

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) commissioned YouGov to field a twelve-country survey concerning multilateralism and other global political issues. The survey included approximately 1,000 respondents each from Brazil, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Turkey, and the United States. Here, we analyze the results.

## Executive summary

- The COVID-19 pandemic dominates the concerns of every country in the sample, followed by climate change and global human rights
- Respondents say global events have a direct and largely negative impact on their lives
  - More ideologically conservative respondents were more likely to feel this way, and respondents who felt this way also said the COVID-19 pandemic showed the world was too connected
- Respondents across countries generally think that their country's involvement with international organizations should increase in order for their country to become stronger after the pandemic
- All but four of the least-trusting countries believe that global organizations have had a positive impact. While respondents typically felt that global events had a negative impact on their country, they did not generally feel this way about global organizations
- Respondents tend to agree that countries should cooperate to tackle the world's biggest problems instead of opting out of global organizations like the United Nations
- When asked about their views about specific international organizations, respondents tended to report favorable views of the organizations of which their country was a member state
- Respondents believe the United Nations impacts their countries in positive ways
- When pressed, respondents across the sample said they were concerned their countries had given up too much sovereignty to various global organizations. They also express concerns about the cost to national sovereignty of joining major political institutions
- Those who identify as more to the right on the political spectrum express more pessimistic views about the United Nations
- We do not find evidence that respondents across the sample prefer working with like-minded countries over working with countries generally
- Respondents across the sample, generally speaking, said that the United States was not currently showing leadership on a vast variety of issues polled. US respondents themselves held mixed views about US leadership on these issues
- Strong majorities of respondents across the sample say that they think the incoming Biden Administration both *will* and *should* rejoin the Paris Climate Accord. Likewise, pluralities of respondents say that the incoming Administration both *will* and *should* rejoin the Iran Nuclear Deal.

## The pandemic: COVID-19 dominates concerns

### *Key takeaways*

- COVID-19, climate change, and human rights dominate global concerns
- Likely due to the pandemic, respondents associate global events with negative outcomes in their own lives
- Respondents tend to believe that the pandemic had on net shown that the world is too connected
- Respondents across countries generally think that their country's involvement with international organizations should increase in order for their country to become stronger after the pandemic.

Our survey asked respondents to rank the top three biggest concerns the world was facing from a set of options including:

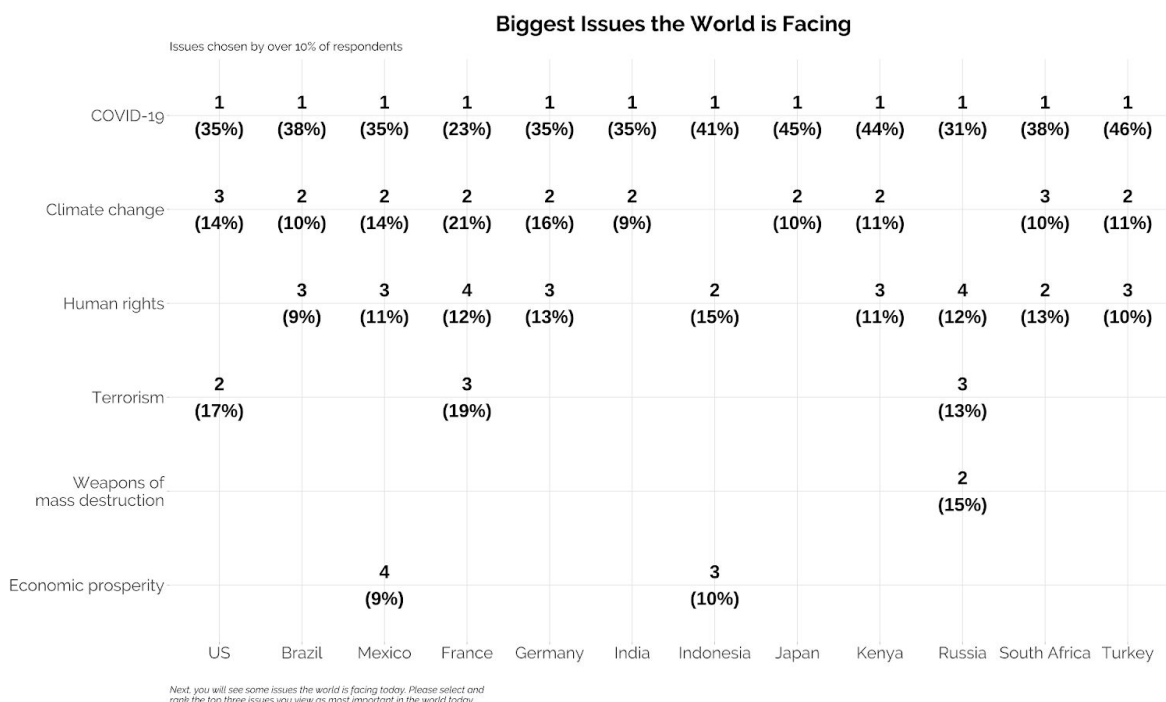
- Protecting human rights around the world
- Dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic
- Expanding economic prosperity around the world
- Keeping the world safe from terrorism or rogue nations
- Protecting democratic freedoms around the world
- Combating climate change
- Protecting the rights of minorities and vulnerable populations
- Preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction
- Helping the world with changes caused by new technology like artificial intelligence
- Promoting gender equity
- Holding large corporations accountable

COVID-19 predominated among these concerns. Dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic was the top concern in each country in our sample, with over 30 percent of respondents in each country—except France—selecting COVID-19 as the biggest issue the world was facing. After COVID-19, most countries' second highest priority was climate change, or the protection of human rights.

Within countries, controlling for various demographic factors, these concerns are broadly shared. Generally speaking, men, women, those with higher and lower levels of education, those who follow politics closely and not closely, are older or younger, etc., each worry most about COVID-19 and beyond that are split between climate change and the protection of human rights.

The following chart shows the top few concerns of respondents in each country in our sample. For brevity, we include responses that more than ten percent of respondents selected in each country. For example, the cell in the top left shows that the top ranked concern of voters in the US, with 35 percent of US respondents selecting COVID-19 as their top concern. In that same

column, we see that 17 percent of American respondents listed “Keeping the world safe from terrorism or rogue nations” as their biggest concern, followed narrowly by climate change (the difference between 17 percent showing concern for terrorism and 14 percent for climate change is not statistically meaningful). Across most countries, large pluralities say COVID-19 is their biggest concern.



Younger voters in France were slightly more likely to prioritize climate change as a top concern. About 24 percent of French voters under thirty-five ranked climate change as their top concern, tying with COVID-19. In Mexico, about 17 percent of respondents under thirty-five ranked climate change as their top concern compared to about 14 percent of the overall sample. Elsewhere, differences were within 1-2 percentage points across age groups. In each case, concern for other issues paled in comparison to concerns about the pandemic.

In several countries in the sample, including France, Germany, Japan, and Mexico, respondents who said they were further to the left were more likely to include climate change and human rights in their top concerns. In other places, self-reported political ideology did not play as strong of a role in predicting their priorities.

In the wake of this global pandemic, it is probably not surprising to see that large majorities of respondents tended to agree that global events had a direct impact on their lives and

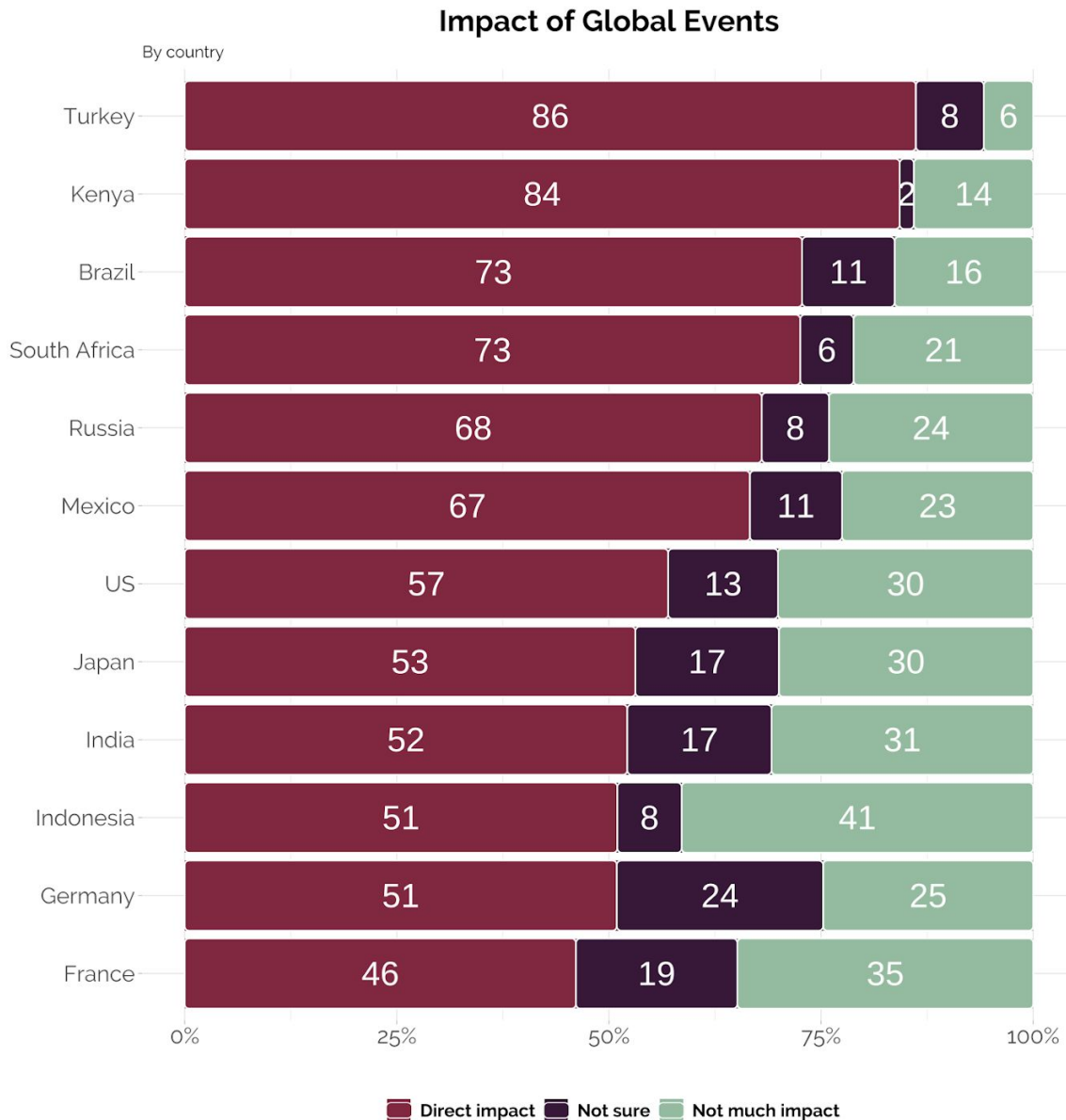
community.<sup>1</sup> The narrowest exceptions included Indonesia and France, where only about a net +11 percentage point of respondents agreed in each country that global events had a direct impact on their lives. Within France and Indonesia, lower shares of respondents overall who say they pay a lot of attention to the news also say they believe global events impact their daily lives.

In the case of Indonesia, this may be because a lower share of respondents say they pay a lot of attention to the news—just 17 percent say they do so “most of the time,” compared to a survey-wide average of 34 percent. In France, however, the statistical relation between paying attention to the news and having attitudes about global events is not as high as in other countries. About as many French respondents report paying a lot of attention to the news as do those in other countries (about 39 percent). Generally, we will show that while respondents in most countries care more about globalism the more they pay attention to the news, respondents from France were the exception.

In many cases, French respondents who reported they supported Emmanuel Macron in the most recent election also reported higher general awareness of multilateralism, of how world events relate to their own lives, and were generally more “global” in their thinking. About 58 percent of Macron supporters reported they felt global events had a direct impact on their lives, compared to about 44 percent of those who supported another candidate in France’s most recent election.

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<sup>1</sup> We asked respondents,  
*And even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closest to your view?*  
 <1> For better or for worse, events going on around the world have a direct impact on my life and my community  
 <2> While it may impact others, events going on around the world don't have much impact on my life and my community  
 <3> Not sure



*And even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closest to your view?*

Similarly, respondents from most countries tended to believe that the pandemic had shown that the world is too connected.<sup>2</sup> Across the sample, respondents tended to be more likely to report

<sup>2</sup> We asked respondents,

When it comes to your country's experience with COVID-19, even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closest to your view?

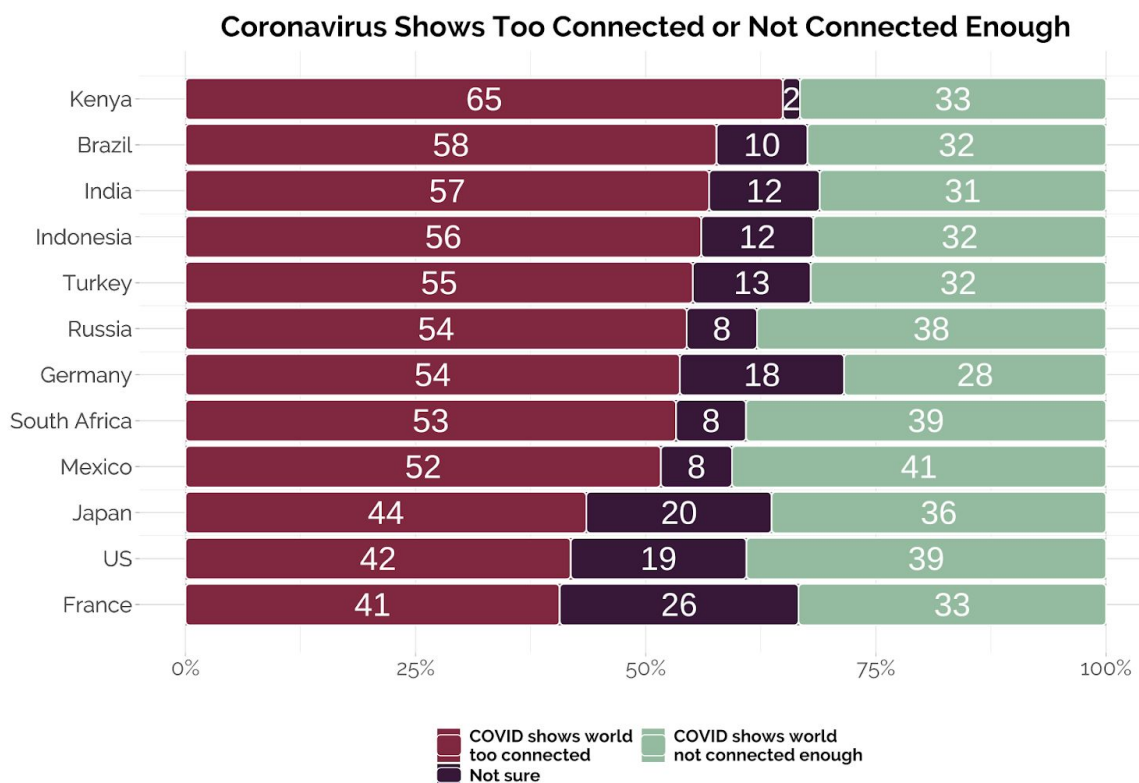
<1> The COVID-19 pandemic shows that the world is too connected, with the flow of people making the spread of disease too fast and deadly

<2> The COVID-19 pandemic shows that the world is not connected enough, with many countries unable to effectively coordinate their response to the pandemic

<3> Not sure

that the pandemic made them feel that the flow of people made the pandemic too easy to spread instead of saying that the pandemic had shown the world is not connected enough.

In countries like the US, for example, controlling for other factors, this view was driven by ideological conservatives and those who did not have a college degree. Among German respondents, who felt less that global events had an impact on their lives than other respondents, this number was driven upward by older voters and by male respondents. Accounting for those factors, party identification had less of a role among French and German respondents than among American respondents. Notably, self-reported political ideology did not play much of a role in predicting responses to this item outside of the United States. Turkey is the only other country where this relationship holds as well, controlling for other factors.



