

Poll Finds Most Publics Around the World Want Their Governments to Be More Cooperative

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Most See US as Cooperative

[Questionnaire with Findings, Methodology \(PDF\)](#)



As the European Union implements a new treaty aimed at helping member countries work together, and as President Barack Obama prepares to receive a Nobel Prize awarded partly for his efforts at international cooperation, a WorldPublicOpinion.org poll of people in 21 nations around the world finds that publics in 14 of them think their governments should be more ready to cooperate with others to achieve mutual gains.

Opening ceremonies of the 15th United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark (Photo: [UNFCCC](#))

However, in six nations more people demur and say that their government tends to be too willing to compromise and is often taken advantage of.

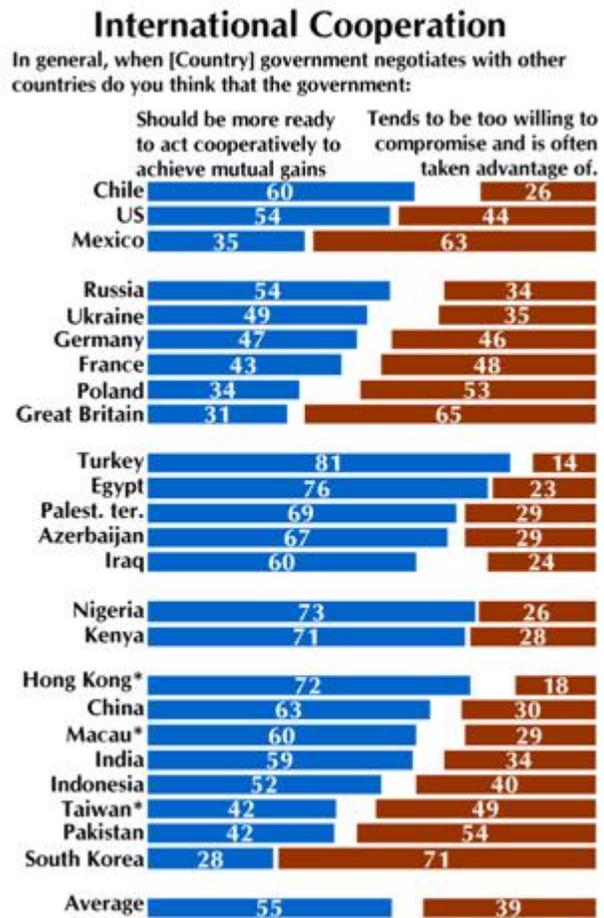
The release of the poll's findings come at a time when international cooperation figures prominently in the news. World leaders are gathering in Copenhagen to consider cooperative options for addressing climate change. In Europe, the new Lisbon Treaty took effect on Tuesday which is meant to draw European countries into a more highly integrated union.

President Obama, meanwhile, will receive the Nobel Peace Prize on Dec. 10, which he won largely for taking a more cooperative stance with the rest of the world. And indeed the poll found that in 15 of 19 nations the US is now seen as generally cooperative.

On average across all nations surveyed, 55% of those polled believe that their leaders "should be more ready to act cooperatively to achieve mutual gains." Thirty-nine percent of those polled say their governments tend to be "too willing to compromise and are often taken advantage of."

The poll shows the highest levels of support for greater cooperation are among Turks (81%), Egyptians (76%), and Nigerians (73%). Palestinians are also among the highest (69%), a positive indicator for potential Middle East peace negotiations.

Publics calling for greater cooperation also are found in the largest and most powerful countries,



including Americans (54%), Chinese (63%), Russians (54%) and Indians (59%). Though Indians favor greater cooperation, only 42 percent of Pakistanis say the same.

Interestingly, the most distinct cluster of nations with low numbers calling for greater cooperation are in the EU. Less than half feel their government should be more cooperative in Britain (31%), Poland (34%), France (43%), and Germany (47%). This may be because they feel that they are already cooperative enough, especially in the context of the EU and in their relations with the United States.

Very large numbers feel that their country tends to be too willing to compromise and is often taken advantage of in Mexico (63%) and South Korea (71%). This may be due to their close relationship with the United States in which America clearly plays the dominant role.

Large majorities favor greater cooperation in Hong Kong (72%) and Macao (60%), but only 42 percent feel that way in Taiwan.

WorldPublicOpinion.org conducted the poll of 20,349 respondents in 21 nations that comprise 64 percent of the world's population. This includes most of the largest nations--China, India, the United States, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Russia--as well as Mexico, Chile, Germany, Great Britain, France, Poland, Ukraine, Kenya, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan, the Palestinian territories, and South Korea. Polling was also conducted in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau. Not all questions were asked to all nations. The margins of error range from +/-3 to 4 percentage points. The surveys were conducted across the different nations between April 4 and July 9, 2009.

WorldPublicOpinion.org, a collaborative project involving research centers from around the world, is managed by the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) at the University of Maryland.

Assessment of US Cooperativeness

Asked to assess whether the United States is generally cooperative in its relations with other countries, publics in 15 of the 19 nations said that the US is generally cooperative, with an average of 59 percent saying that it is cooperative and 30 percent saying it is not.

"Clearly President Obama has turned the tide in the image of the US as a leader in the world. When Obama called for greater cooperation at the UN, most people saw the US as ready to carry its share of the water," comments Steven Kull, director of WPO.

The only nations to say that the US is not cooperative all have Muslim majorities: Egypt (62%), Iraq (58%), Pakistan (54%), and Turkey (45%). Interestingly, the governments of all four of these nations have close working relations with the US.

Assessment of China's Cooperativeness

Asked to assess whether China is generally cooperative, views are more mixed but still predominantly positive. Eleven nations rate China as cooperative, seven as not cooperative, and one is divided. On average, 53% say they think China is generally cooperating with other countries, and 35% say they do not think so.

China's overall cooperation with other nations draws a positive response from a majority of respondents around the world. Outside China, the strongest support came again from Pakistan, where 94% say they think China is cooperative, followed by Azerbaijan with 89% and Ukraine with 81%. The strongest negative response was from South Korea, where 68% of respondents do not think China is cooperative, followed by Great Britain with 66% and France with 63%. Sixty-one percent of Americans say China does not cooperate.

In China, 63% of those polled on the mainland say their government should be more open to international cooperation.