are the most talked about global issue in Germany (discussed by 42% in the past month), while climate change specifically is also an important topic of discussion for 20 per cent of Germans (the same as the global average). Environmental problems are also considered the most serious global problem with over six in ten rating them as very serious (62%, up 5 points since 2009). Climate change in particular became less of a concern over the past year (48%, down 6 points). Extreme poverty is ranked second and rated as very serious by 60 per cent of Germans (9 points below the global average). Germans also exhibit notably less concern about corruption (44%) compared to the rest of the world, as it is one of the four countries out of 26 where a majority does not rate it as very serious.

Italy

Unemployment is the most talked about global issue in Italy, discussed by 18 per cent of Italians in the past month. Corruption is also a frequent topic of

discussion in Italy, with 14 per cent saying they talked about it. Although it is below the global average (21%), this is the highest proportion among all industrialised countries, as is the percentage of Italians rating corruption as very serious (72%). Extreme poverty is seen as the most serious global problem in Italy, rated as very serious by 84 per cent of Italians (well above the 69% global average). This is followed by armed conflicts (81%) and human-rights abuses (79%) both of which are also greatly above global averages.

Russia

The most talked about global issue in Russia is extreme poverty, discussed by 36 per cent of Russians, more than terrorism (33%). Both these issues are more frequent topics of discussion than they are globally (18% and 14%, respectively). While corruption is not talked about very often by Russians (2%), it is seen as the most serious global problem (67%, similar to the global average). Terrorism is ranked second (66%), having increased by 14 per cent since 2009. Environment problems come third, and are rated as very serious by 63 per cent of Russians. Concerns about climate change increased significantly over the past year (46%, up 10 points) but remain lower than the global average (56%).

Spain

Climate change is the most talked about global issue in Spain: over one in five (22%) said they discussed it in the past month, close to the global average (20%). Unemployment is the second most frequently discussed topic, mentioned by 21 per cent of Spaniards. Extreme poverty is considered the most serious global problem in Spain, with 81 per cent rating it as very serious, well above the global average (69%). Human-rights abuses rank second (73%). This is significantly above the global average (59%) although the perceived seriousness of the problem has dropped 17 points since 2009. Concern about environmental problems (62% very serious, down 16 points) and climate change (59%, down 18 points) have both decreased dramatically since last year, and are now close to global averages (64% and 56%, respectively).

United Kingdom

The UK's most discussed global issue is the state of the global economy, mentioned by 31 per cent of Britons. This is the highest proportion after that of the US, and well above the global average (12%). The perceived seriousness of this problem also increased, by 11 points since 2009 (67% very serious, above the 50% global average). Climate change is the second most discussed topic (26%, above the 20% global average), but concern about the issue has decreased since 2009, and less than one in two now rates it as very serious (49%, down 12 points). Extreme poverty is considered the most

serious global problem (70%, similar to the global average). Like Germany, the UK shows relatively little concern about corruption (50%) compared to other countries surveyed.

Turkey

Terrorism is the most discussed topic in Turkey, mentioned by more than half of Turks (54%, tied for the highest proportion worldwide with Pakistan). This is almost four times the global average (14%). Unemployment follows, with 33 per cent of Turks saying they discussed the issue in the past month.

Terrorism is also the most serious global problem according to Turkish respondents, and is rated as very serious by 73 per cent of them. Corruption ranks second in perceived seriousness as a global problem (67%, similar to the global average). Armed conflicts and extreme poverty both come third with 64 per cent. These ratings have both dropped significantly since 2009, with the seriousness of war diminishing by 11 points, and that of poverty by 12 points.

AFRICA

Egypt

The rising cost of food and energy is the most talked about global issue in Egypt, discussed by 58 per cent of Egyptians in the past month, considerably higher than the global average (14%). The spread of human diseases and extreme poverty are the second and third most discussed topics (38% and 34%, respectively). Corruption is considered the most serious global problem in Egypt, rated as very serious by 91 per cent of Egyptians—the highest proportion overall after Brazil. The rising cost of food and energy is the second most serious problem in Egypt (88%, the highest percentage globally). Egypt also shows the second-highest level of concern, after Brazil, about the spread of human diseases, with 86 per cent of Egyptians rating it as a very serious problem.