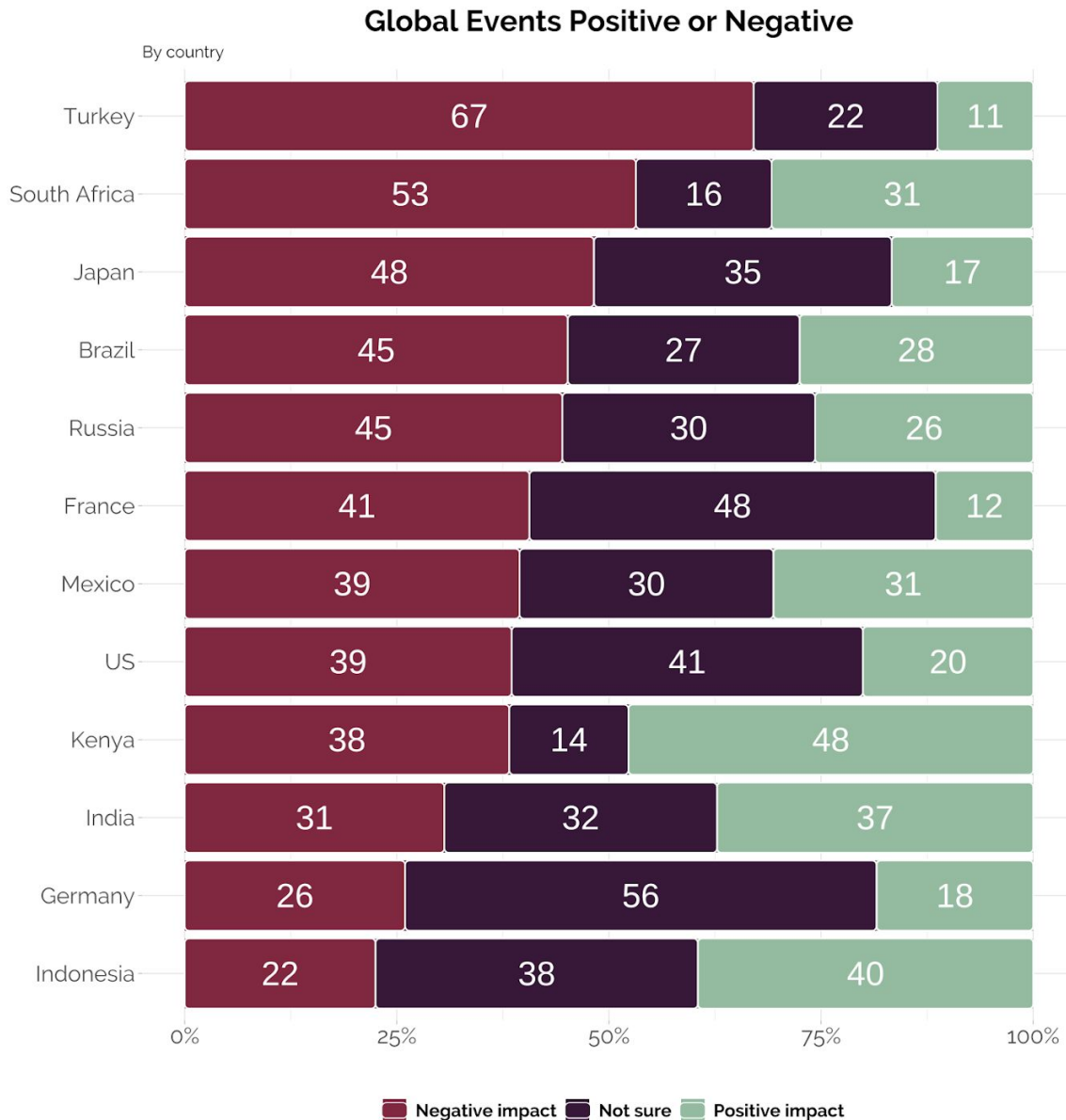
When it comes to your country's experience with COVID-19, even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closest to your view?

In the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic, it is probably not surprising that respondents generally tended to report that global events had a negative impact in their lives. With the exceptions of Kenya, India, and Indonesia, respondents on net felt that global events had a more negative than positive impact on their lives. In an era defined by a global pandemic, this result is expectable.

This result also generally correlates with the belief that global events have an impact on ones' life. Across the full sample, about 32 percent of respondents reported believing both that global events had a direct impact on their life and that those impacts have been negative. Only about 17 reported both that global events had a direct impact on their lives and that those impacts were mostly positive. Respondents who didn't think global events had much impact on their lives were evenly split between whether these events had a positive or negative impact, at about 8 percent each. The rest were unsure how they felt one way or the other.

In most countries, controlling for other factors, respondents who reported they paid more attention to the news reported more belief that global events had a positive impact on their lives overall rather than negative. In many of those cases, the effects were small. In the US, Democratic voters were more likely to report global events had a positive impact on their lives, as were Macron supporters among French respondents. Among German respondents, party identification did not predict pessimism or optimism toward global events, controlling for other factors. In each case, respondents who reported they paid more attention to the news were optimistic about the impact of global events.

Notably, German respondents were also much less likely to report global events had a negative impact on their lives than they were to report that the pandemic showed the world was too connected, or that global events had a direct impact on their lives. Kenya, India, and Indonesia share these "optimism gaps."



*And, even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closest to your view?*

Similarly, respondents on net across the sample felt their country had become too involved in global affairs lately.<sup>3</sup> In each country in the sample, respondents on net were more likely to say

<sup>3</sup> We asked voters,

And even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closest to your view?

<1> Lately, my country has become too involved in the affairs of other countries, and our government should focus more on our country's own affairs

<2> Lately, my country has felt too closed off from the rest of the world, and our government should work with its friends and allies to tackle our problems

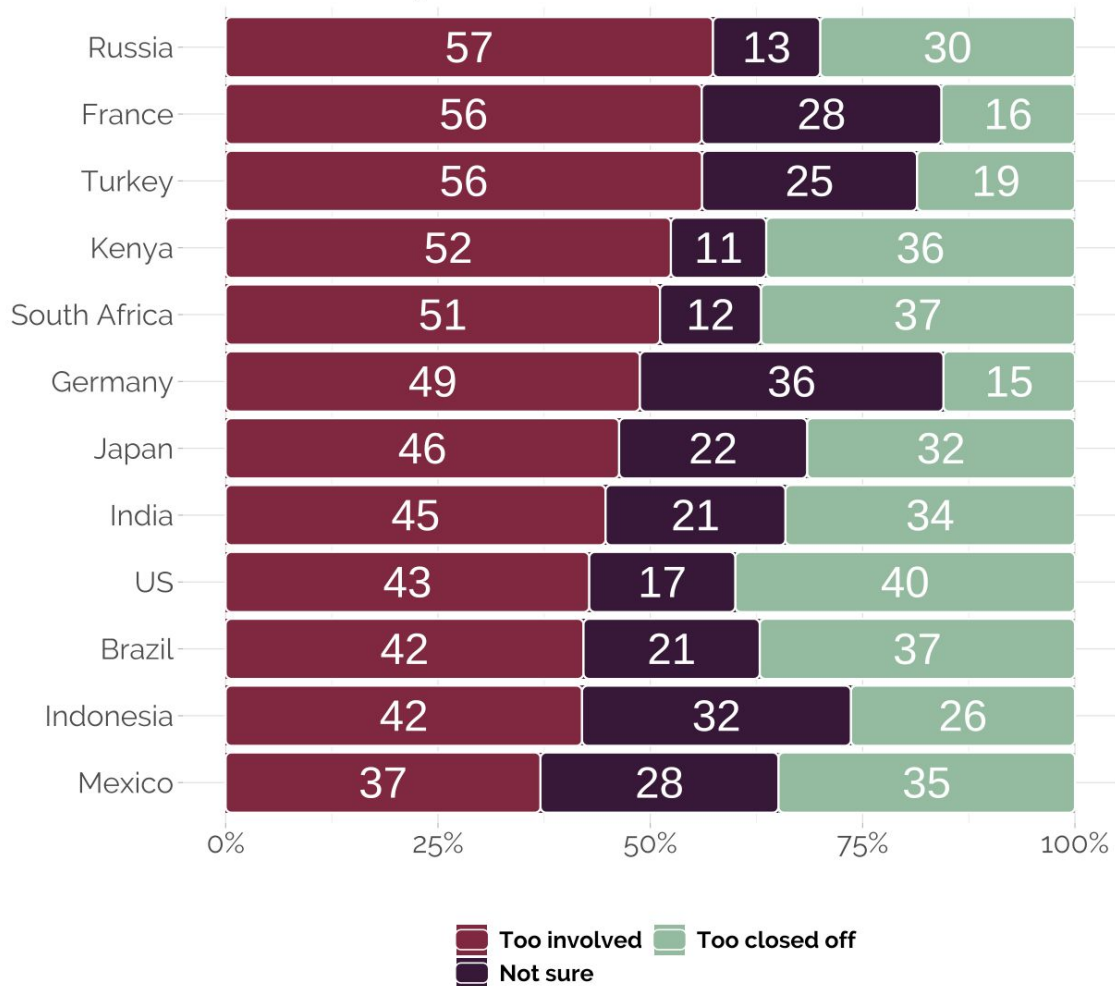
<3> Not sure



they believed their country was too involved in global affairs lately than to say their country was too closed off lately. The pattern of responses here does not appear to follow the pattern of the closed-ness or openness of any of the countries in the sample. For example, Russia, which is widely considered more of a closed society compared to many others, produced the highest share of respondents who reported feeling their country was too involved in world affairs recently. Notably, the American countries in our sample - the US, Mexico, and Brazil - were each split on the question of whether their country was too involved or too closed off.

In Mexico, respondents who reported they paid a lot of attention to the news reported feeling their country was too involved in global politics, as did respondents in Germany. However, this correlation does not hold in most of the rest of the sample, where news attention and feeling one way or the other on this item did not correlate.

### Country Too Involved or Too Closed Off



*And even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closest to your view?*

But at the same time, all but four least trusting countries believe on net global organizations have had a positive impact.<sup>4</sup> While respondents typically felt that global events had a negative impact on their country, they did not generally feel this way about global organizations. In the next section, we will explore the role respondents want global organizations play in recovering from the pandemic and dealing with other problems like climate change.

<sup>4</sup> We asked voters, And, generally speaking, would you say global organizations have had a [positive or negative] impact, or are you unsure?  
 <1> Mostly positive impact  
 <2> More positive than negative impact  
 <3> More negative than positive impact  
 <4> Mostly negative impact  
 <5> Not sure

## Respondents want more involvement in global organizations as a means of recovering from the pandemic

### Key takeaways

- While respondents typically felt that global events had a negative impact on their country, they did not generally feel this way about global organizations.
- Respondents tend to agree that countries should cooperate to tackle the world's biggest problems instead of opting out of global organizations like the United Nations

At the same time, when it comes to facing the COVID-19 crisis, respondents across countries generally think that their country should become *more* involved in global organizations in order for their country to become stronger after the pandemic.<sup>5</sup> Strong majorities for every country in the study think that their countries should ensure that they are closer with global organizations that deal with pandemics (ranging from 92 percent in Kenya to 59 percent in the United States), ensure good relations with the global community (ranging from 92 percent in Kenya to 65 percent in the United States), and fostering good relations with their neighbors (ranging from 90 percent in Kenya to 63 percent in Japan).

In line with our previous findings concerning the world's interconnectedness, strong pluralities of respondents across countries say their nation should focus less on immigration-related reforms (ranging from 64 percent in Russia, to 38 percent in Brazil). On this particular issue, respondents were more hesitant to say this would help their country grow stronger after the pandemic. Overall, these results show that, although respondents might see the COVID-19 crisis as a potential consequence of globalization, they also might look to the international world order to help steer their countries out of the crisis.

The following chart breaks out the issues respondents believed their countries should focus on in order to grow back stronger after the pandemic. In most countries, respondents wanted less focus on immigration and on military spending, and more focus on issues like healthcare, global relations, and global organizations. Notably, this did not correlate much with attitudes toward global events overall. This suggests that respondents were capable of disentangling questions about *events* and questions about *issues*. Even though respondents were clearly pessimistic

<sup>5</sup> In order for your country to become stronger after COVID-19, when it comes to changes it might make, should it focus [more or less] on doing each of the following?

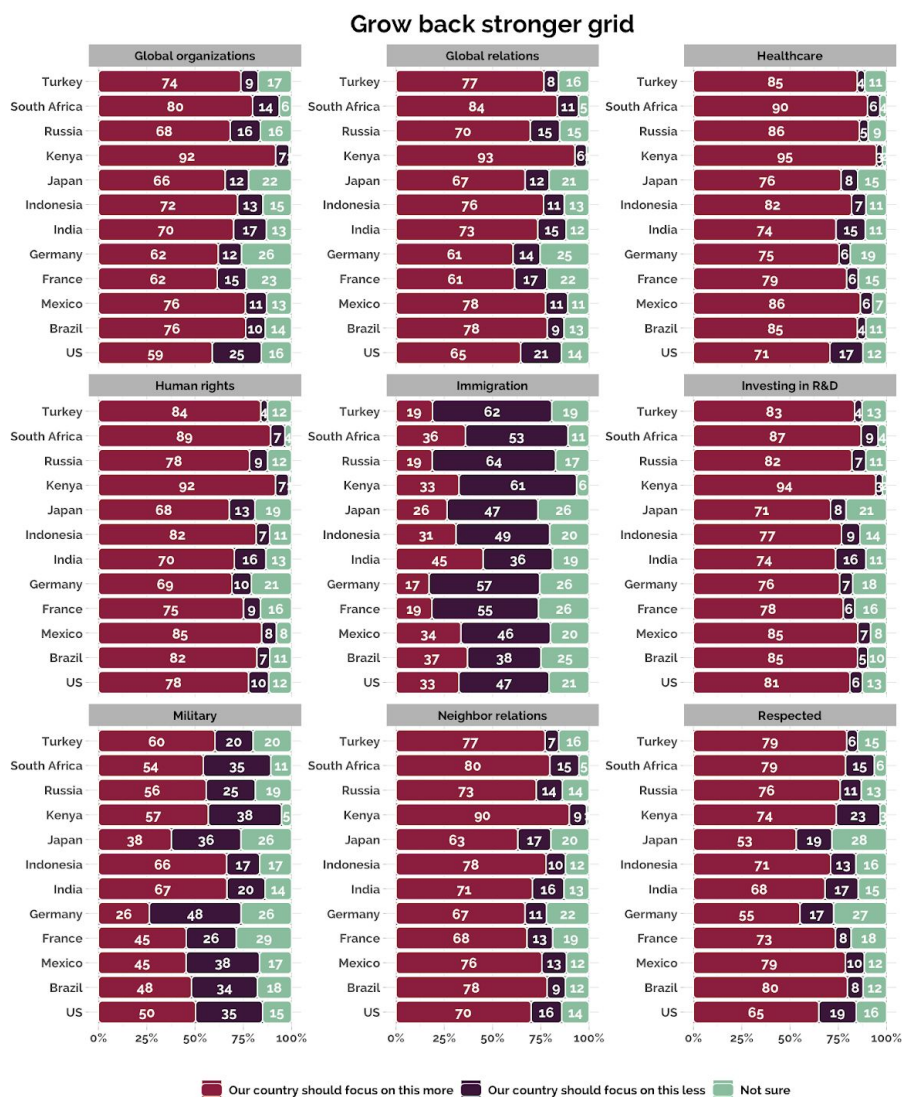
- Investing more in medical research and infrastructure
- Ensuring our country has good relations with its neighbors
- Ensuring our country has good relations with the global community
- Ensuring we are closer with the global organizations that help deal with pandemics
- Ensuring our country is respected
- Protecting the human rights of our citizens
- Providing our citizens access to healthcare
- Building a strong military
- Letting new immigrants into the country

<1> Our country should focus on this more

<2> Our country should focus on this less

<3> Not sure

about the state of the world and even sometimes about global organizations, large majorities across the board viewed global institutions and organizations as important components of the recovery from the pandemic, the number one issue about which respondents expressed concern.



The following graph uses age groups to break out the results of select items from this grid—“ensuring our country has good relations with its neighbors”, “ensuring our country has good relations with the global community” and “ensuring we are closer with the global organizations that help deal with pandemics”. Overall, respondents across age groups overwhelmingly think that their countries should focus on relationships with their neighbors, the global community, and international organizations. More than half of respondents who are 18-29 in every country

agree that their nations should focus more on international relations as a way to overcome the crisis.

**Select items from the grow back stronger grid, by age groups**

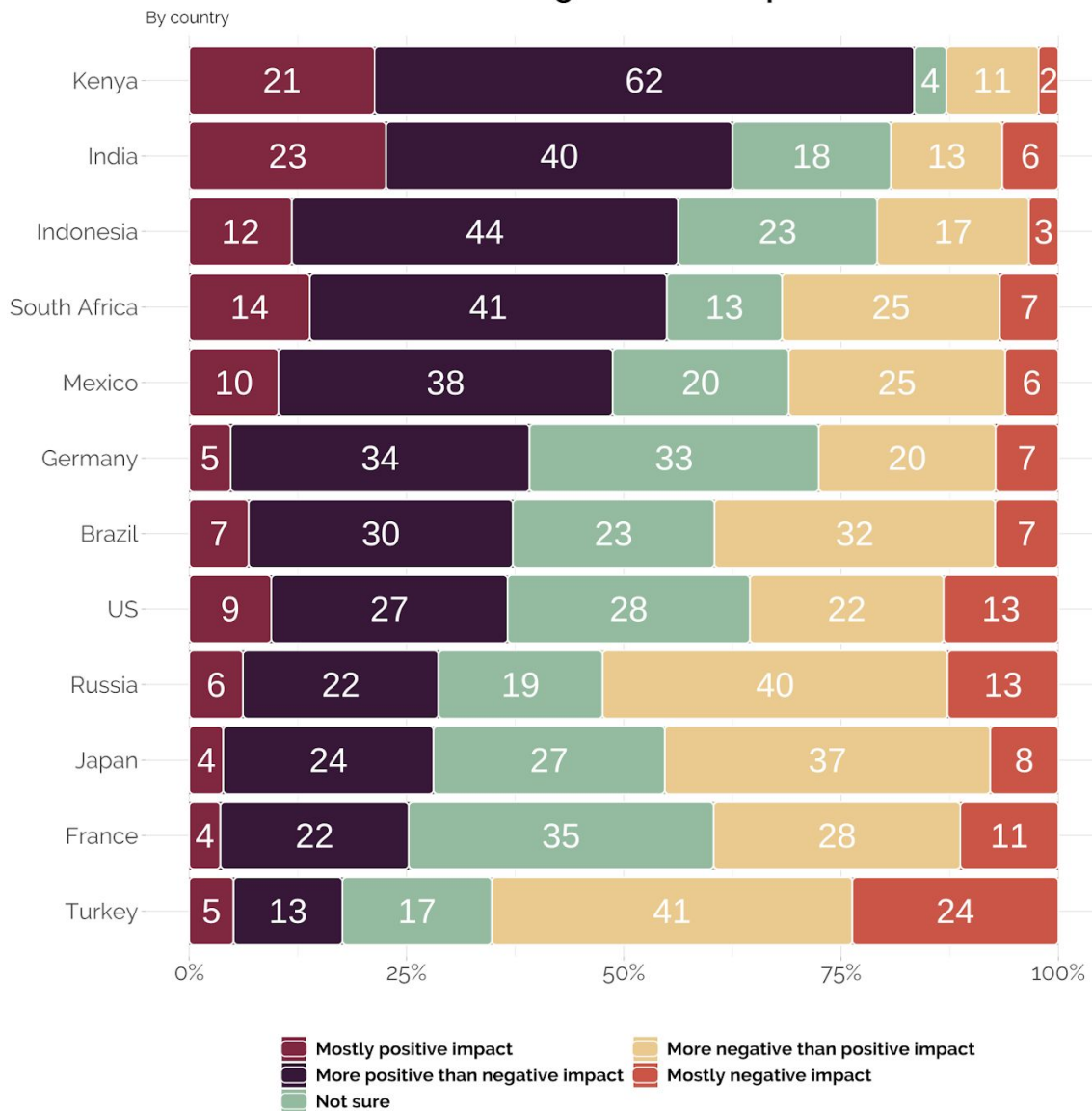




We pressed respondents further on this question by asking them what kind of impact global organizations had on their lives. We asked whether global organizations had a mostly positive, more positive than negative, more negative than positive, or mostly negative impact, or if respondents were unsure.

