

Not much of a free world But at least optimistic

Political Freedom

Globally 42% believe that political freedoms are sufficient and 50% that they are insufficient. There is a 8-points spread between positive and negative views.

Sufficient **42%**

Insufficient **50%**

45% of the people around the world believe that their political freedoms will increase in the coming quarter of a century. 19% believe it will decrease and 27% believe that they will stay the same.

Increase **45%**

Decrease **27%**

Economic Opportunities

29% globally believe that opportunities are sufficient. 64% believe that they are insufficient.

Sufficient **29%**

Insufficient **64%**

48% believe that economic opportunities will increase in 25 years. 23% believe they will decrease and 21% think they will stay the same. 7% could not answer.

Increase **48%**

Decrease **23%**



Not much of a free world. But at least optimistic

Every second citizen of the world we live in finds that political freedoms today in the country they live in are actually insufficient, and at least two out of five believe that they are sufficient. Discontent is even higher when it comes to the economic conditions – nearly two thirds believe that today's economic opportunities in their country are insufficient. Less than one third believe that they are sufficient.

Expectations for the future seem more positive. 45% expect that in 25 years political freedoms in their countries will increase (increase greatly or at least increase somewhat). 19% expect that they will decrease (decrease somewhat or even decrease greatly). 27% expect that political freedoms will remain the same. Economic expectations are even better – half of the world's population is expecting that economic opportunities in their country will increase within 25 years and 23% are pessimists. About a fifth of the people surveyed expect opportunities in economy will remain the same in quarter of a century.

Personal and national income, age and education are key factors that affect attitudes in a complex manner. Gender, political stability, religious preferences and local traditions apparently play a significant role. Of course, the question of freedom is quite delicate and sometimes sufficient freedom is to be mostly declared where it is absent the most. And mass consciousness usually reacts rather automatically to all types of questions related to the authorities, expressing attitudes to them and not to the topic of the question.

This is the picture from the 75 years jubilee poll conducted by Gallup International Association (GIA) covering about two thirds of the global population (and more than 90% of those countries which are free to conduct and publish opinion research).

When asked “How would you evaluate political freedoms in your country today”, globally 42% believe that political freedoms are sufficient and 50% that they are insufficient. There is a 8-points spread between positive and negative views.

The most positive assessments are in Europe – Sweden (74% “sufficient”, 17% “insufficient” or +57 points), Portugal (74% “sufficient”, 23% “insufficient”) and Switzerland (69% “sufficient”, 23% “insufficient” or +46 points). The United Arab Emirates are a kind of an exception (75% “sufficient”, 22% “insufficient” or +53 points).

Countries with limited political freedoms according to their citizens seem to be Nigeria (13% “sufficient” but 86% “insufficient” forming a negative spread of -73 points), Peru and Libya (equal spreads though different shares: -69 points), Ecuador (-62 points), Bosnia and Herzegovina (-59 points) and Sierra Leone (-50 points).

Positive attitudes dominate in regions like South Asia (+18 points), the EU (+14 points) and North America (49% “sufficient”, 39% “insufficient” or +10 points), while negative attitudes prevail in Latin America (27% “sufficient”, 67% “insufficient” or -40 points), Sub-Saharan Africa (-39 points) and Afghanistan (29% “sufficient”, 67% “insufficient”).

Women (39% “sufficient”, 51% “insufficient”), lower age, lower income and lower education groups, as well as poorer countries, are more likely to believe that their political freedoms are insufficient – as it might be expected. On the contrary – higher age, education and income groups are rather satisfied.

When asked about economic opportunities in their country today, 29% globally believe that opportunities are sufficient. 64% believe that they are insufficient.

The most negative evaluations are registered in Bosnia and Herzegovina (6% “sufficient”, 92% “insufficient” forming a negative spread of -86 points), Argentina (-84 points), Peru (7% “sufficient”, 90% “insufficient”), Nigeria (-82 points), North Macedonia (-80 points) and Georgia (9% “sufficient”, 88% “insufficient”).

Comparison between regions reveals that only in North America people have slightly positive attitude (46% “sufficient”, 44% “insufficient” or +2 points). Sub-Saharan Africa (-62 points) and Latin America (-61 points) are the most pessimistic. They are followed by West Asia (-58 points), MENA (25% “sufficient”, 72% “insufficient”), non-EU countries (-46 points), East Asia and Oceania (-25 points), EU (-21 points) and South Asia (-5 points).

Women (26% “sufficient”, 66% “insufficient”) again seem more vulnerable than men (33% “sufficient”, 62% “insufficient”). Low-income economies and people are expectedly more negative.

