

Wide Dissatisfaction with Capitalism -- Twenty Years after Fall of Berlin Wall

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[Full Report \(PDF\)](#)



POLL Twenty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, a new BBC World Service global poll finds that dissatisfaction with free market capitalism is widespread, with an average of only 11% across 27 countries saying that it works well and that greater regulation is not a good idea.

In only two countries do more than one in five feel that capitalism works well as it stands--the US (25%) and Pakistan (21%).

The most common view is that free market capitalism has problems that can be addressed through regulation and reform--a view held by an average of 51% of more than 29,000 people polled by GlobeScan/PIPA.

An average of 23% feel that capitalism is fatally flawed, and a new economic system is needed--including 43% in France, 38% in Mexico, 35% in Brazil and 31% in Ukraine.

Furthermore, majorities would like their government to be more active in owning or directly controlling their country's major industries in 15 of the 27 countries. This view is particularly widely held in countries of the former Soviet states of Russia (77%), and Ukraine (75%), but also Brazil (64%), Indonesia (65%), and France (57%).

Majorities support governments distributing wealth more evenly in 22 of the 27 countries --on average two out of three (67%) across all countries. In 17 of the 27 countries most want to see government doing more to regulate business--on average 56%.

The poll also asked about whether the breakup of the Soviet Union was a good thing or not. While an average of 54% say it was a good thing, this is the majority view in only 15 of the countries polled. An average of 22% say it was mainly a bad thing, while 24% do not know.

Among former Warsaw Pact countries, most Russians (61%) and Ukrainians (54%) believe the breakup of the Soviet Union was a bad thing. In contrast, four in five Poles (80%) and nearly two-thirds of Czechs feel the disintegration of the USSR was a good thing (63%).

The results are drawn from a survey of 29,033 adult citizens across 27 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 19 June and 13 October 2009

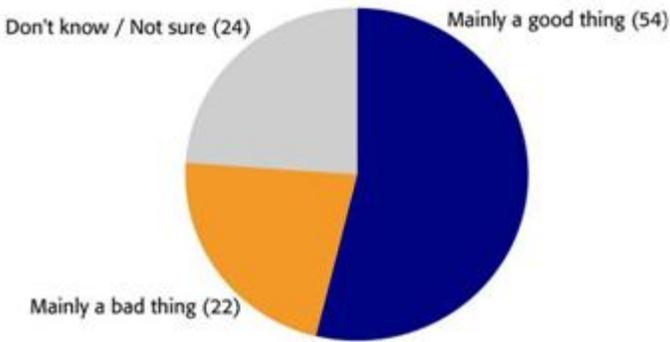
GlobeScan Chairman Doug Miller says: "It appears that the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 may not have been the crushing victory for free-market capitalism that it seemed at the time--particularly after the events of the last 12 months."

"Some features of socialism, such as government efforts to equalise wealth, continue to appeal to many people around the world," comments Steven Kull of PIPA.

Participating Countries

Views on the Disintegration of the Soviet Union

Average of 26 Countries, 2009

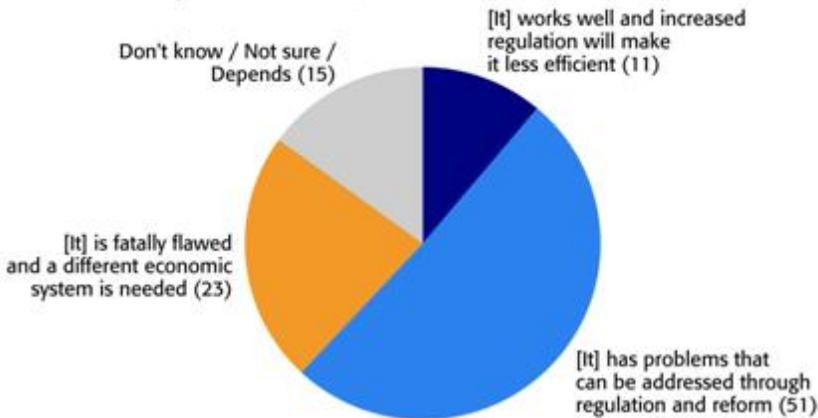


Note: In Brazil, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, Mexico, Panama, the Philippines, and Turkey urban samples were used. Please see the Methodology for further details.

Not asked in Brazil

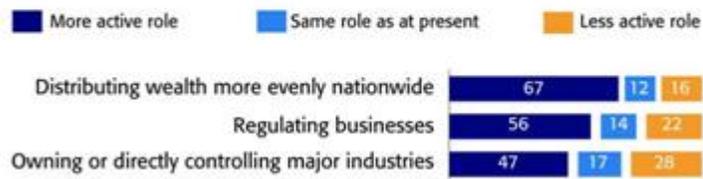
Views on Free Market Capitalism

Average of 27 Countries, 2009



How Active a Role Government Should Play in Managing the Economy

Average of 27 Countries, 2009



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

Detailed Findings

Europeans say they feel the disintegration of the USSR was a good thing, with very large majorities in Germany (79%), the UK (76%), and France (74%) feeling this way. The strongest consensus is in the US, where 81% say the end of the Soviet Union was mainly a good thing. Major developed nations like Australia (73%) and Canada (73%) also hold the same view.

Outside the developed West the consensus is much less strong. Seven in ten Egyptians (69%) say the disintegration of the Soviet Union was mainly a bad thing. Views are divided in India, Kenya, and Indonesia as to whether it was a good or a bad thing, with many also saying they do not know.

Despite sharing a similar perspective on many key issues, French and Germans disagree sharply when it comes to free market capitalism. In France, 47% feel that its problems can be solved by regulation and reform whilst nearly as many think that it has fatal flaws (43%). In Germany, however, there is very little support (8%) for a different economic system, with nearly three in four (74%) feeling that free market capitalism's problems can be addressed by regulation and reform.

Latin Americans are particularly enthusiastic about a more active role for government in running the economy, with around nine in ten supporting more redistribution of wealth in Mexico (92%), Chile (91%), and Brazil (89%). Support for redistributing wealth more evenly is lowest in Turkey (9%)--but those who do not support a greater role for government in this area are also in the majority in India (60%), Pakistan (66%), Poland (61%), and the US (59%).

The proportions wanting to see government be more active in regulating business are highest in Brazil (87%), Chile (84%), France (76%), Spain (73%), China (71%), and Russia (68%). Only in Turkey (71%), does a majority think their government should do less to regulate business. However, there is more

widespread opposition elsewhere, including the Philippines (47% oppose), Pakistan (36%), Nigeria (32%) and India (29%).

The direct ownership or control of industries by government is generally more controversial, with large numbers opposed to it in, not only the US (52%) but also Germany (50%), Turkey (71%), and the Philippines (54%).

In total 29,033 citizens in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, the Philippines, Poland, Russia, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America were interviewed face-to-face or by telephone between 19 June and 13 October, 2009. Polling was conducted for BBC World Service by GlobeScan and its research partners in each country. In 9 of the 27 countries, the sample was limited to major urban areas. The margin of error per country ranges from +/- 2.2 to 3.5 per cent, 19 times out of 20.