Though respondents tended to view global events negatively, they tended to view global organizations more favorably. On net, respondents from seven of the twelve countries in our sample reported viewing global organizations more favorably than negatively. Respondents from Kenya were conspicuously favorable toward global organizations, while respondents in France were conspicuously less so. Within the France sample, Macron supporters were slightly more likely to have a favorable view of global organizations. About 40 percent of Macron supporters viewed global organizations favorably, compared to just 26 percent of the France sample overall. In the US, Democrats were significantly more likely to say global organizations had a positive impact than were Republicans (55 percent versus 19 percent), while in Germany there was no effect related to SPD voters (42 percent of whom said global organizations had a positive impact, compared to 39 percent of the sample overall).

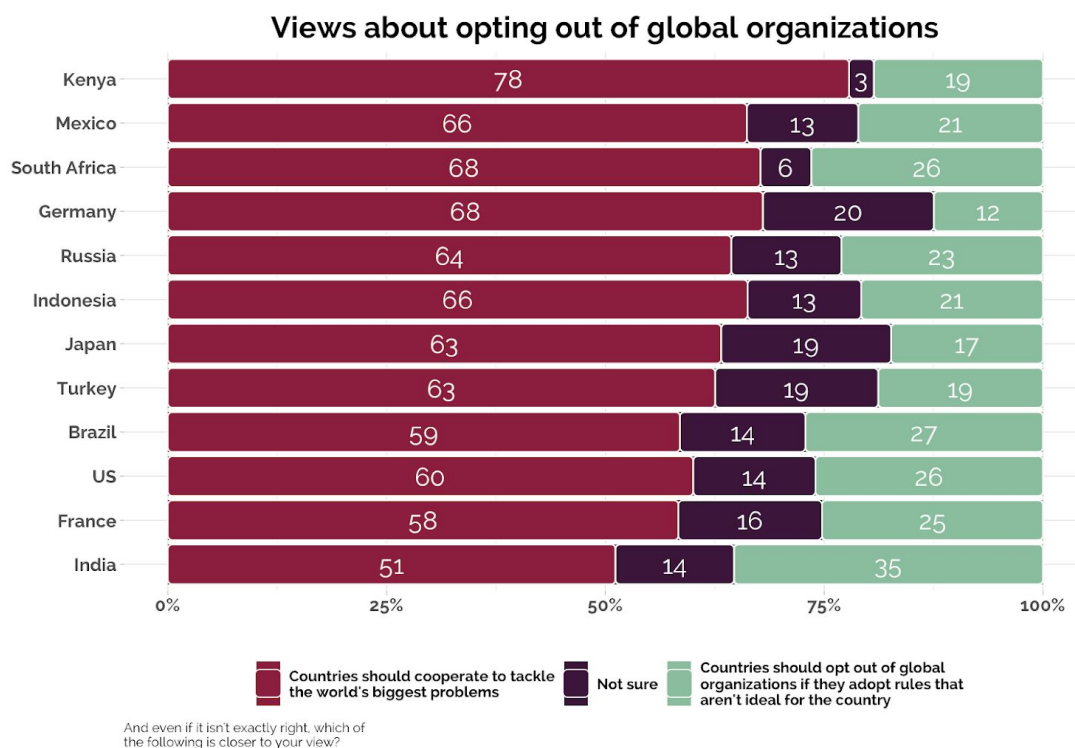
## Global Organizations Impact



*And, generally speaking, would you say global organizations have had a (positive or negative) impact, or are you unsure?*

Across the sample, respondents who reported they paid more attention to the news were more likely to report believing global organizations had a positive impact on their lives. In the US, more liberal and Democratic voters were more likely to report believing global organizations had a more positive impact, as were Macron supporters in France. Party identification did not play as clear of a role in Germany, except that AfD voters were much more likely to say global organizations had a negative impact overall (60 percent, compared to 23 percent of SPD supporters and 18 percent of CDU supporters).

Respondents tend to agree that countries should cooperate to tackle the world's biggest problems instead of opting out of global organizations like the United Nations.<sup>6</sup> In fact, strong majorities of respondents across all countries sampled in this study chose cooperation over opting out of international organizations. In some countries in the sample, like Germany, Russia and the United States, respondents who identified as further to the right on the political ideology scale were more likely to report they would prefer to opt out of global organizations that aren't ideal for their country. This relationship did not appear in other countries. In France, accounting for other factors, respondents who paid more attention to the news were more likely to prefer to opt out of global organizations.



Respondents across age groups in most countries, with the exception of the United States, also agree that countries should cooperate to tackle the world's problems. The following graph breaks out the views about international organizations by age groups. In this graph, it is clear that respondents across most countries and age groups, when pressed, would choose international cooperation to tackle problems rather than opting out of those organizations if the rules are not to their liking. For example, respondents who are 18-29 in the United States have

<sup>6</sup> And even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closer to your view?

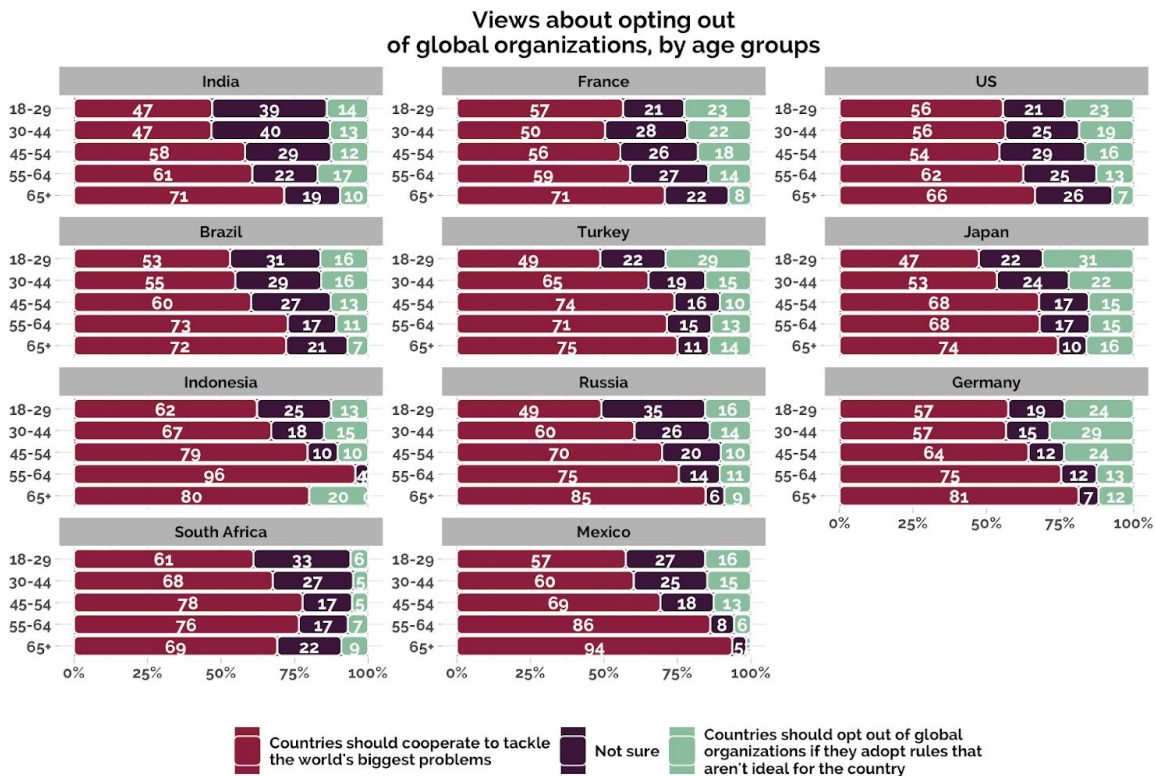
<1> If global organizations like the United Nations adopt rules that aren't ideal for a country, that country should opt out of global organizations

<2> Even though no set of rules is perfect for everyone, it is important for countries to cooperate to tackle the world's biggest problems

<3 fixed> Not sure



a net pro-cooperation gap of 33 percentage points when compared to the opting-out position. Young respondents in countries like India (33 pp), France (34pp), Brazil (37pp) have similar large gaps. Even in countries with the highest pro-opt-out responses, respondents 18-29 on net favor international cooperation. This is the case in, for example, Turkey (20pp), and Japan (16 percentage points).



Respondents felt positively about the United Nations, but were unsure or less positive about others

#### Key takeaways

- When pressed on specific organizations, respondents tended to report favorable views of the organizations of which their country was a member state.
- Across the sample, the United Nations and the World Health Organization (WHO) emerged as particularly popular organizations
- Respondents who reported paying more attention to the news reported both higher name recognition of global organizations and higher favorability toward those organizations.

- Overall, respondents believe the United Nations impacts their countries in positive ways
- When pressed, respondents across the sample said they were concerned their countries had given up too much sovereignty to various global organizations.

When pressed on specific organizations that they might favor or disfavor, respondents tended to report favorable views of the organizations of which their country was a member state. For example, we asked respondents from France and Germany whether they held favorable views of the European Union (EU). Voters in Germany held a net favorable view of the EU, by a 49-21 margin, with the rest having no opinion or being unsure. Voters in Germany, similarly, held a net favorable view of the UN by a 48-29 margin.

On other global organizations, however, respondents were generally ambivalent. For example, about 40-45 percent of respondents from countries who were members of less well-known organizations like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the Group of Twenty (G20) reported being unsure how they felt about those organizations.

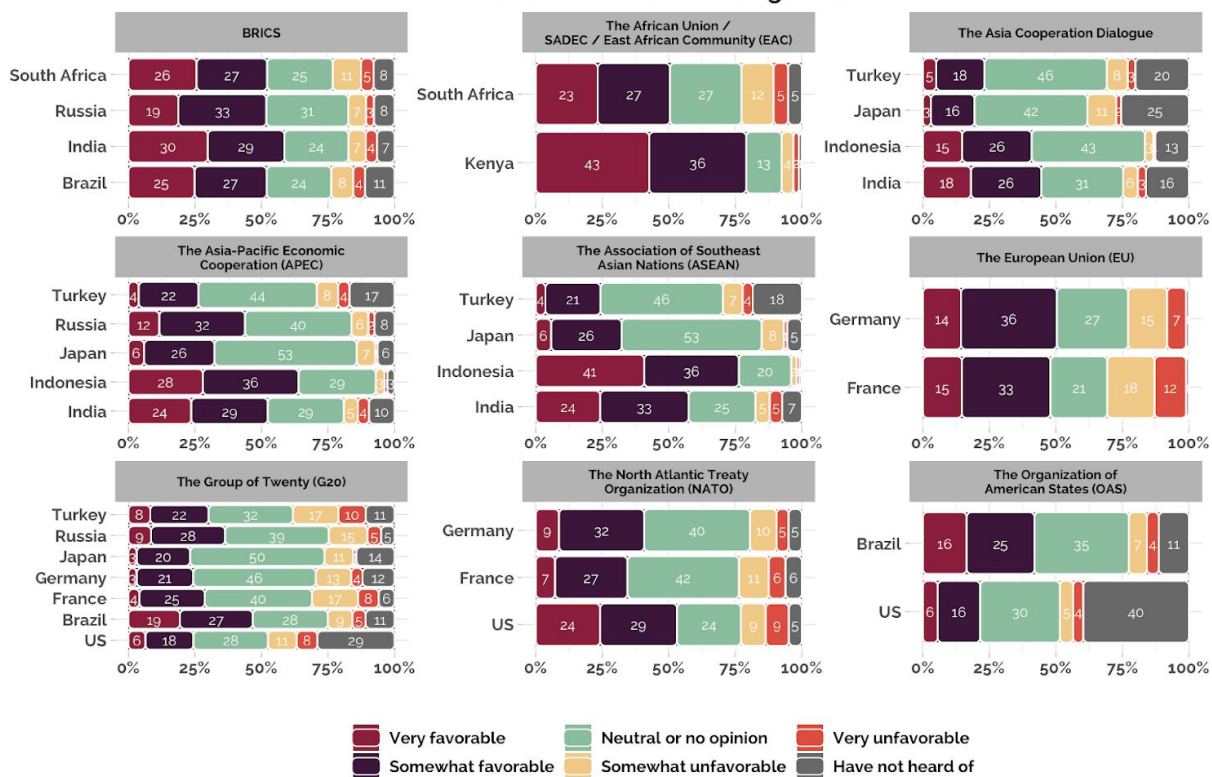
Notably, across the sample, the World Health Organization (WHO) emerged as a particularly popular organization, most likely due to its role in coordinating the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, even among respondents from Russia, who were broadly more pessimistic about global organizations than others, the WHO enjoyed a net positive 52-24 favorability rating. In Kenya, fully 78 percent of respondents held a positive view of WHO, compared to just 6 percent of respondents who held a negative view of that organization.

Though cross-country trends are in most places unreliable here as respondents were asked about different organizations depending on their country of residence, a few trends stood out. Respondents who identified as being more ideologically to the right held less favorable views of global organizations. In countries like Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan, older and more politically conservative respondents had less favorable views of global organizations. In contrast, in these same countries, as well as in the US and Russia, respondents who reported they paid more attention to the news reported more favorable views of global organizations.<sup>7</sup>

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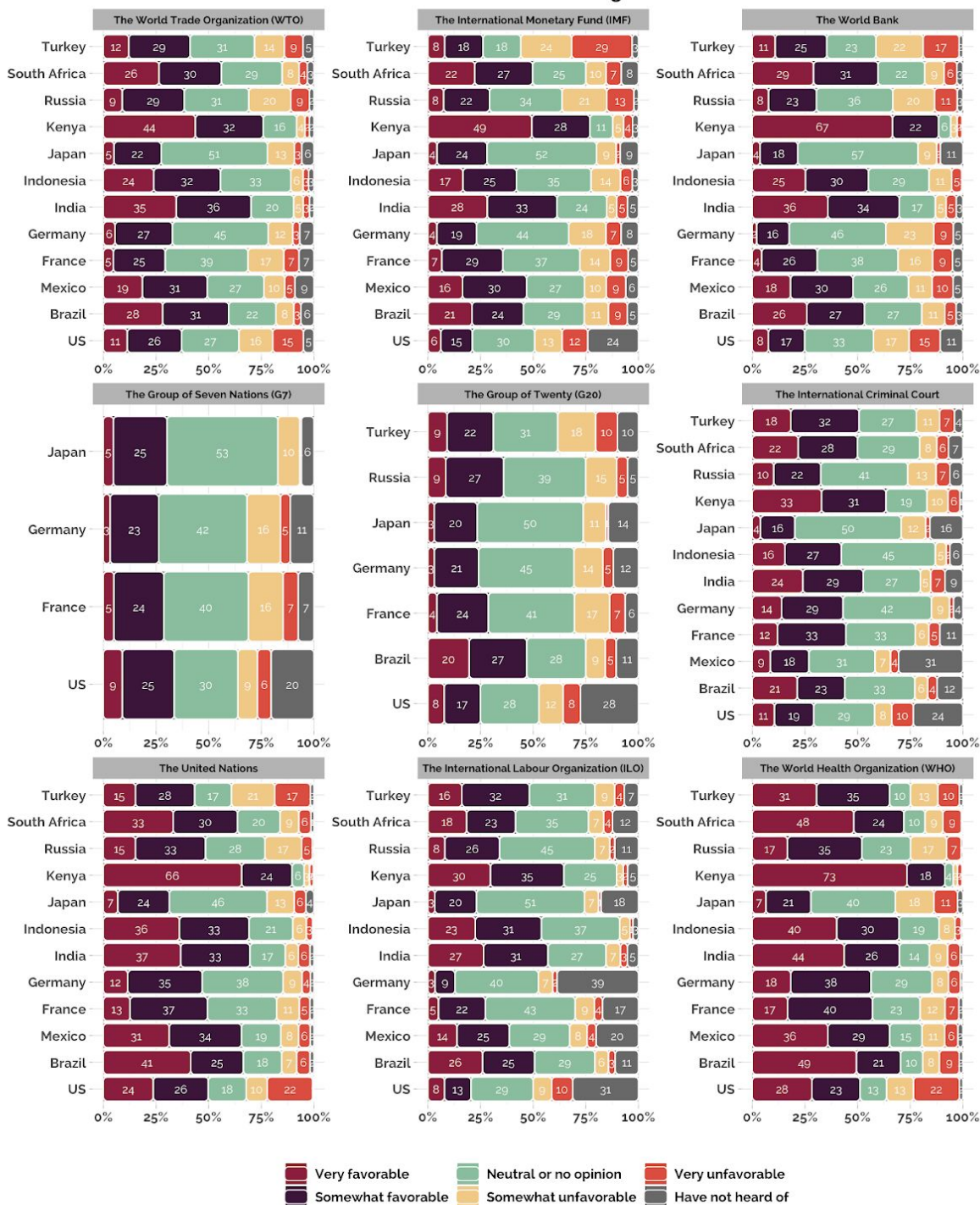
<sup>7</sup> Although being a member of the Organization of American States (OAS), Mexico's responses are not included here as a fielding error did not present this option to many of the Mexico respondents.

