

People Who Know Foreigners or Travel More Likely to See Themselves as Global Citizens: Global Survey

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[Questionnaire/methodology \(PDF\)](#)



A WorldPublicOpinion.org survey of people in 21 nations from around the world finds that people who get to know people from other countries or who travel outside their country are more likely to view themselves as global citizens.

(Photo: [J. Aaron Farr](#))

Among those who say they do not know people from other regions of the world, only 29 percent say that they see themselves as a global citizen as much, or more than, as a citizen of their nation. The more people know people from different regions of the world, the more they see themselves as a global citizen--rising to 47 percent among those who know people from five or more regions.

Among those who have not travelled outside of their country in the last five years only 29 percent say that they see themselves as a global citizen as much, or more than, as a citizen of their nation. Among those who have travelled outside their country at least once in the last five years, 39 percent say they see themselves as a global citizen as much or more than as a citizen of their own country.

Asked "Do you consider yourself more a citizen of [your country], more a citizen of the world or both equally?" most people around the world said that they think of themselves primarily as citizens of their country. On average 66 percent say they primarily think of themselves as citizens of their country, 10 percent as citizens of the world and 20 percent as both equally.

Previous research by the World Values Survey revealed that many more people think of themselves as a "world citizen" to some extent. In a poll of 45 nations majorities in 42 said that they see themselves "as a world citizen," with an average of 72 percent taking this position. The WPO poll reveals that substantially fewer regard this identity as more primary than their identity as a citizen of their nation.

In the WPO poll the nations with the highest numbers saying they primarily think of themselves as a "citizen of the world" are Italy (21%) and Germany (19%).

Substantial numbers say they see themselves as either a citizen of the world, or as equally a citizen of the world and their country. These include France (51%), China (50%), Italy (48%), India (46%), and Mexico (44%). The lowest levels are found in Azerbaijan (9%), Kenya (12%), Jordan (15%) and South Korea (16%).

The publics with the lowest numbers identifying themselves primarily as citizens of their nation were Chinese. These included 35 percent of Chinese and also 36 percent of Taiwanese. However 61 percent of people in Macau said they identify with their nation. Indians were also quite low in national identity at 40 percent.

Younger people tend to be more globally oriented than older people. Among those 60 and older, 24 percent see themselves as global citizens. This rises to 34 percent among those 18-29 years old.

Global identity also increases with education. Among those with less than a high school education, 28 percent think of themselves as a global citizen. This rises to 39 percent among those with education.

Steven Kull, director of WorldPublicOpinion.org comments, "These findings suggest it is likely that in the future people will increasingly think of themselves as global citizens. Young people are more prone to see themselves this way. Also, with economic development people travel more, meet foreigners more and become more educated; all these developments are related to greater tendencies for people to see themselves as global citizens."

Kull adds, "These findings also suggest international exchange programs, where people meet people from other countries, may increase the likelihood that people will think of themselves in more global terms."

The poll of 21,307 respondents was conducted in 21 nations between July 15 and November 4, 2008 by WorldPublicOpinion.org, a collaborative project of research centers around the world managed by the Program on International Policy Attitudes at the University of Maryland. Most of the world's largest nations were included--China, India, the United States, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Russia--as well as Argentina, Mexico, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinian territories, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Kenya, Thailand, South Korea, and Ukraine. The nations polled represent 61 percent of the world population. Publics in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau were also polled. Margins of error range from approximately +/-2 to 4 percent. Not all questions were asked in all nations.