

23 Nation Poll: Who will Lead the World?

April 6, 2005

In 20 Countries, Citizens Want Europe to Be More Influential Than US

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[Questionnaire](#)

A public opinion poll across 23 countries finds that in 20, a majority (17) or a plurality (3) of citizens think it would be mainly positive for Europe to become more influential than the US in world affairs. Currently, Europe is seen as having a mainly positive influence in the world in 22 countries. Among specific major countries, the one most widely viewed as having a positive influence is France—viewed positively in 20 countries. The countries most widely viewed as having a negative influence are the US (viewed negatively in 15 countries) and Russia (14 countries).

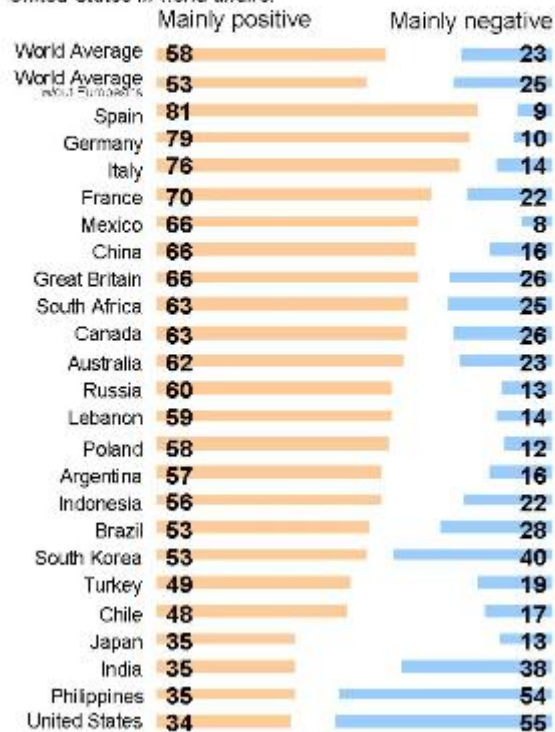
The poll of 23,518 people was conducted by the international polling firm GlobeScan together with the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) at the University of Maryland. The 23-nation fieldwork was coordinated by GlobeScan and completed during December 2004 in most countries. The poll included some questions (previously reported) that were fielded for the BBC World Service.

On average, across all countries polled, 58 percent favor Europe becoming more influential than the US in world affairs. Excluding European countries, the average is 53 percent. The most enthusiasm for greater European influence (other than in Europe) is among US neighbors—Mexico (66%) and Canada (63%)—and China (66%), South Africa (63%), Australia (62%), and Russia (60%). The only countries where a majority sees this prospect as negative are the Philippines (54%), and the US. However, among Americans only 55 percent see it as negative while 34 percent say it would be positive, reflecting the deep political divide among Americans over US foreign policy. Indians are divided, with, 35 percent saying mostly positive, 38 percent mostly negative.

Asked to evaluate the current influence of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Europe as a whole, in 22 out of 23 countries a majority (20) or plurality (2) sees Europe as having a positive influence in the world. On average, 68% see Europe as having a positive influence and only 13% see it as negative—63% to 15% if European countries are excluded.

Europe vs. US Influence in World:

For each of the following possible future trends, please tell me if you would see it as mainly positive or mainly negative . . . Europe becomes more influential than the United States in world affairs.



The white space in this chart represents "Depends/Neither" and "DK/NA".

Europe is viewed especially positively in Canada (79%), China (77%), the Philippines (76%), and South Africa (76%). The only country not to view it positively is India, where views are evenly divided. Mexico is relatively lukewarm (42% positive, 16% negative) as is Japan (39% positive, 2% negative).

Views of France

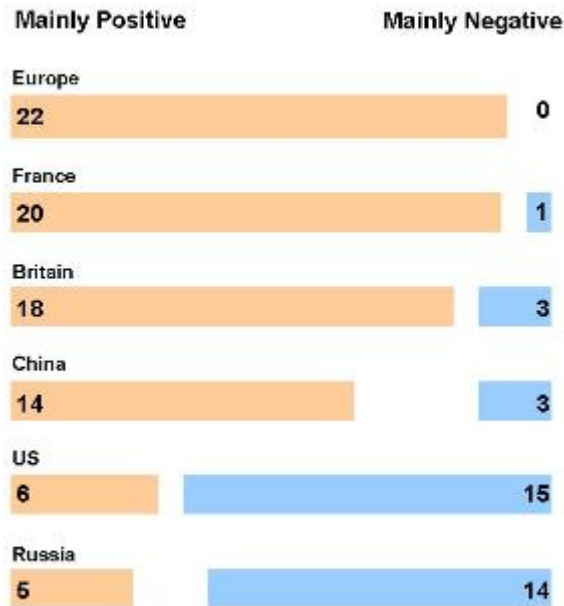
The most highly regarded individual country is France, which is seen as having a positive influence in 21 countries—58 percent on average, with 20 percent seeing a mainly negative influence. [Note: In all cases the population of the country being evaluated was excluded from the totals.]