### Views on different IOs (regional)



In the US case, political partisanship played a strong role in predicting approval of most organizations of which the United States is a member. For example, fully 80 percent of Democrats in the US sample said they had a favorable view of the World Health Organization, compared to just 21 percent of Republicans, unsurprising given how Donald Trump politicized the WHO in the American press. About 64 percent of US respondents approved of the United Nations, compared to just 26 percent of Republican respondents. We do not observe similar divides in other countries for the most part, though we note that among German respondents, those who support the AfD report consistently lower favorability to most any global organization.

**Views on different IOs (global)**



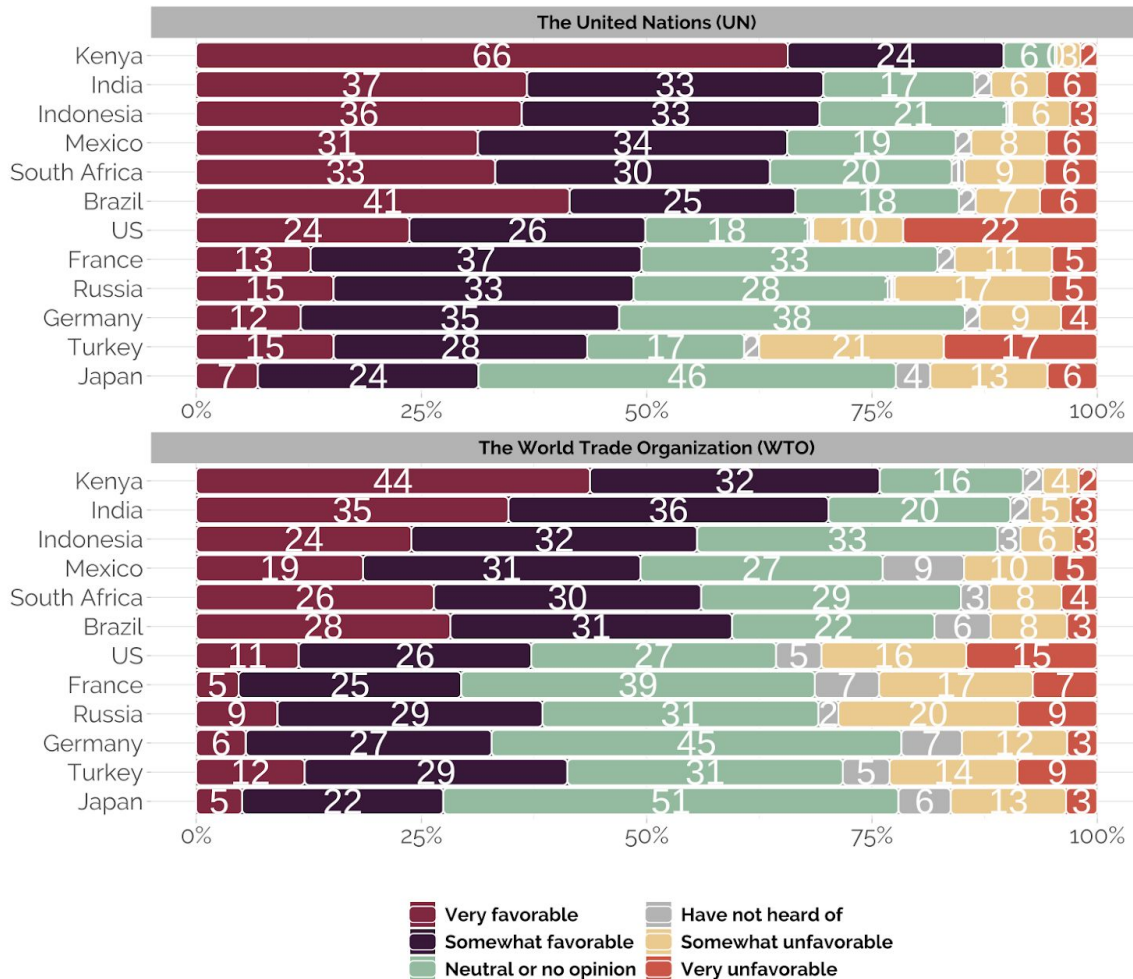
On the other hand, though they have lower name recognition, organizations associated with the global financial system tend to have lower net approval ratings. For example, while name recognition of organizations like the World Trade Organization (WTO) tends to be low, those that have heard of these organizations report lower favorability than they do of other types of organizations. Generally speaking, approval of this organization is on average about 8-10 points lower across the sample than approval of organizations with higher name recognition, namely, the United Nations. The following chart shows an illustrative example.

As in other areas, respondents who reported paying more attention to the news reported both higher name recognition of global organizations and higher favorability toward those organizations. This is true in each country in the sample, even when controlling for other demographic factors. The relatively high share of respondents reporting “Neutral or no opinion” or “have not heard of” on this item leads us to caution against overinterpretation of the results.



## Favorable or Unfavorable View of International Organizations

By member countries



Next, you will see the names of some international organizations that your country is involved in/some countries are involved in. For each of those, please say whether you have a favorable or unfavorable view of that organization, or if you haven't heard of it or have a neutral opinion of it.

In some countries, notably Germany and the United States, political partisanship plays a clear role in predicting support for global organizations. But overall, respondents believe the United Nations impacts their countries in positive ways. We asked respondents about a variety of aspects of the United Nations's impact on their country:

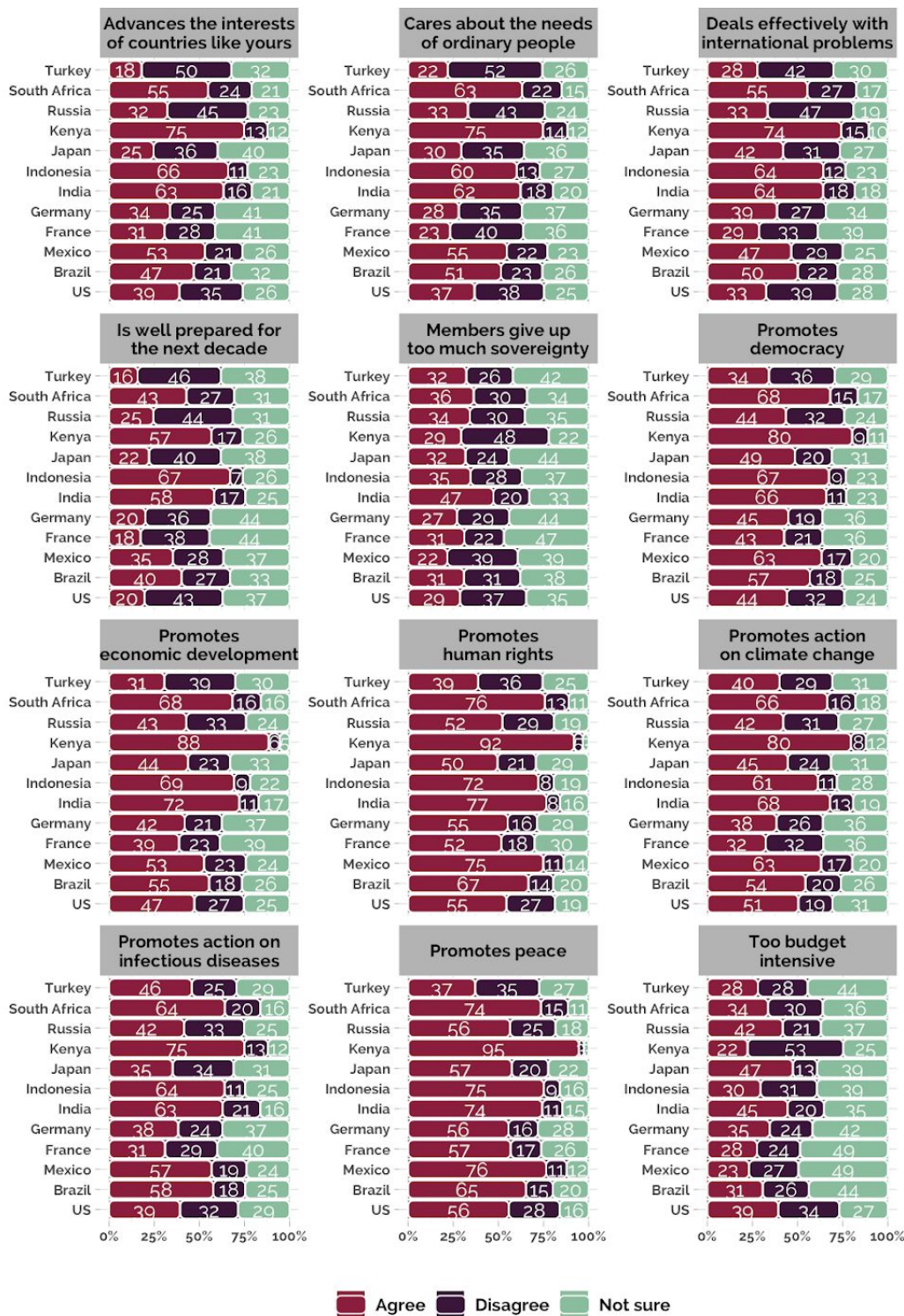
*And when it comes to the United Nations, would you say you [agree or disagree] with each of the following, or are you unsure? The United Nations...*

1. Promotes human rights
2. Promotes peace

3. *Promotes economic development*
4. *Promotes action on infectious diseases, like coronavirus*
5. *Promotes action on climate change*
6. *Advances the interests of countries like yours*
7. *Cares about the needs of ordinary people*
8. *Deals effectively with international problems*
9. *Is well prepared for the challenges of the next decade*
10. *Makes its members give up too much of their sovereignty*
11. *Costs my country too much of our budget*
12. *Promotes democracy*

The following plot shows a few illustrative examples. For example, on net, respondents agree that the UN promotes human rights (with 63 percent agreeing and just 17 percent disagreeing) and promotes action on climate change (with 53 percent agreeing and 20 percent disagreeing). In addition, respondents were split on whether the United Nations made their nations give up too much sovereignty, by a 32-30 margin. These views vary by country. For example, in Turkey the net gap between those who agree that the UN promotes human rights and those who disagree with that statement is just 3pp, with 25 percent of respondents reporting they are unsure. In contrast, 91 percent of respondents in Kenya say that the UN promotes human rights.

## Views on the UN grid





As with the question of whether respondents tend to approve or disapprove of global organizations, respondents who reported they paid a lot of attention to global events both were more likely to have an opinion about the UN (rather than saying "don't know") and to have a favorable opinion. In Japan, Germany and France, younger voters were slightly more likely to agree with positive attributes of the United Nations such as “promotes peace” and “deals effectively with international institutions.” In other countries, age did not play a role in predicting views toward the United Nations. Notably, while French and Russian respondents are often more skeptical about global institutions, those respondents on net agree the UN protects human rights.

## Global Organizations and National Sovereignty

### *Key takeaways*

- Respondents in much of the sample express concerns about the cost to national sovereignty of joining major political institutions.
- Those who identify as more to the right on the political spectrum express more pessimistic views about the United Nations.
- We do not find evidence that respondents across the sample prefer working with like-minded countries over working with other countries broadly speaking.

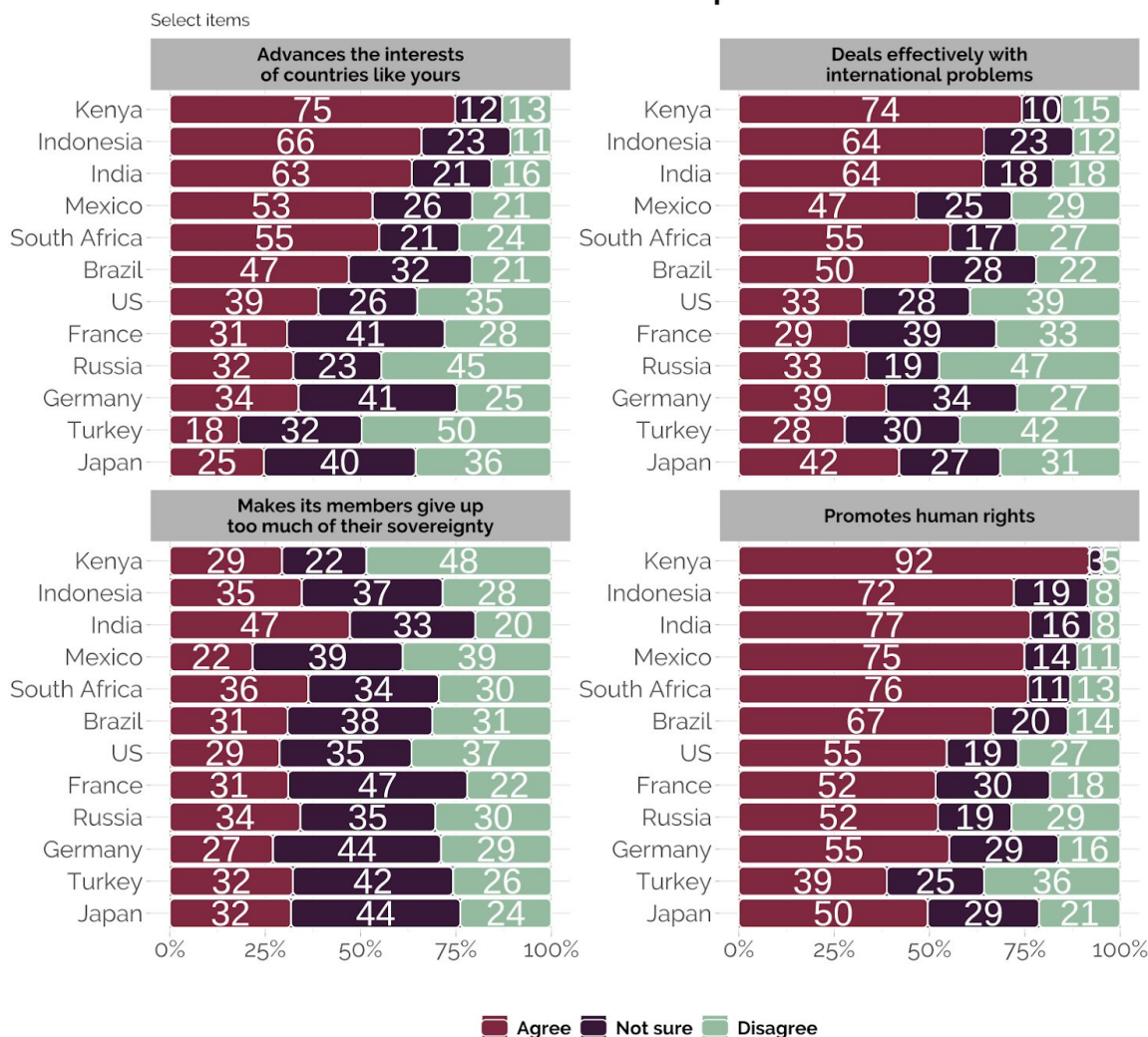
Respondents in much of the sample, however, expressed concerns about national sovereignty when pressed on the potential costs of working with global organizations. In most countries voters are split on this question, while in France respondents agreed the UN required giving up too much sovereignty by a 31-22 margin. Within the France sample, older respondents and respondents who supported candidates other than Macron were slightly more likely to express this concern.

In most of the countries in the sample - including Kenya, where support for the United Nations is generally very high, and Russia, where support for the United Nations is generally lower - those who identify as more to the right on the political spectrum express more pessimistic views about the United Nations. Among countries in the sample, this effect is the weakest in Japan, where attitudes toward the United Nations are generally lower.

Indeed when pressed, respondents across the sample said they were concerned their countries had given up too much sovereignty to various global organizations. Large majorities of respondents in India, South Africa, Kenya, France, and Brazil agreed with this concern. Notably, despite a widely assumed turn toward isolationism in recent years, voters in the US were split on this item and respondents in Russia on net disagreed, by a 31-46 margin.

