

## Economic System Needs 'Major Changes': Global Poll

March 31, 2009

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### POLL

Major reform of the international economic system is needed in order to solve the current crisis, according to a new global poll of over 29,000 people carried out for BBC World Service.

As G20 leaders prepare to meet in London this week, 70 per cent of those across the 24 countries polled by GlobeScan think 'major changes' are required to the way the global economy is run. Only 4 per cent think no significant changes are needed.

Majorities in most countries - on average 68 per cent - also see the need for major changes to their own country's economy.

Of the 24 countries polled, 15 are part of the G20 and among those countries, 65 per cent think major changes are required to the international economic system, while 62 per cent see the need for major changes to their own country's economy.

When asked whether the downturn in the global economy has negatively affected them and their family over six in ten (62%) said it had affected them at least 'a fair amount'. Thirty-one per cent say that it has affected them 'a great deal'. Both these figures are little changed from a BBC poll in mid-2008.

More than two in five (44%) say that they have been personally affected by shortage of credit for mortgages and other loans at least a fair amount, with one in five saying it has affected them a great deal.

The findings suggest that people in developing countries are being harder hit by the economic downturn than those in richer nations. People in Kenya (74%), Egypt (64%), the Philippines (55%) and Turkey (50%) are most likely to say that the global economic downturn is affecting them personally 'a great deal'. Mexico (55%) and Nigeria (39%), meanwhile, have among the highest proportions of people saying they have been negatively affected 'a great deal' by the credit shortage.

Asked when they expected their situation to improve, those personally affected by the economic downturn were divided between those who think it will last more than two years (45%) and those who say it will recover sooner than that (46%).

The poll also shows that despite recent price falls, the high cost of food continues to negatively affect a much higher proportion of people than the economic downturn. Three in four families (76%) across the 24 countries say it is affecting them at least a fair amount, with 47 per cent saying it is affecting them a great deal, down from 59 per cent six months ago. Again, citizens of developing countries are most likely to report negative impacts from food prices.

The results are drawn from a survey of 29,913 adult citizens across 24 countries, conducted for BBC World Service by the international polling firm GlobeScan, together with the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) at the University of Maryland. GlobeScan coordinated fieldwork between 24 November 2008 and 27 February 2009.

GlobeScan Chairman Doug Miller commented, "The poll reveals a global mandate for bold action at this week's G20 leaders summit. Results suggest most people see the global economic system as flawed."

He added: "The poll also highlights the 'forgotten crisis' of high food prices that is still having the most negative impact on many people's lives."

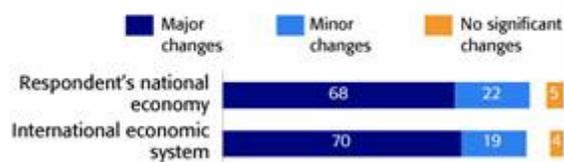
### Participating Countries



\*Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama  
Note: In Brazil, Chile, China, Egypt, Mexico, the Philippines, Portugal, Turkey, and the countries of Central America urban samples were used. Please see methodology for details.

## Changes Needed in Economic Systems as a Result of Financial Crisis

Average of 24 Countries, 2009



The white space in this chart represents "DK/NA."

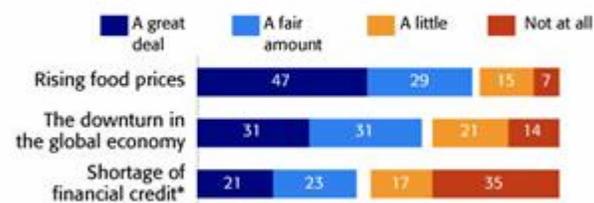
## Detailed Findings

Majority support for fundamental reform of the international economic system is found in 20 of the 24 countries polled, led by Portugal (92%), the Philippines (88%), Kenya and Spain (both 84%). The only countries where less than half call for major changes are Russia (47%), Japan (45%), Mexico (42%), and India (40%).

Majorities in 19 of the 24 countries also see the need for major changes to their own country's economic system. On average 68 per cent think their own country's economy needs major changes in response to the economic crisis. Some of the largest majorities are found in developed economies that have been particularly affected by the economic crisis, such as Portugal (90%), Spain (82%), the US (75%) and the UK (73%). Japan and India have the smallest numbers calling for major change (both 39%).

## Effects on Respondent and Family of Recent Developments

Average of 24 Countries, 2009



\*Not asked in Japan

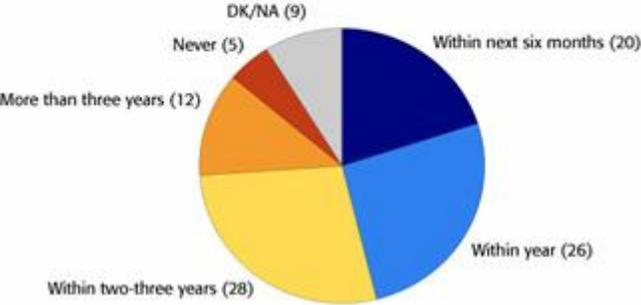
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Rising food prices continue to be a major concern across many countries, but are a particularly acute problem in the developing world, with very large majorities in countries such as Kenya (91%), Egypt (85%) and the Philippines (83%) saying they are being affected a great deal.

In total 29,913 citizens in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Central America (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama), Egypt, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, the Philippines, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the USA, were interviewed face-to-face or by telephone between 24 November, 2008 to 27 February, 2009. Polling was conducted for BBC World Service by the international polling firm GlobeScan and its research partners in each country. In 9 of the 24 countries, the sample was limited to major urban areas. The margin of error per country ranges from +/-2.3 to 3.5 per cent, 19 times out of 20.

**Expect Economy to Improve for Respondent and Family**

Average of 24 Countries, 2009



For more details, please see the [full report \(PDF\)](#).