Ghana

The most talked about global issue in Ghana is unemployment, mentioned three times more frequently by Ghanaians than the global average (49% vs 16%). Corruption is the second most discussed issue (42%, twice as many as the global average) and is also the most serious global problem, rated as very serious by 77 per cent of respondents. Extreme poverty (65%) and the spread of human diseases (58%) are ranked second and third respectively, and are rated comparably with the global averages (69% and 55%, respectively).

Kenya

The most discussed global issue in Kenya is corruption. This is a topic of discussion for 63 per cent of Kenyans, the highest proportion among all countries surveyed, and three times the global average. Unemployment follows as the next most talked about global issue (38%). Corruption is also seen as a very serious global problem by 86 per cent of the population, well above the 68 per cent global average. Extreme poverty emerges as the second most serious problem (82% very serious), well above the global average (69%), and ahead of the rest of Africa. The rising cost of food and energy (77%), and the spread of human diseases (67%) are ranked third and fourth, respectively.

Nigeria

Corruption is the most talked about global issue in Nigeria, mentioned by 49 per cent of Nigerians. Unemployment is the second most discussed topic (29%). Corruption is also considered the most serious global problem in Nigeria, with 43 per cent of Nigerians rating it as very serious; as with concern about other issues in Nigeria, this is lower the global average (68%). The rising cost of food and energy is ranked as the second most important global problem, with 38 per cent considering it very serious, while extreme poverty (37%) is ranked third with 37 per cent.

ASIA-PACIFIC

Australia

Climate change is the most talked about global issue in Australia. Almost three in ten (29%) Australians said they discussed about it over the past month, significantly above the 20 per cent global average. Interestingly, transnational migration comes as the second most discussed global issue by Australians, mentioned by one in five people (21%), much more than in any other country (5% globally). Extreme poverty and environmental problems emerge as the most serious global problem, with 72 per cent rating them as very serious, with a six-point increase for environmental problems since 2009. Concerns for climate change have slipped a bit over the same period of time (53%, down 4 points and similar to the global average).

China

Climate change is the most talked about global issue in China. Twenty-seven per cent of Chinese said they had discussed this topic over the past month, above the global average (20%). Other environmental problems are the second most discussed issue (14%, similar to the global average). Corruption comes as the third most talked about topic (13%), and is also the most serious global problem for Chinese respondents, with 73 per cent rating it as very serious, which is somewhat above the global average (68%).

Environmental problems are ranked second (70%), while climate change is third (62%, up 9 points since 2009). China has the lowest level of concern about the state of the global economy (27%, down 6 points since 2009).

India

The most talked about global issue in India is corruption, mentioned by 30 per cent of Indians. It is also considered to be a very serious global problem by 66 per cent of the Indian population, which is similar to the global average (68%). Terrorism comes after corruption, with 25 per cent of Indian respondents saying they discussed it in the past month—significantly higher than the global average (14%). Terrorism is also the most serious global problem, with two-thirds of Indians rating it as very serious (up 10 points since 2009). Perceived seriousness of climate change has increased dramatically since 2009 (52%, up 19 points), and has also been a recent topic of discussion for 17 per cent of Indians.

Indonesia

Corruption is also the most talked about global issue in Indonesia, as in India. Close to half of Indonesians (45%) said they discussed the topic in the past month, more than twice the global average of 21 per cent. The rising cost of food and energy is the second most discussed topic, mentioned by 34 per cent of respondents. This is much higher than the global average (15%). This is also seen as the most serious global problem in Indonesia, rated as very serious by 85 per cent of Indonesians. Corruption (81%) and extreme poverty (78%) are second and third respectively. Both of these ratings greatly exceed the global averages of 68% and 69%, respectively. The perceived seriousness of the state of the global economy has increased since 2009 (72% very serious, up 8 points).

Japan

Climate change is the most talked about global issue in Japan (26%), and is also ranked as the most serious global problem (55%), although it dropped 12 points since 2009, and is now perceived to be less serious than in China. Armed conflicts emerge as the second most serious problem—rated as very serious by 52 per cent of Japanese—and concern about this issue has increased seven points since 2009. Japan exhibits by far the lowest level of concern about corruption worldwide, with less than three in ten (26%) rating it as very serious, and the Japanese do not report having discussed corruption in the past month at all. The perceived seriousness of the state of the global economy decreased a lot since 2009 (38%, down 16 points).