Among respondents from Germany, younger respondents were slightly less likely to feel this way, as were SPD supporters. Among respondents from France, Macron supporters were less likely to feel that way, while respondents who paid a lot of attention to the news were *more* likely to feel that way. In the US, respondents who identified as liberal or as Democrats were also less likely to feel this way. Notably, in Russia, where respondents largely disagreed that they'd given up too much sovereignty, those who did were disproportionately high news-attention respondents.

## United Nations reputation



And when it comes to the United Nations, would you say you agree or disagree with each of the following, or are you unsure? The United Nations...

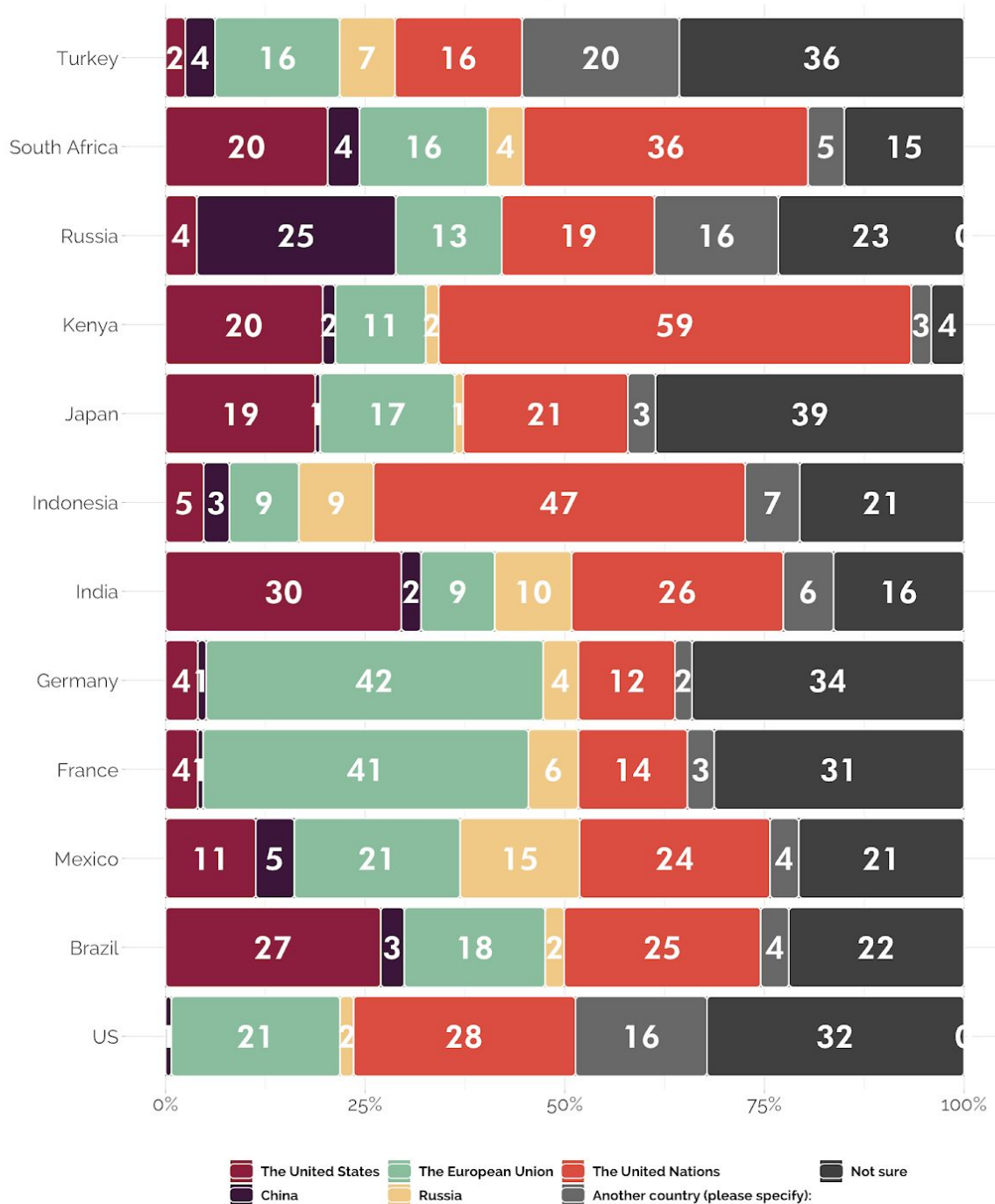
Indeed, when pressed on which countries or organizations they trusted more, respondents tended to choose the United Nations over other possible choices including The United States, China, Russia, The European Union, or another organization.<sup>8</sup> Respondents from India and Brazil were split between trusting the United Nations most and trusting the United States most, with 30 percent of respondents from India preferring the US and 26 percent preferring the UN, and 27 percent from Brazil preferring the US and 25 percent preferring the UN. Notably, no more than 5 percent of respondents from any country reported having the most trust in China.

<sup>8</sup> Respondents were not asked about their own countries. For example, respondents from the US were not shown the option, "The United States."

Indeed, in many countries, the United States ranks fairly low as a source of trust among non-US respondents. For example, only 2 percent of respondents in Turkey, and 4 percent of respondents in Russia say that they trust the United States to do what's right in international affairs. But this finding is repeated even among US allies like Germany (4 percent), France (4 percent), Mexico (11 percent), and Japan (19 percent). This highlights the potential difficult international arena that the Biden Administration will likely have to face when it comes to American standing in the world.

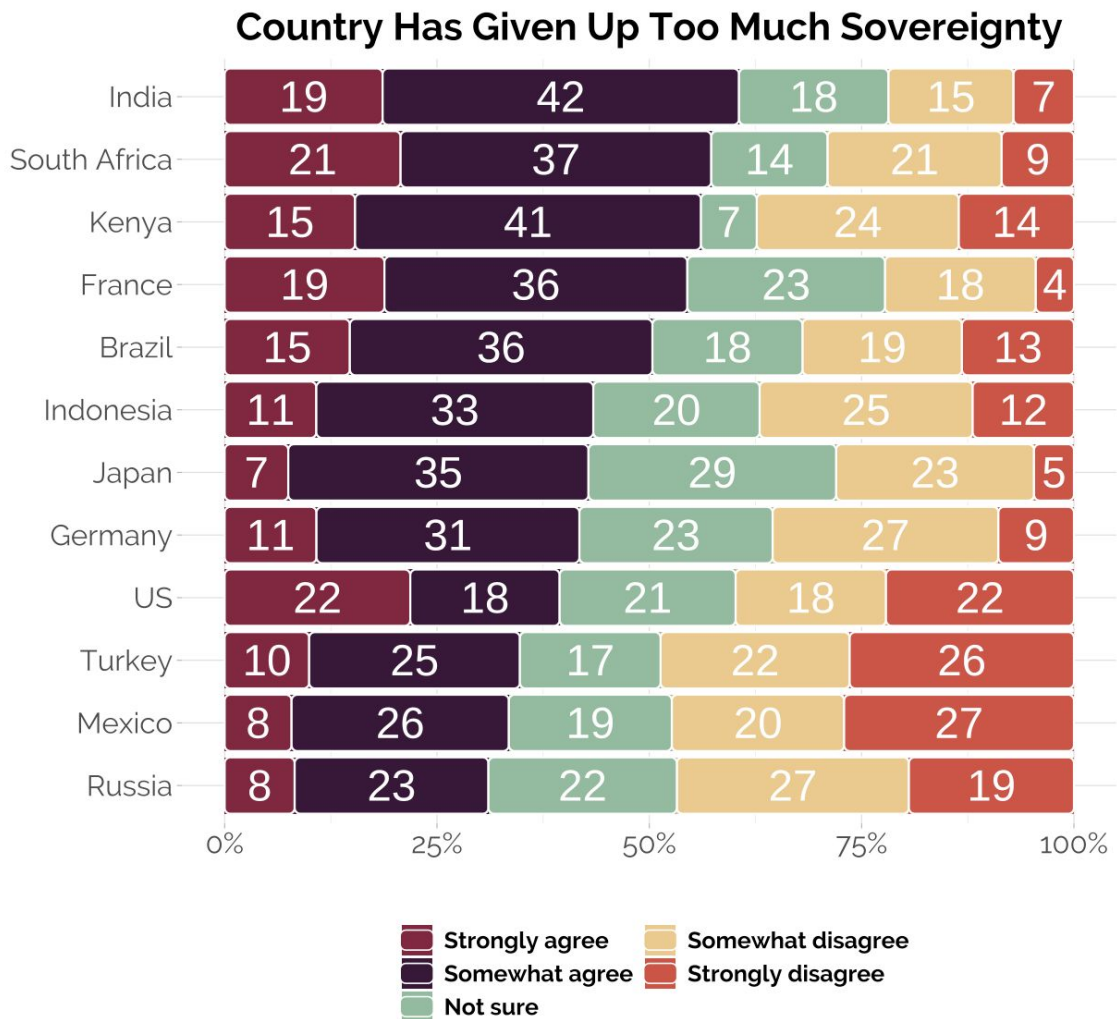
On the upside, international organizations like the European Union and the United Nations ranked highly among respondents across countries. For example, 59 percent of respondents in Kenya said that they trust the UN to do the right thing, alongside 47 percent of respondents in Indonesia, 36 percent in South Africa, 28 percent in the United States, and 26 percent in India. Similarly, the European Union ranks fairly highly among member states like Germany and France, while competing with the United Nations in Mexico, the United States, and Brazil.

### Who do respondents trust



Generally speaking, when it comes to international affairs, who do you trust most to do the right thing?

In much of the rest of the sample, factors like news attention did not predict concern for national sovereignty one way or the other. In most of the countries where we asked where respondents fell on the political spectrum, those to the right were more likely to agree their country had given up too much sovereignty. The only exception was Turkey, where political ideology did not play a role in predicting responses to this item.



*Generally speaking, would you say you [agree or disagree] that your country has given up too much of its sovereignty to go along with what international organizations want it to do?*

Although respondents expressed concerns about sovereignty from various different directions, they were split on whether this concern implied countries should prioritize with like minded

allies.<sup>9</sup> We do not find evidence that respondents across the sample prefer working with like-minded countries. The only countries where large majorities prioritize working with like-minded countries, India and Russia, are strongly dominated by single-party systems.

Within countries, we find that those who are more on the “right” end of the political spectrum are generally more likely to say they believe their country should work with like-minded allies. In countries like India and Russia, where steady majorities of respondents agree that their respective countries should prioritize working with allies who are like-minded, we do not observe this correlation. Among respondents from France and Germany, we find that those who report they pay more attention to the news are more likely to agree that their countries should prioritize working with like-minded allies. In the US, respondents who identify as more politically conservative are more likely to agree with this as well. In France, we observe this among respondents who voted for a candidate other than Macron in the 2017 elections.

Respondents who felt their countries should prioritize working with like-minded countries were also more likely to say they thought the pandemic proved the world was too interconnected, and were more likely to say they believed their country was too involved in global affairs. In many countries, particularly France, Japan, Russia, and the US, these attitudes are broadly shared by more conservative respondents.

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<sup>9</sup> We asked respondents,

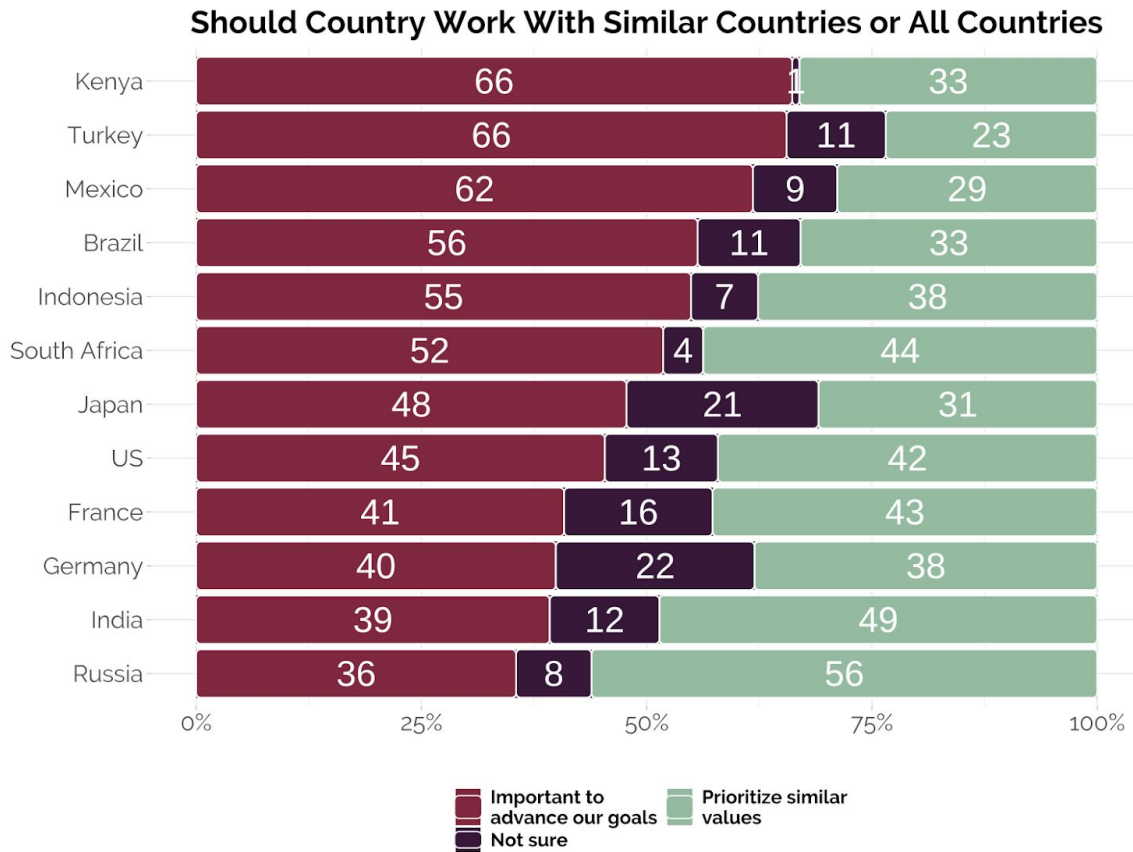
And even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closest to your view?

<1> Even if other countries hold very different values, it is important for my country to cooperate with other countries that will help mine with its goals

<2> I would prefer my country prioritized cooperating with countries with similar values and beliefs to my own country

<3> Not sure





*And even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closest to your view?*

Similarly, more conservative respondents were more likely to report they believed democratic countries should have their own international institutions.<sup>10</sup> We asked respondents if some countries, specifically democracies, should have their own venues in which to cooperate and coordinate. Broadly, while more conservative respondents favored this idea, there was little difference between respondents from more democratic or less democratic countries overall.

On net, respondents from every country agreed there should be fora for democratic countries. Notably, respondents who pay more attention to the news also report being more favorable toward creating institutions just for democracies, even controlling for other factors like their political affiliation. While we made no effort to classify countries by their level of democracy, we

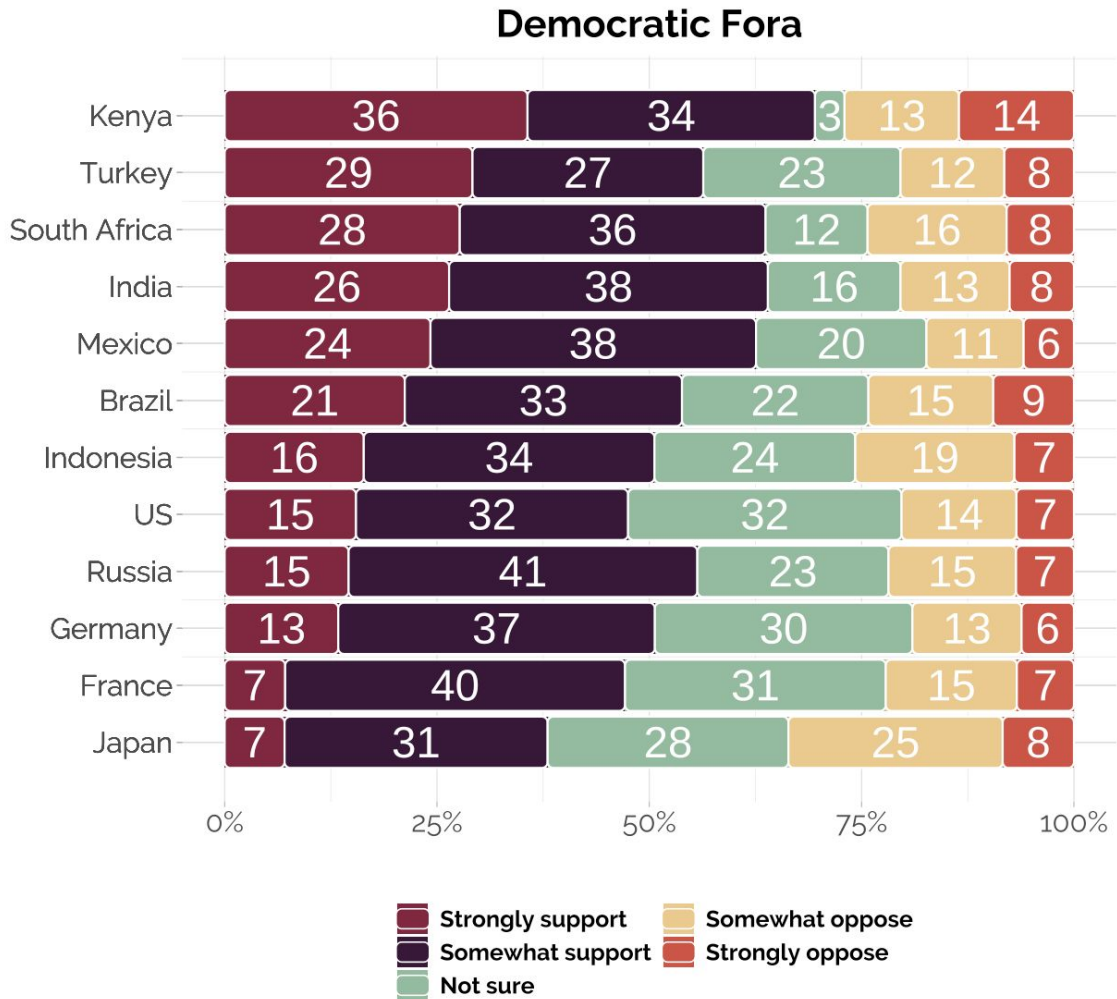
<sup>10</sup> We asked respondents:

Currently, many different kinds of countries, including democracies as well as less free societies, meet and vote in international institutions like the United Nations as equals. Would you [support or oppose] democratic countries creating institutions of their own, to make major decisions amongst themselves?