Only in the US does a majority (52%) say that France is having a negative influence in the world (positive 37%). Turkey is divided, with 34% positive and 37% negative. Interestingly, the country most positive toward France is its historical nemesis Germany, where 77% view France as positive, followed by Italy (73%). Close behind were China

(72%), South Korea (72%), South Africa (69%), and Lebanon

Influence in the World

Please tell me if you think each of the following are having a mainly positive or mainly negative influence in the world (Number of countries where majority or plurality says...)



(69%). The white space in this chart indicates countries where views are divided.

Views of US

The US edges out Russia for the dubious distinction of having the largest number of countries rating it as having a negative influence in the world, with 15 countries saying it has a negative influence and just 6 countries viewing it as positive.

On average, a plurality of 47 percent view US influence in the world as mostly negative, while 38 percent view it as mostly positive and 15 percent did not answer either way. The countries most negative towards the US are Argentina (65%), Germany (64%), Russia (63%), Turkey (62%), Canada (60%) and Mexico (57%). Majorities see US influence as positive in the Philippines (88%), South Africa (56%), India (54%), Poland (52%), and South Korea (52%). A plurality of Italians (49%) are also positive. Interestingly the French were only moderately negative about US influence, with 54 percent viewing it negatively—mirroring the 52 percent of Americans who view France negatively.

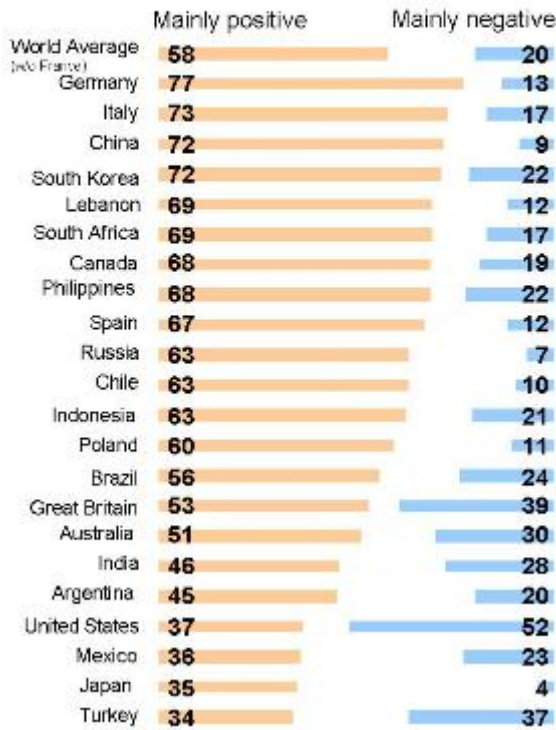
Views of Russia

Russia has the fewest number of countries (5) viewing it as having a positive influence, with 14 viewing it negatively. On average, 35% view it positively and 40% negatively.

The most negative are Germany and France at 57%, followed by Brazil (52%), Poland (51%) and South Korea (50%). Americans only lean mildly negative (39% positive, 44% negative). The only two countries with a majority positive toward Russia were China, where 64 percent view it positively, and India (67%). However, pluralities are positive in the Philippines (49%), Chile (44%) and Lebanon

French Influence in the World:

Please tell me if you think each of the following are having a mainly positive or mainly negative influence in the world...France



(38%).

The white space in the chart represents 'Don't know' and 'Other'.

Views of Britain

Britain and China are in a middle tier and viewed primarily as positive. Eighteen countries view Britain as having a positive influence, led by the US (78%), South Korea (70%), South Africa and Canada (both 67%). On average, 50% view Britain positively and 29% negatively. Only one country has a majority with a negative view of Britain—Argentina with 53% (positive 18%)—perhaps a hangover from the Falklands War. Two countries have pluralities with negative views, Turkey (48% negative, 27% positive) and Mexico (41% negative, 17% positive). India is divided (39% positive, 35% negative).