Expectations for the future seem more optimistic than assessments of the present in terms of freedom. 45% of the people around the world believe that their political freedoms will increase in the coming quarter of a century. 19% believe that their political rights will decrease and 27% believe that they will stay the same.

The most optimistic countries in that respect are Vietnam (86% “increase”, 3% “decrease”), Nigeria (80% “increase”, 12 “decrease”), Sierra Leone and Indonesia (77% “increase”, 12% “decrease”; 74% “increase”; 9% “decrease” – equal spreads though different shares), Kosovo (68% “increase”, 4% “decrease”) and Ivory Coast (+62 points).

Some of the regions that today show the most negative attitudes, are actually among the ones with more hopes for tomorrow. Developing regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia (68% “increase”, 16% “decrease”; 62% “increase”, 10% “decrease” or +52 points – equal spreads though different shares) and East Asia and Oceania (56% “increase”, 13% “decrease”) are the most optimistic about their political freedoms in 25 years. They are followed by MENA (+27 points) and Latin America (+24 points). The developed regions such as North America (37% “increase, 29% “decrease”) and the EU (+8 points) are the most skeptical.

“The younger, the more optimistic”, the pattern seems to be. Which usually means “not enough money, still educating and rather having hope”. And younger people are not so many in richest countries – usually Christian or atheist – so, such countries are not among the most optimistic. Having more to lose is apparently a problem sometimes for some countries. But indicators like this show as well that when it comes to personal income, the richest people are still the ones with the bright prospects expected. Unlike richest countries.

People around the globe are rather optimistic about economic opportunities after 25 years.

48% believe that economic opportunities will increase in 25 years. 23% believe they will decrease and 21% think they will stay the same. 7% could not answer.

The most optimistic countries are outside North America and the EU. Vietnam (97% “increase”, 2% “decrease” or +95 points), Ivory Coast (81% “increase”, 3% “decrease”), Kosovo and Nigeria (both: +73 points) and Indonesia (77% “increase”; 10% “decrease”).

The most optimistic regions are Sub-Saharan Africa (72% “increase”, 13% “decrease” or +59 points), South Asia (+50 points), East Asia and Oceania (+39 points), Latin America (+37 points). They are followed by non-EU countries (+33 points). The most skeptical are in the EU (+8 points), West Asia (46% “increase”, 29% “decrease”) and North America (+16 points).

The youngest and the richest people – not surprisingly – are the most optimistic. The richest – that usually means oldest nations are the most pessimistic.

The index, which combines both positive and both negative responses about freedom and economic opportunities for present and the future, shows that countries with a higher standard of living are – as expected – more optimistic about their economic and political prospects nowadays than those with a lower standard of living (not without exceptions, of course). Rounding out the top five are Sweden (share of answers “sufficient” for political freedoms today + share of answers “sufficient” for economic opportunities today = 135), Switzerland (132), UAE (129), India (114) and Germany (113). Poorer countries are also the most pessimistic today - Nigeria (177), Libya and Peru (172), Bosnia and Herzegovina (169), Ecuador (161) and North Macedonia (158).

Countries that are more pessimistic today are optimistic about the future, with some exceptions. Vietnam (183), Nigeria (162), Cote d'Ivoire (153), Sierra Leone (153) and Indonesia (151) lead the ranking in anticipation of better economic and political opportunities. EU countries have the lowest expectations. North Macedonia (82), Greece (75), Ecuador (74), the Czech Republic (68) and Iraq (68) are leading countries in pessimism about the future.

Kancho Stoychev, president of GIA:

“Political freedoms are deteriorating and economic opportunities are not sufficient – this is the general feeling in the world these days, despite the variations between countries and regions. Compared to previous studies we registered an increased anxiety. A global response is already not possible. So, we are going to follow many regional responses and more attempts to solve the problems country by country, because the expectations for a better global future are substituted by expectations of a better local life”.



Sample Size and Mode of Field Work:

A total of 58 045 persons were interviewed globally. In each country a representative sample of around 1000 men and women was interviewed during August-October 2022 either face to face, via telephone or online.

The margin of error for the survey is between +3-5% at 95% confidence level.

About Gallup International

Gallup International Association (GIA) is the leading global independent association in market research and opinion polling.

For 75 years Gallup International members have demonstrated their expert ability to conduct multi-country surveys on a comparable basis and deliver the highest quality. Our more than 100 members and partners are leading national institutes with a profound local knowledge of research methods and techniques, statistical sources, customs and culture differences of its own country and carefully selected by the Association Board. With only one member agency per country, members work together on a daily basis to share knowledge, new research techniques and tools, as well as to provide the most appropriate solutions to international research projects and service our clients to the best of our abilities.

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