<1> Strongly support  
<2> Somewhat support  
<3> Somewhat oppose  
<4> Strongly oppose  
<5> Not sure



note that support for unique fora for democracies is not limited by any sort of governing system under which respondents in our survey live.



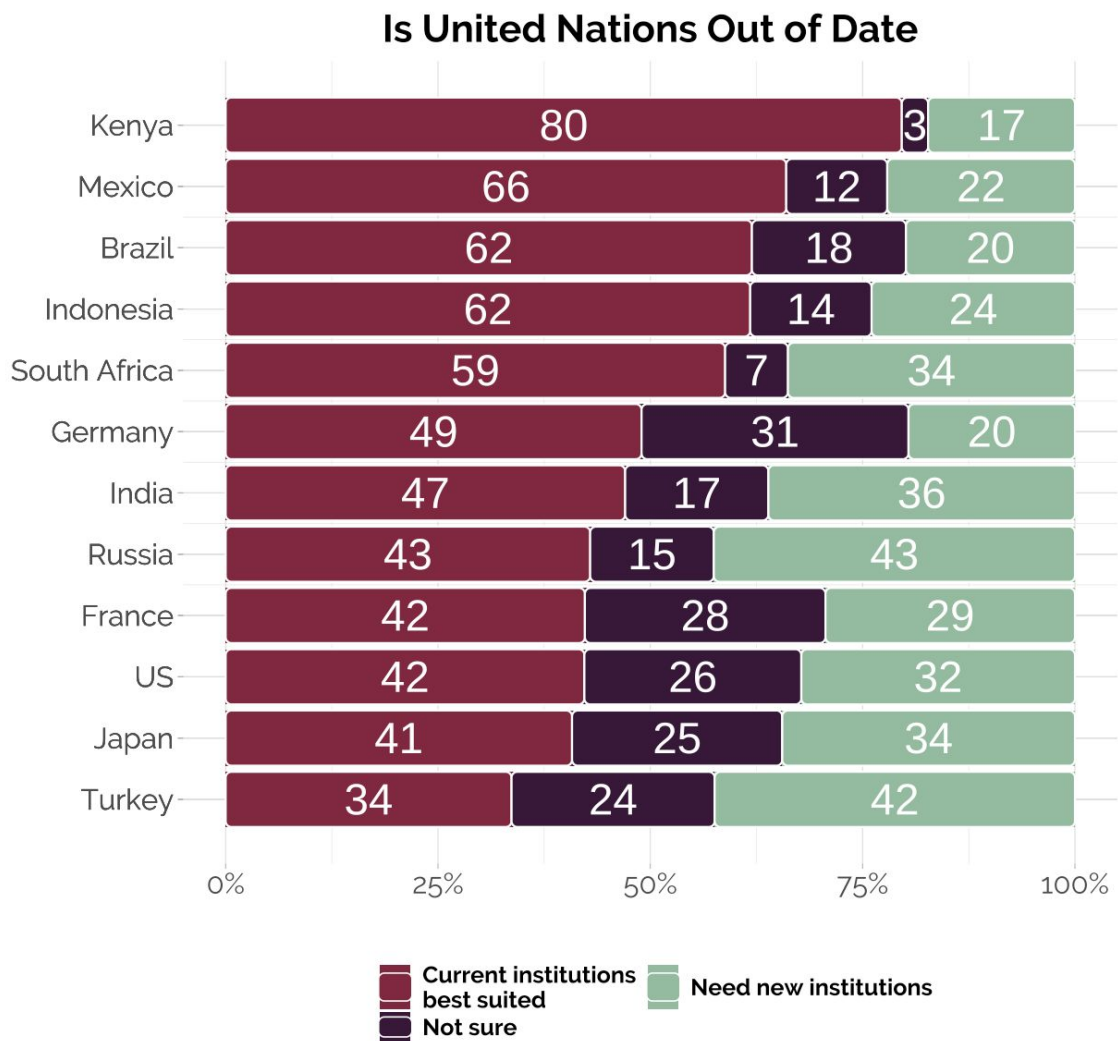
*Currently, many different kinds of countries, including democracies as well as less free societies, meet and vote in international institutions like the United Nations as equals. Would you (support or oppose) democratic countries creating institutions of their own, to make major decisions amongst themselves?*

At the same time, modest pluralities of respondents from each country supported devising new institutions broadly as an alternative to the United Nations.<sup>11</sup> Generally speaking, these are the

<sup>11</sup> We asked respondents, And even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closer to your view?  
 <1> Existing global institutions like the United Nations aren't perfect, but they are the best suited to help us handle the world's problems  
 <2> Existing global institutions like the United Nations are inadequate to today's problems, and a new set of global institutions is needed  
 <3> Not sure

same respondents from each country who said that membership in the United Nations cost their country too much of its sovereignty.

The respondents who agreed that a new set of institutions should replace the United Nations were generally skeptical of both global events and global institutions, and so it is not clear they are expressing a desire for new global institutions so much as expressing dissatisfaction with those that exist. Those respondents tend to be further to the right politically, and to support more conservative candidates in the US, France, and Germany.



*And even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closer to your view?*

Finally, we note that the fear of loss of sovereignty outweighs other concerns respondents might have about global organizations. We included a variety of items measuring attitudes toward other countries, including rising powers that are likely to seek influence in these same organizations. For example, we asked respondents if they felt that new rising economies were likely to benefit their own countries as a potential trading partner, or to threaten their countries as a potential source of competition.<sup>12</sup> On net, respondents from every country in the sample but Turkey agreed that they were more likely to benefit from working with countries that were growing wealthier and more powerful than believed they would inevitably come into conflict.

Within countries, respondents further to the right on the political spectrum were more likely to report believing their country would inevitably come into conflict with rising countries. For example, in France, about 25 percent of respondents who identified as on the political left agreed that rising powers would lead to inevitable conflict, up to 40 percent of those on the right side of the political spectrum. In Turkey, where pessimism about rising powers was higher across the board, political ideology did not play much of a role, and the political spectrum relationship was reversed. Fully 65 percent of those on the left felt that rising powers posed more of a threat than a potential benefit, compared to 30 percent of those on the right.

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<sup>12</sup> We asked respondents,

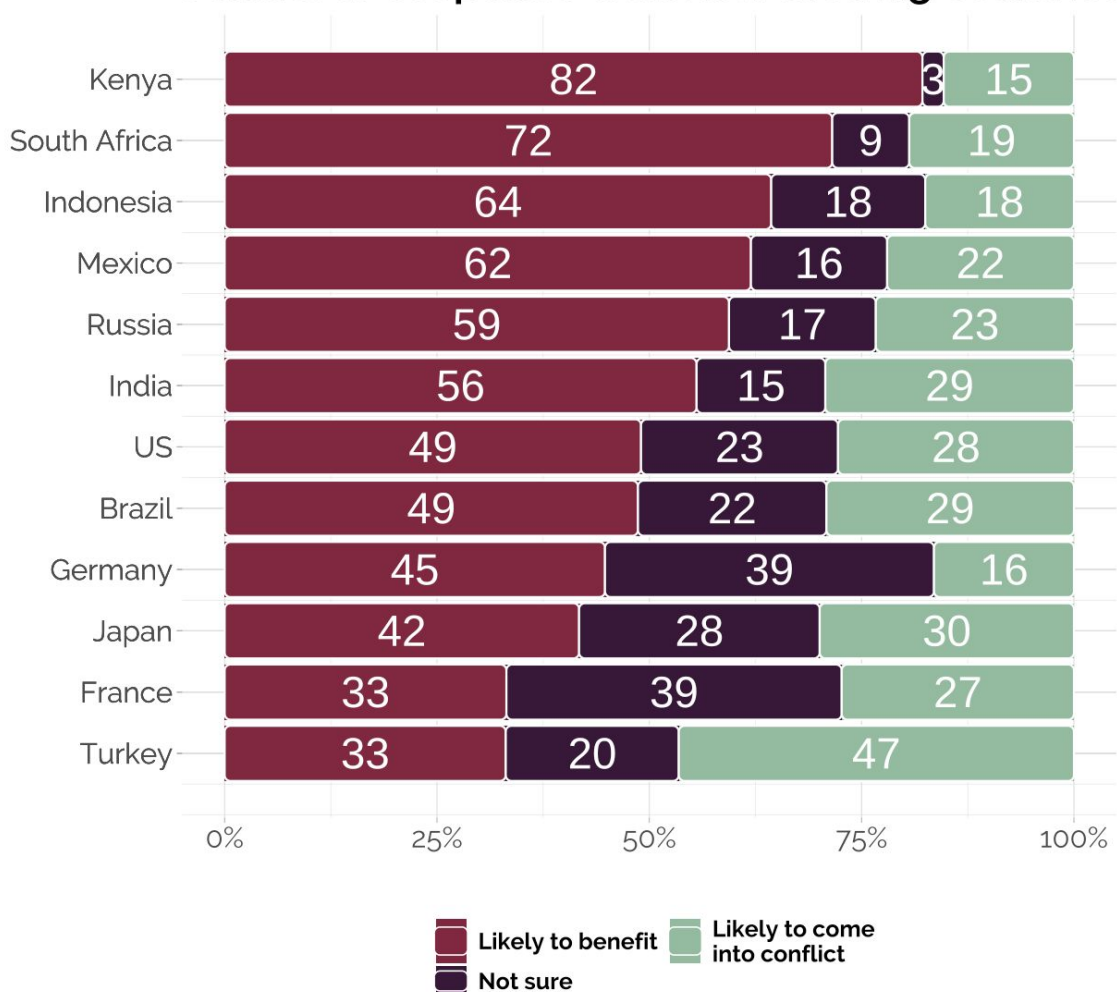
And even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closer to your view?

<1> My country is likely to benefit from more trade and cooperation with other countries that are growing wealthier and more developed

<2> My country is likely to come into conflict with other countries that are growing wealthier and more developed

<3> Not sure

## Conflict or Cooperate With New Growing Countries



*And even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closer to your view?*

## United States leadership

### Key takeaways

- Respondents across the sample, generally speaking, said that the United States was not showing leadership on a vast variety of issues polled.
- US respondents themselves held mixed views about US leadership on these issues.
- Evaluations of US leadership in various areas do not necessarily depend on whether respondents come from a country that has generally adversarial relations with the United States.
- In most cases, respondents across the countries in our sample believed Joe Biden would show a great deal more leadership on global issues than Donald Trump has

We also asked respondents a variety of items about US politics and the incoming Biden Administration. We asked respondents about US leadership on a variety of issues:

*And when it comes to the following areas, would you say the United States is more of a leader or is not showing any leadership?*

*<1> Protecting human rights around the world*

*<2> Dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic*

*<3> Expanding economic prosperity around the world*

*<4> Keeping the world safe from terrorism or rogue nations*

*<5> Protecting democratic freedoms around the world*

*<6> Combating climate change*

*<7> Protecting the rights of minorities and vulnerable populations*

*<8> Preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction*

*<9> Helping the world with changes caused by new technology like artificial intelligence*

On each issue, across the sample, the US received mix results. On each of these issues, overall, more respondents said the US was “not showing leadership” than said the US was “showing a great deal of leadership.” On each of these issues, more respondents said the US was showing no leadership than was showing a great deal of leadership.

Notably, US respondents themselves held mixed views about US leadership on these issues. Indeed, controlling for other factors, US respondents only felt the US was showing more leadership on “dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic” (31 percent in the US compared to 19 percent overall) . On several of these issues, respondents from Kenya held statistically significantly higher views of US leadership than did respondents from the US.

While it is probably not surprising to find that respondents from Russia were more pessimistic about US leadership to a statistically detectable degree, we also find that respondents from France, Germany, Japan, Mexico, and Turkey tended to be more pessimistic about US

leadership than those from India, Indonesia, Kenya, South Africa, or from the US itself. Indeed, on the item “keeping the world safe from terrorism,” about as many respondents from France (11 percent) and Germany (13 percent) thought the US showed “a great deal of leadership” as did those from Russia (13 percent).

In other words, evaluations of US leadership in various areas do not necessarily depend on whether respondents come from a country that has generally adversarial relations with the United States. Perhaps due to the unique political context of the most recent generation of US political leadership, which has been openly antagonistic toward various elements of the existing world order, respondents from across the political spectrum and across the sample may take a more dim view of US leadership. Whatever the cause, our data suggest that both allies and adversaries perceive a leadership deficit from the United States on a host of issues the world is facing.



*And when it comes to the following areas, would you say the United States is more of a leader or is not showing any leadership?*

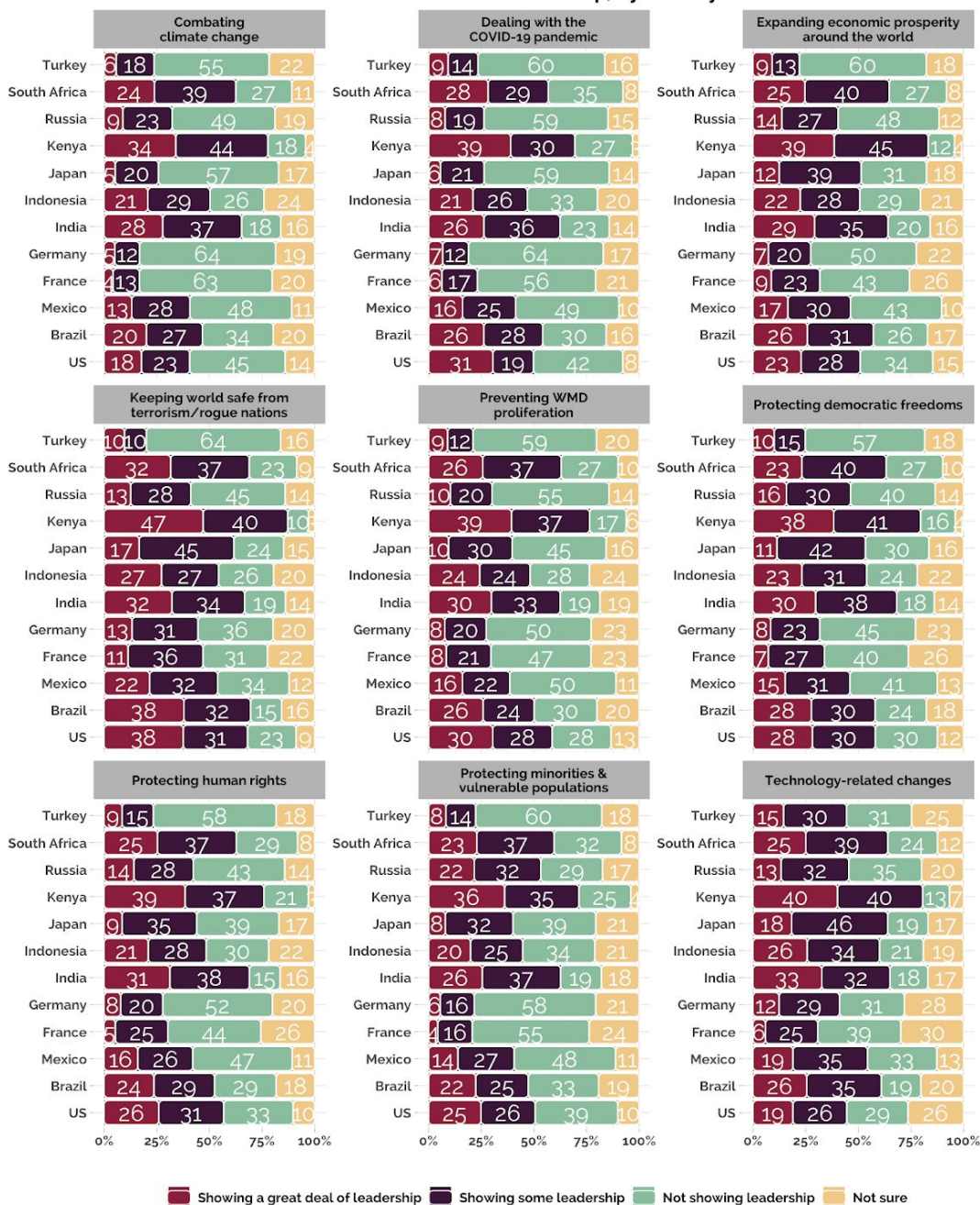
The following chart breaks out views of US leadership by each country in the sample. Respondents from the Kenya sample are consistently more optimistic about US leadership than are those from other countries, while respondents from France, Germany, and Turkey are consistently more pessimistic. Across the sample, respondents do not show much variety in their ratings of US leadership - respondents who felt the US was showing leadership on one issue tended to feel that way about the other items we asked about.