Views of China

As was previously reported by the BBC World Service, fourteen countries view China as having a positive influence. On average, 48% view China as positive and just 30% as negative. The most positive are Lebanon (74%), the Philippines (70%), Indonesia (68%) and India (66%). In only three countries do a plurality view Chinese influence as

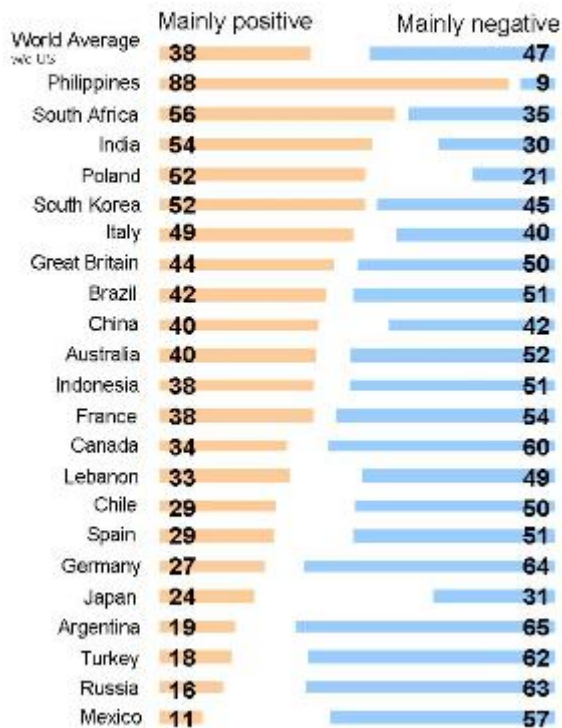
negative—Germany (47%), the US (46%) and Poland (33%), and in no case does a majority have a negative view. In Japan, few say China is having a negative influence (22%), but also few say it is having a positive influence (25%), while 53% do not take a position one way or the other.

The BBC World Service Poll showed this positive view of China is closely related to its economic role in the world rather than its potential military power. While in sixteen countries most saw it as positive if China were to become “significantly more powerful economically,” in 17 countries more said that it would be negative if China becomes “significantly more powerful militarily.”

Comments

United States' Influence in the World:

Please tell me if you think each of the following are having a mainly positive or mainly negative influence in the world . . .
The United States



The white bars in the chart represent 'Depends on what you mean' and 'DK/NA'

Steven Kull, director of PIPA, comments,

“What is notable here is that Europe and China, which have engaged the world primarily through economic relations—or soft power—are widely seen as having a mostly positive influence, while the countries that have very large militaries and have recently used them in a prominent way--the US and Russia—are more often seen as having a negative influence. Some have argued US military power deserves appreciation for making the global economic order possible, but with the Cold War a fading memory, this perspective seems to be fading as well. While trade might buy you love, guns clearly do not.”

Doug Miller, President of GlobeScan concludes, "Our research shows that Europe's star has risen as America's reputation has declined under the Bush Administration. Americans really must worry when it is the wealthy of the world and the youth of the world that are the most upset with them."

Demographic Variations

Looking at variations by age is especially significant, as the attitudes of young people compared to older people suggest possible future trends. Indeed, all the striking findings of the study appear to be more pronounced among young people. Young people (18-29) are more supportive of Europe becoming more influential than the US (60%) than those 60 or more (51%). Excluding Europeans, 56 percent of young people are supportive, as compared to 45% of older people. Larger percentages of young people than older people have a positive view of the influence of Europe (69% vs. 64%; excluding Europeans, 65% vs. 57%), of France (61% vs. 53%), of China (54% vs. 41%), and of Russia (39% vs. 32%). However, young people are more prone to view the US as having a negative influence (50% vs. 40%), as well as Britain (32% vs. 22%).

Education is also an important variable, as those who are educated are likely to be better informed. Here too, the striking findings of the study are more pronounced at higher educational levels. Those with relatively high levels of education are more likely to have a positive view of Europe becoming more influential than the US (63%) than are those with lower levels of education (53%). (Excluding Europeans: 57% and 45%.) Larger percentages of those with higher education have a positive view of the influence of Europe (72% vs. 64%; excluding Europeans, 67% vs. 55%), of France (63% vs. 52%), China (49% vs. 44%), Russia (38% vs. 31%) and Britain (53% vs. 44%). However, those who are more educated are more likely to have a negative view of US influence (50% vs. 44%).

Income followed a pattern quite similar to education. Those with higher levels of income were more likely to have a positive view of Europe becoming more influential than the US; to have a positive view of the influence of Europe, of France, Russia, and Britain; and to have a negative view of the influence of the US.

Polling was conducted by GlobeScan's network of national Research Partners from Nov. 15, 2004 to Jan. 5, 2005 with a total of 23,518 people. In eight of the countries, the sample was limited to major metropolitan areas. The margin of error per country ranged from +/-2.5-4%.