Pakistan

Terrorism is the most talked about global issue in Pakistan, with 54 per cent mentioning the topic—tied with Turkey for the highest proportion worldwide. It

also emerges as the most serious perceived global problem in Pakistan (61%), although the issue receives a lower rating than in India and Turkey—where it is also a serious concern and topic of discussion—and where its perceived seriousness has somewhat decreased since 2009 (down 5 points). Corruption is the third most discussed global issue (30%), after the rising cost of food and energy (47%), but is a less serious problem in Pakistan than it is globally (54% vs 68%). Extreme poverty is ranked second, with six in ten people rating it as very serious, while the perceived seriousness of climate change increased a little since 2009, although it remains at a low level compared to other countries (35%, up 6 points).

Philippines

Extreme poverty is the most talked about global issue among Filipinos, with 53 per cent saying they discussed it in the past month. Among other topics more frequently discussed than globally are the rising cost of food and energy (47%), climate change (43%), and corruption (42%). Corruption is perceived as the most serious global problem, rated as very serious by 87 per cent of Filipinos—the third highest proportion after Brazil and Egypt, and far above the global average (68%). Extreme poverty and the rising cost of food and energy rank second and third (85% and 84%, respectively). The perceived seriousness of the state of the global economy is now similar to the global average, following a 20-point drop since 2009 (54%).

LATIN AMERICA

Mexico

Mexico is the only country in this study to have ranked education as the most talked about global issue. Over three in ten (31%) said they had discussed it in the past month, compared to 9 per cent globally. Corruption is the second most discussed issue with 24 per cent and is followed by talks about the energy supply crisis (23%), an issue barely discussed in most other countries. The rising cost of food and energy is considered the most serious global problem in Mexico (86%). The state of the global economy is ranked second, rated as very serious by 84 per cent, which is the highest proportion globally. Climate change (83%) and other environmental problems (78%) follow, with ratings significantly higher than the global averages.

Brazil

The most talked about global issue in Brazil is climate change, discussed by 23 per cent of Brazilians. It is followed by crime and violence (22%) and corruption (20%). Brazil shows notably high rankings for the seriousness of most global issues. Extreme poverty (97% very serious) is seen as the most serious, followed by corruption (96%), and human rights (93%), all of which

are far above global averages. Concern about climate change has increased seven points since 2009 (89%).

Chile

Climate change is the most talked about global issue in Chile. Thirty per cent of Chileans said they discussed the issue in the past month, compared to one in five globally. Other environmental problems are the second most discussed topic (27%). Extreme poverty and environmental problems are the most serious global problems in Chile with eight in ten (81%) rating both issues as very serious. The perceived seriousness of climate change remains high and stable since 2009 (80%) and is well above the global average of 56 per cent. The level of concern about corruption (75%), while above the global average, is lower than in other South American countries.

Colombia

The most talked about global issue in Colombia is unemployment, mentioned by 41 per cent of Colombians—three times more than it is globally. Corruption is also talked about frequently, with almost a quarter of Colombians saying they discussed it in the past month. This topic is also considered the most serious global problem by Colombians, equally with extreme poverty (both 88%). This is significantly above the global averages, as is the perceived seriousness of environmental problems (86%) and climate change (80%).

Ecuador

Ecuador is the only country where crime and violence is the most talked about global issue, with 28 per cent saying they discussed it in the past month, compared to 10 per cent globally. The topic of corruption comes second with 21 per cent, which equals the global average. Ecuadorians also consider corruption to be the most serious global problem, with 82 per cent rating it as very serious. Extreme poverty and environmental problems (both 72%) follow as second most serious problems. The perceived seriousness of climate change (68%) is considerably above the 56 per cent global average.

Peru

Climate change is the most talked about global issue in Peru, mentioned by 29 per cent of respondents, which is significantly above the global average (20%). Corruption emerges as the second most discussed topic (27%), and is also considered the most serious global problem according to Peruvians (79%). Extreme poverty (78%) is ranked second. The third most serious global concern is environmental problems (76% very serious), followed by climate change (71%), both of which are rated higher than their global averages (64% and 56%, respectively).