Within countries, respondents who identified as further to the right on the political spectrum were more likely to agree that the US showed great leadership in a given area, but there was no



apparent variation by issue. In other words, more ideologically rightwing respondents were more likely to view the US as a leader along most every issue we included.

Views about US leadership, by country



We also asked respondents about what they thought incoming US President Joe Biden *would* do with respect to certain international agreements and what they thought he *should* do.

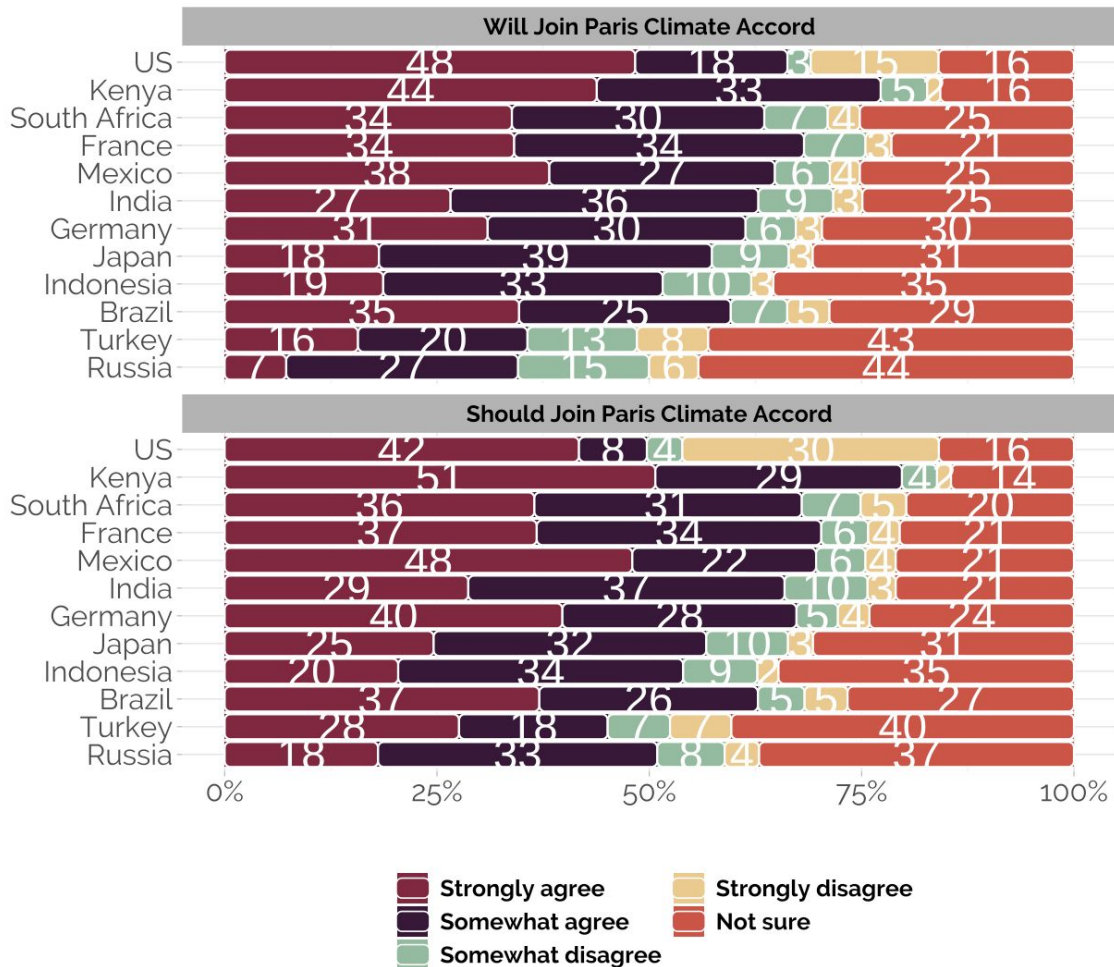


Specifically, we asked respondents about the Paris Climate Accord and about the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, also known as the Iran Nuclear Deal.

Strong majorities of respondents across the sample say that they think the incoming Biden Administration both *will* and *should* rejoin the Paris Climate Accord. The only exceptions here are Russia and Turkey, where 34 percent and 36 percent, respectively, believe that the Administration will rejoin the Paris Climate Accord. However, even in these countries where there is skepticism about what the Administration will do, there is strong agreement throughout the countries in our study that the United States should rejoin this Agreement.

Notably, the biggest divide between belief about what the US will do as opposed to what it should do on the subject of the Paris Climate Accord occurred among American respondents. By a 66-18 margin, respondents from the United States believed their country would rejoin the Paris Climate Accord, but were split on a narrower 50-34 margin as to whether the US should. Within the US, partisanship strongly predicts the divide on whether the US both should and would rejoin the Paris Climate Accord.

## What Biden will/should do on Paris Climate Accord

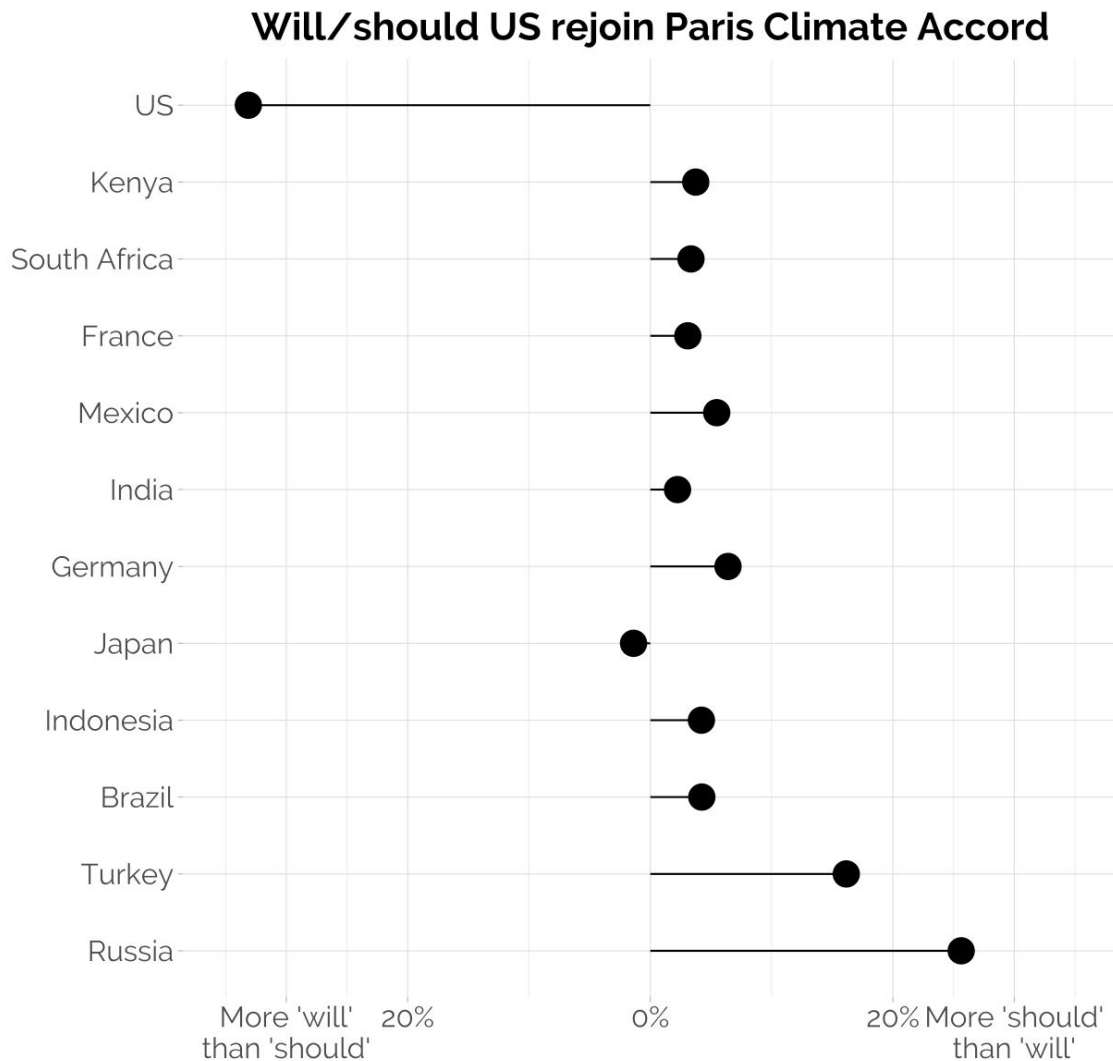


Next, you will see some statements about incoming United States President Joe Biden. For each of those, please say whether you agree or disagree, or if you are unsure.

Interestingly, the United States itself is the country that mostly says the US will, but not should, rejoin the Agreement. In this study, 66 percent of respondents from the United States believe that the Biden Administration *will* rejoin the Accord against 18 percent who think the US will not, and only 50 percent of respondents in that country think that the Administration *should* rejoin that international agreement, against 34 percent who do not. Conversely, respondents from every other country in our sample tend to believe more that the Administration *should* rejoin when compared to their views of how likely it is that Biden *will* rejoin the Paris Climate Accord, even when it has been part of his platform to do so.

The following chart contrasts the share of voters who, on net, believe the US “should” rejoin the Paris Climate Accord with the share who believe the US “will” rejoin the Paris Climate Accord. Each point is the net total of respondents who agree the US *should* rejoin the Paris Climate Accord, minus the net total of respondents who agree the US *will* rejoin the Paris Climate Accord. In other words, points to the left of zero represent countries where more people think the US *will* than *should* rejoin the Paris Climate Accord, and points to the right indicate countries where more people think the US *should* rather than *will* rejoin the Paris Climate Accord.

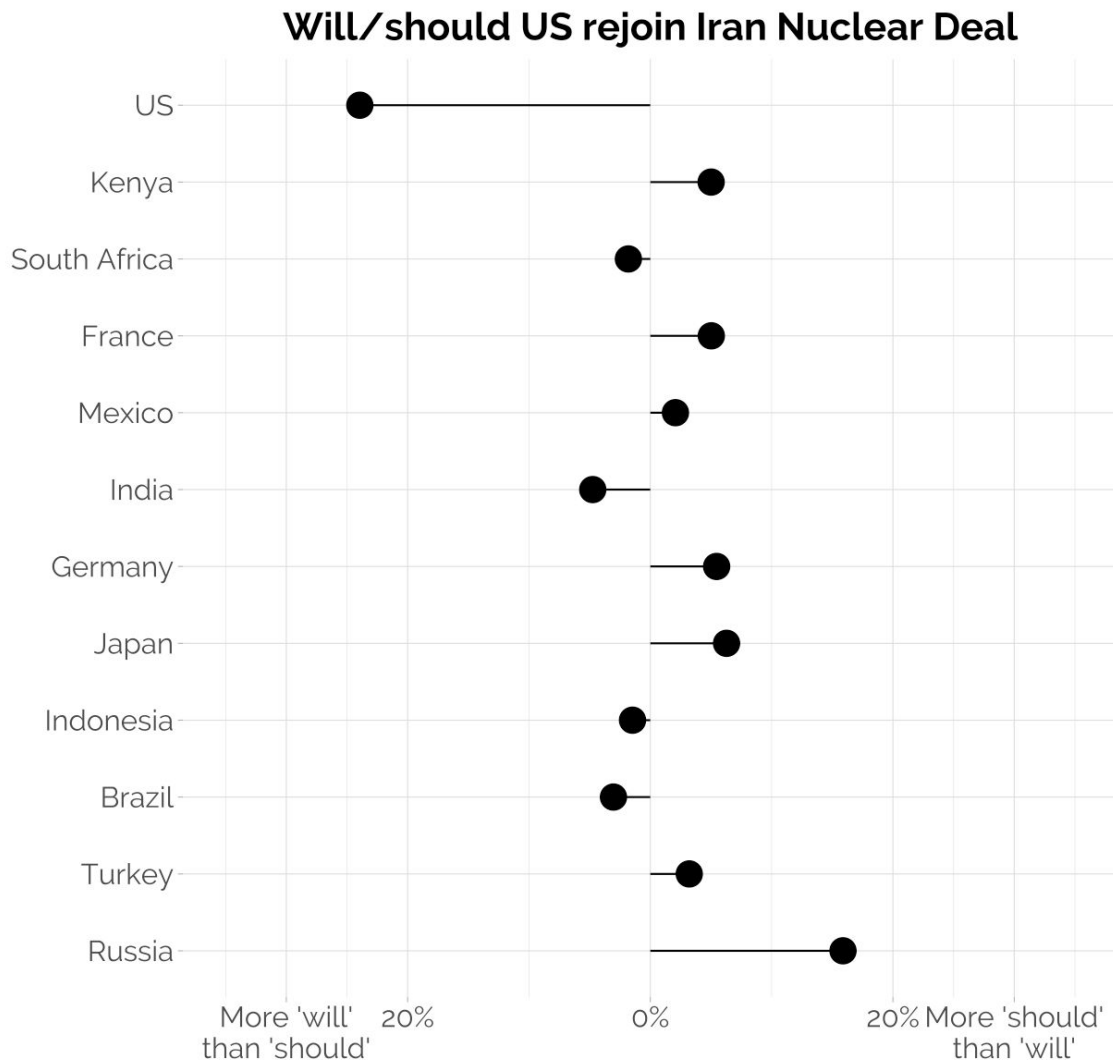
For most countries, these quantities line up closely, with a few percent more respondents saying the US *should* rejoin the Paris Climate Accord than those who think it *will*. This gulf is larger for Russia and Turkey. On the other hand, in the US, on net, more people think the US *will* than *should* rejoin the Paris Climate Accord—the only country whose respondents on net feel this way. In other words, only US respondents think the US might wrongly re-enter the Paris Climate Accord, while every other country is more concerned that the US will wrongly fail to do so.



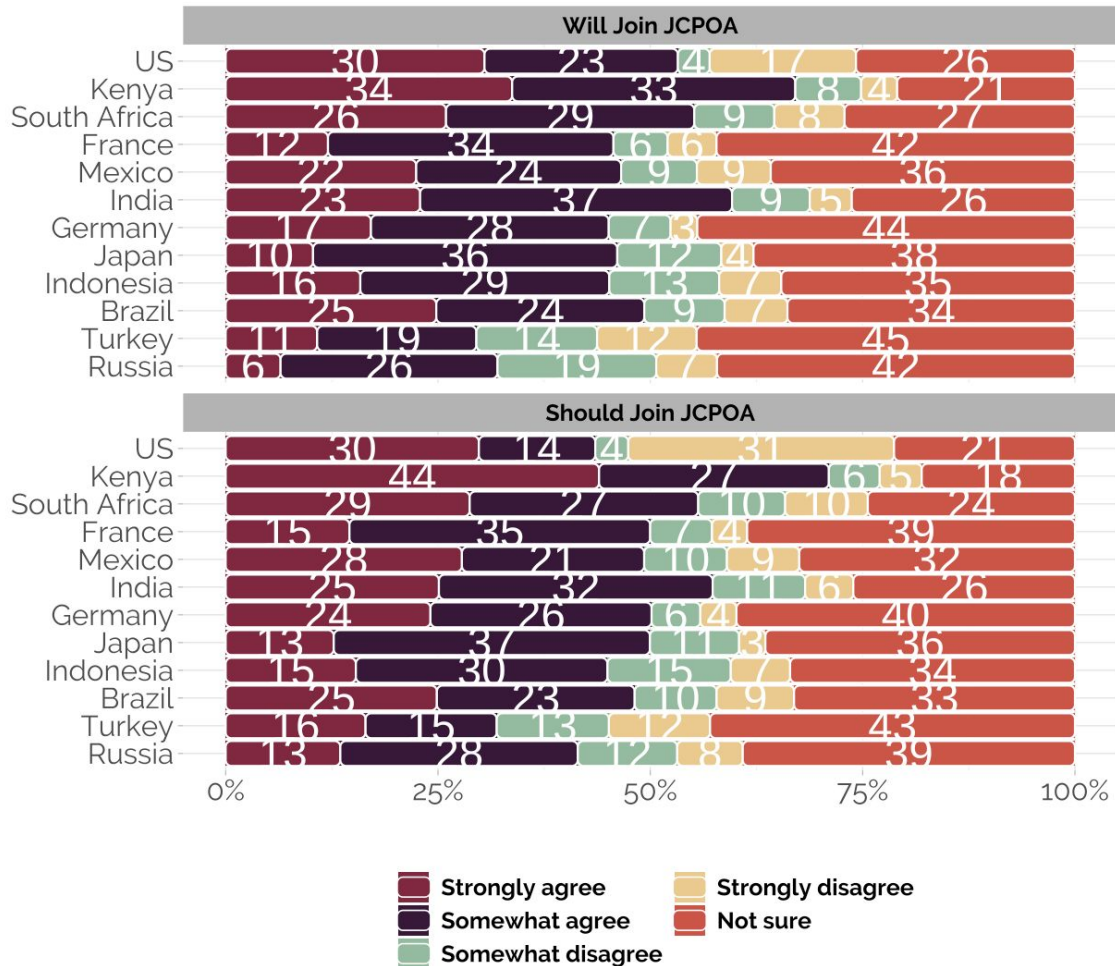
We find similar patterns when looking at another potentially contentious American policy: whether the US should rejoin the Iran Nuclear Deal—respondents in the United States tend to believe more that the Administration *will* rejoin it than it *should* do so. There are a few countries, however, that line up slightly with the United States in this topic—South Africa, India, Indonesia and Brazil.

However, as is the case with the Paris Climate Accords, strong pluralities of respondents across the sample, with the exception of Russia and Turkey, believe both that the United States *will* and *should* rejoin the Nuclear Deal. For example, 69 percent of respondents in South Africa

believe that the US should re-join, while 44 percent of respondents in the United States think that their nation should do so. Notably, however, there is a lot of ambivalence in these questions, with an average of 39 percent saying they are unsure of whether the US will or should join the Iran Nuclear Deal.



## What Biden will/should do on Iran Nuclear Deal



Next, you will see some statements about incoming United States President Joe Biden. For each of those, please say whether you agree or disagree, or if you are unsure.

Ultimately, respondents across the countries in our sample believed Joe Biden would show a great deal more leadership on global issues than Trump had. We showed respondents a battery of global issues and asked them whether they thought Joe Biden would show more leadership on a given issue, or less. We asked,

*Now, think about incoming President Joe Biden, when it comes to those same issues, when the United States has a new President, do you think it will show [more leadership or less leadership] on that issue than it did under current President Donald Trump?*



- Protecting human rights around the world*
- Dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic*
- Expanding economic prosperity around the world*
- Keeping the world safe from terrorism or rogue nations*
- Protecting democratic freedoms around the world*
- Combating climate change*
- Protecting the rights of minorities and vulnerable populations*
- Preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction*
- Helping the world with changes caused by new technology like artificial intelligence*

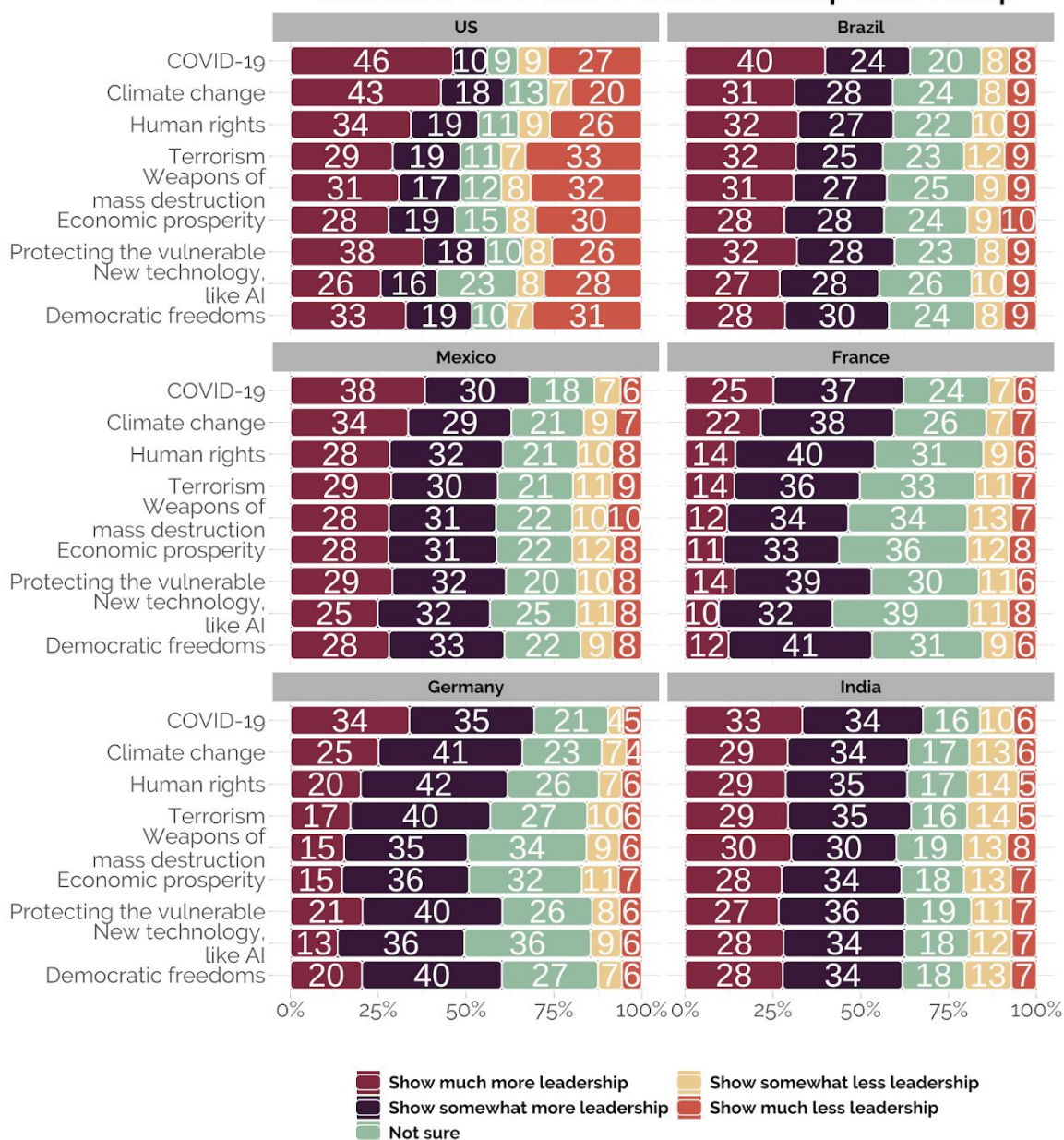
Across the countries in our sample, respondents overwhelmingly report they believe Joe Biden will show more leadership than did Donald Trump. Indeed, the most divided country in our sample was the United States, where partisanship clearly divided respondents between whether they thought Joe Biden would show more or less leadership than Donald Trump.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the lopsided favorability of Joe Biden was highest among the American allied countries whose respondents currently expressed the lowest views of US leadership earlier in the survey - France and Germany. Among French and German respondents, no more than 20 percent thought Biden would show less leadership than Trump on any issue. Respondents in Brazil, who elsewhere were slightly to the right of other countries and whose respondents are slightly more conservative than the survey-wide average, also overwhelmingly believe Biden will show more leadership than Trump on every issue we polled.

That said, Japan, Russia, and Turkey were the most pessimistic about Biden's potential leadership compared to Trump's across the board as well. On several issues—terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, economic prosperity, and dealing with new technologies like artificial intelligence—respondents from Russia on net believed Biden would fall short of Trump. On the issues of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, respondents from Turkey agreed, and were split on the other issues.

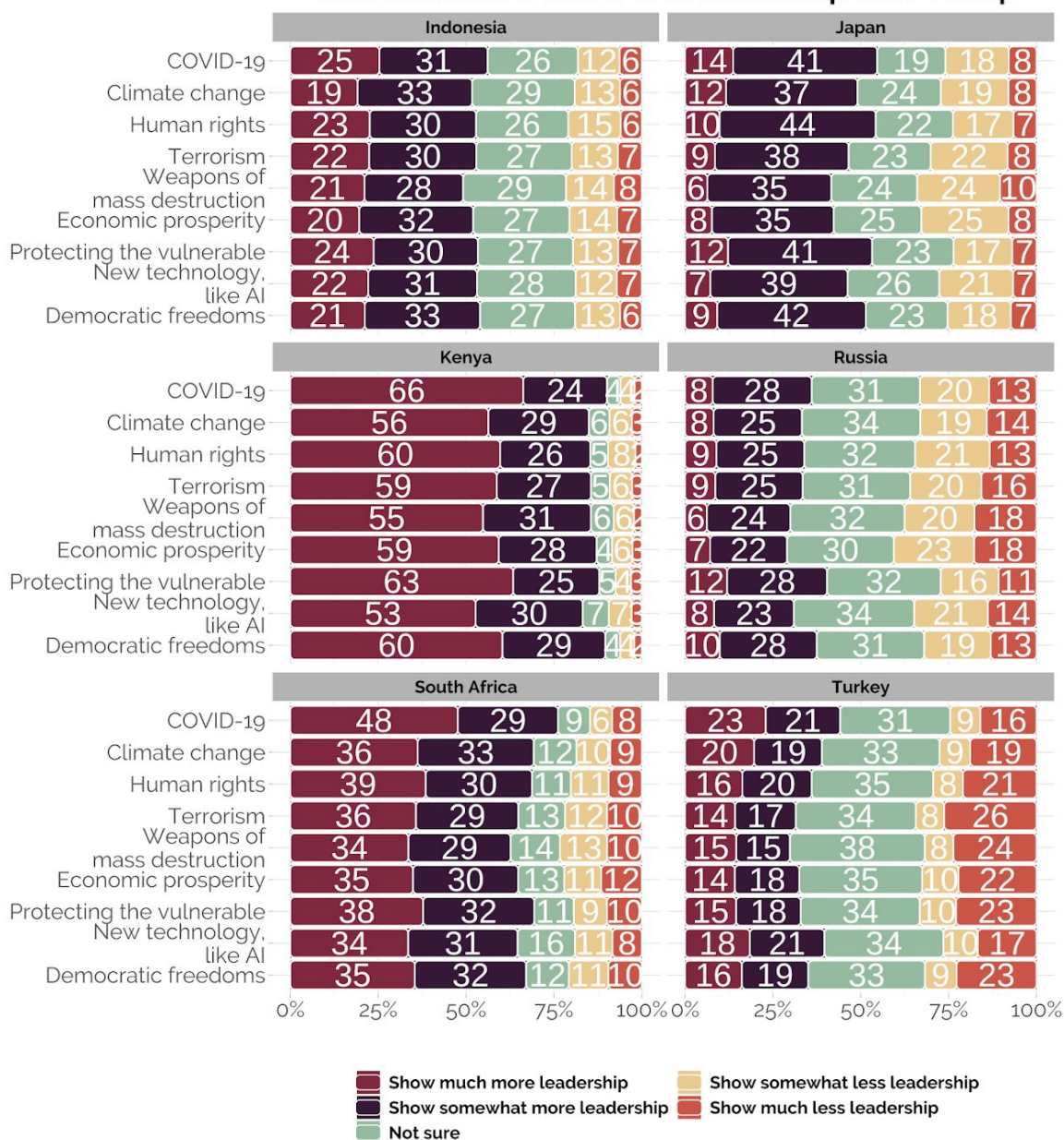
Respondents from Kenya and South Africa were the most certain that Biden would show more leadership than Trump on each of these issues, having very lower shares of those who said they were unsure on each item. As each of these countries' respondents express relatively sympathetic views toward multilateralism and global institutions, and those attitudes correlate highly with being slightly more to the left ideologically, this is perhaps not surprising.

### Will Biden show more/less leadership than Trump



Now, think about incoming President Joe Biden, when it comes to those same issues, when the United States has a new President, do you think it will show [more leadership or less leadership] on that issue than it did under current President Donald Trump?

### Will Biden show more/less leadership than Trump



Now, think about incoming President Joe Biden, when it comes to those same issues, when the United States has a new President, do you think it will show [more leadership or less leadership] on that issue than it did under current President Donald Trump?

## Conclusion

Throughout our survey, voters expressed two competing views of the world around them. On the one hand, respondents were pessimistic about the state of the world. More respondents said global events had a negative than positive impact on their lives, and said that these impacts were real and meaningful, not distant. Respondents expressed skepticism of the outside world in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, and generally felt the pandemic showed the world was too interconnected.

On the other hand, a small number of global institutions—the United Nations and the World Health Organization—have relatively strong reputations, and are viewed as important elements of recovering from the global pandemic. Those organizations are seen as vital to recovery from the pandemic, and respondents in many countries also said they actively would prefer to see their country more involved in that organization.

In some ways, Joe Biden enters the Presidency in a favorable position. Across the world, countries believe he will show more leadership on a host of issues than did Donald Trump. At the same time, those countries also believe that Biden will not necessarily do what it takes to restore US leadership in the world. Other countries are also deeply pessimistic about the present state of US leadership. As such, while our data suggests many countries are giving Biden the benefit of the doubt that he will show more leadership on crucial issues than Donald Trump, they also suggest that the United States has a long path to walk to restore its reputation around the world.



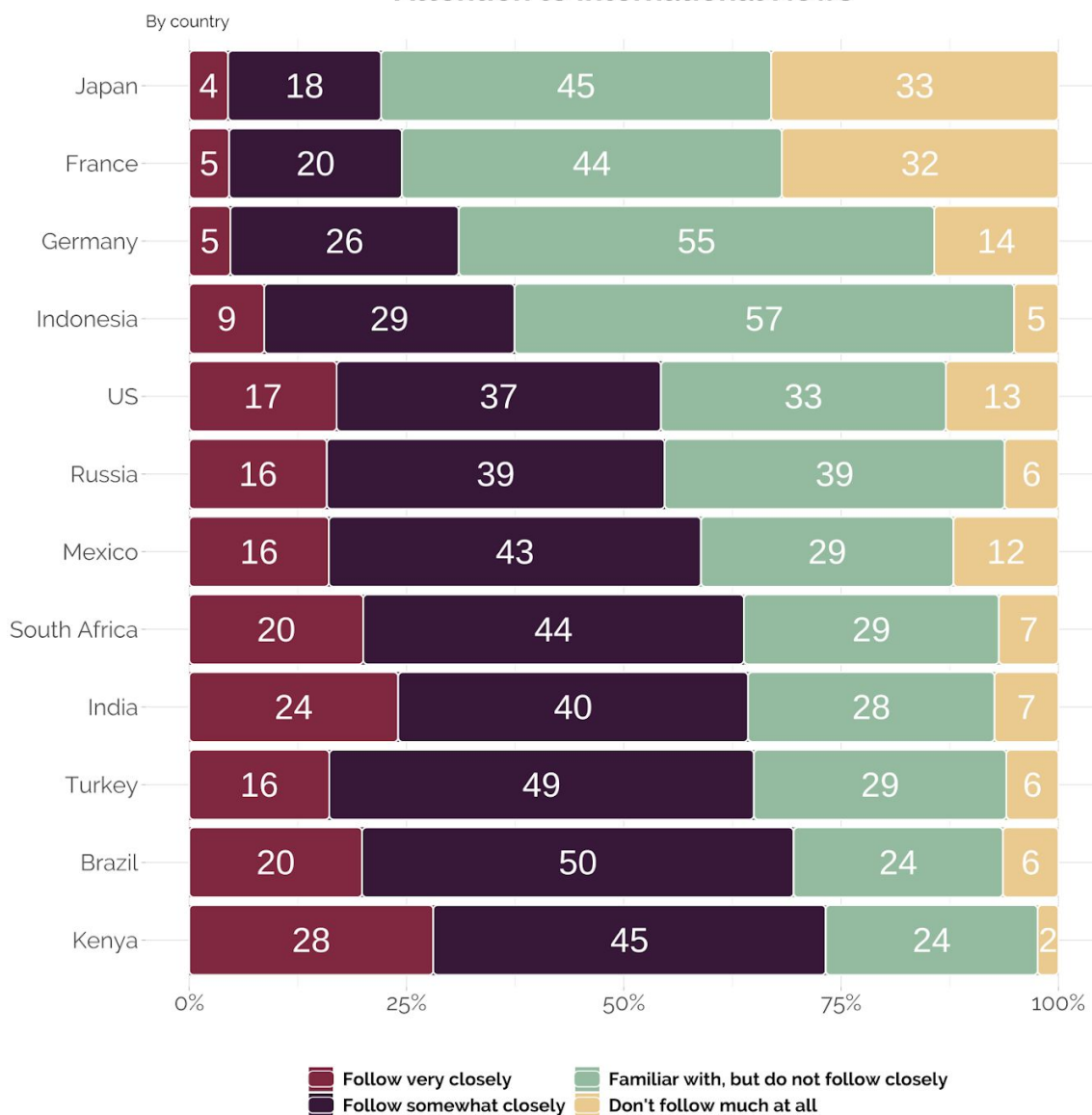
## Appendix A: Sampling and Weighting Methodology

This report is based on 12,403 interviews conducted by YouGov on the internet among respondents in the United States, Brazil, Mexico, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Russia, South Africa, and Turkey.

- The United States sample (n = 1,037) is representative of US registered voters and was weighted according to gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, US census region, and 2016 Presidential vote choice.
- The French sample (n = 1,005) is representative of French voters and was weighted according to gender, age, urban/rural status, education, region, and 2017 Presidential vote.
- The German sample (n = 1,003) is representative of German voters and was weighted according to gender, age, education, state, party identification, and political interest.
- Responses in Brazil (n = 999) are nationally representative and weighted according to age, gender, education, and region
- The sample from Indonesia (n = 1,076) is representative of online respondents in that country and was weighted based on demographic variables like age, gender, region, marital status, and socioeconomic status.
- The sample from India (n = 1,067) is representative of online respondents in that country and was weighted based on demographic variables like age, gender, religion, and region.
- The sample from Japan (n = 1,045), Kenya (n = 930), Mexico (n = 1,023), Russia (n = 1,157), Turkey (n = 1,015), and South Africa (n = 1,046) is representative of online respondents in each of those countries and was weighted based on demographic variables like age, gender, and region.

In constructing this sample, YouGov selected respondents who were representative of the various populations available to them within each country. The following charts that one of the key measures used in this analysis, attention to news about issues surrounding multilateralism, varies significantly across countries. We include this observation as a means of caution when interpreting cross-national results.

## Attention to International News



*Some people closely follow news about international affairs, while others do not. How much would you say you follow international news?*