

On behalf of FES, YouGov fielded surveys in the nations of Argentina, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Poland, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States, including about 1,000 respondents in each country (with the exception of Tunisia, where the sample is approximately 500). This survey, fielded in August 2021, is the second wave of a survey project focused on global cooperation, the first wave of which fielded in December 2020. The following memo summarizes the results of the latest round of polling focused on the COVID-19 pandemic and the global response to it.

## Executive summary

- Belief in global cooperation remained strong throughout the pandemic.
  - Twelve of the nineteen countries in our sample evaluate their own country's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic positively.
  - On net, seventeen of the nineteen countries in our sample believe their respective emergency COVID-19 measures *will* be lifted in the near future, and fifteen of nineteen countries agree they *should* be lifted.
  - In some countries whose second and third COVID-19 peaks arrived later in the year, like India, respondents are split but narrowly optimistic on whether their country will soon lift emergency measures.
  - Countries in the Global North are pessimistic about the effect COVID-19 has had on the global order, believing that emergency responses and vaccine hoarding did more to push the world apart than global cooperation on vaccine distribution did to bring it together -- but countries in the Global South feel the opposite.
  - Views of US leadership on the issue of COVID-19 has improved over the last year, but is still seen as a weak spot for US leadership.
- Organizations like the United Nations continue to enjoy strong favorable ratings over the course of the past year, and did not change to a statistically significant degree over the course of the most recent survey wave.

## Global Views on the COVID-19 Pandemic

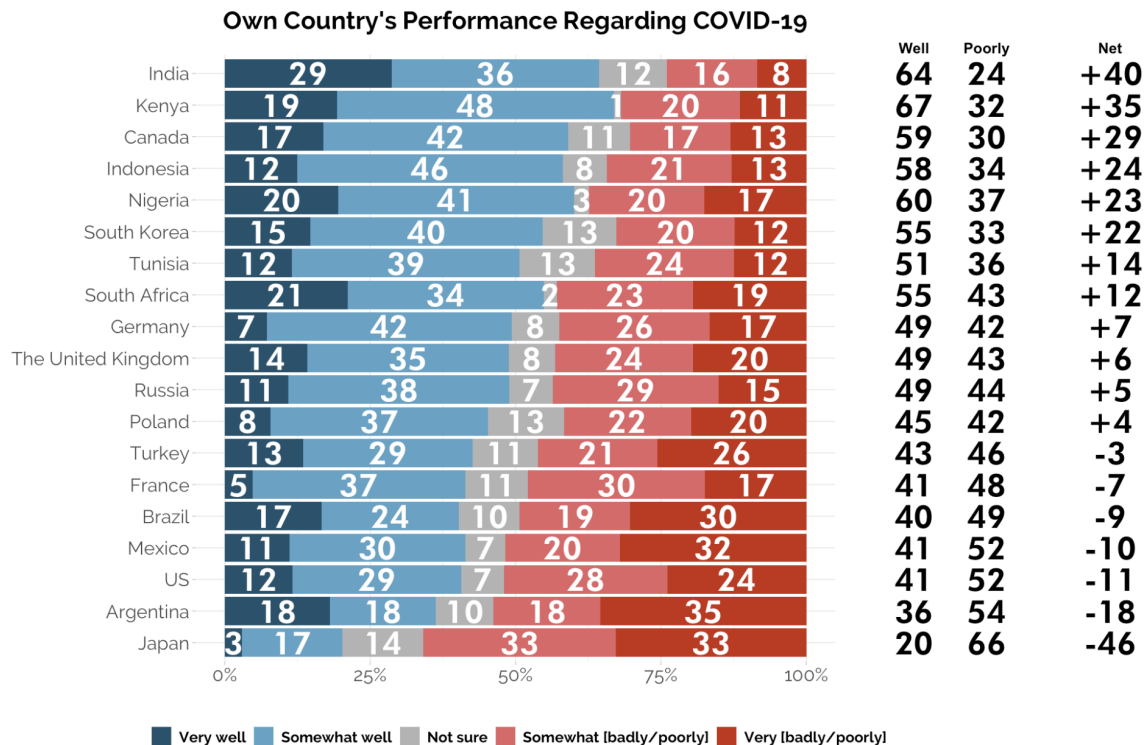
As the world continues to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, now in its second year, public opinion on the world's response to the pandemic is mixed. While not universal, respondents broadly view their own country's response positively, and many believe the world grew closer during the pandemic. Furthermore, respondents seem to broadly approve of the responses of global organizations to the crisis. However, there is clearly still much dissatisfaction with the handling of the pandemic in many quarters.

### *People mostly give their own country high marks on COVID-19 performance*

In addition to asking respondents for their views about the United States and to various global institutions like the United Nations, we asked for their views on how their own country had responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. We did this in a few ways: we asked respondents to evaluate their country's general response to the pandemic and also asked them about the emergency measures their country had put in place.

When it came to evaluating their own country's performance regarding the pandemic, respondents from India were overwhelmingly positive, saying by a +40 percentage point margin that their country had handled the pandemic very or somewhat well. A second tier of countries including Kenya, Canada, Indonesia, Nigeria, and South Korea also gave their countries overwhelmingly positive reviews when it came to the pandemic, by margins ranging from +22 percentage points to +35 percentage points.

Much of the rest of the sample was more evenly split, with about half the countries giving their country somewhere between a +10 and -10 percentage point net approval or disapproval when it came to handling COVID-19. The narrowly positive countries included Germany, the UK, Russia, and Poland. The narrowly pessimistic countries included Turkey, France, Brazil, Mexico, and the United States. Argentina and Japan were the most pessimistic countries in the sample, with respondents from Japan giving their country an overwhelmingly negative -40 percentage point review when it came to its handling of COVID-19. In Japan, politically moderate respondents drove down evaluations of their country's response to COVID-19 with, for example, those who put themselves at a "5 out of 10" ideologically giving Japan just a 13 percent favorability rating on its COVID-19 response.



*People in most countries expect emergency measures to end with the pandemic*

We asked respondents two questions about the restrictions put in place during the pandemic: should these restrictions be lifted when the pandemic ends, and do you think they will be. Of course, restrictions were discussed broadly and could be interpreted to mean rules such as restrictions on travel, mask mandates, and vaccine mandates.

In general, the countries in our sample expressed cautious optimism, with majorities in most cases expressing belief that their country would eventually lift its emergency policies once the pandemic came to an end. Similarly, respondents felt that lifting them soon would be appropriate, with similar margins of respondents reporting those emergency measures SHOULD be lifted, in addition to the belief they inevitably WOULD be lifted.

Most every country in the sample reported they believed their country would lift their emergency measures once the pandemic was over. While the countries of India, Mexico, France, and Germany were roughly statistically split on whether their measures “would” or “would not” stay in place once the pandemic was over, every other country in the sample by a statistically clear margin said they believed those measures would be lifted.

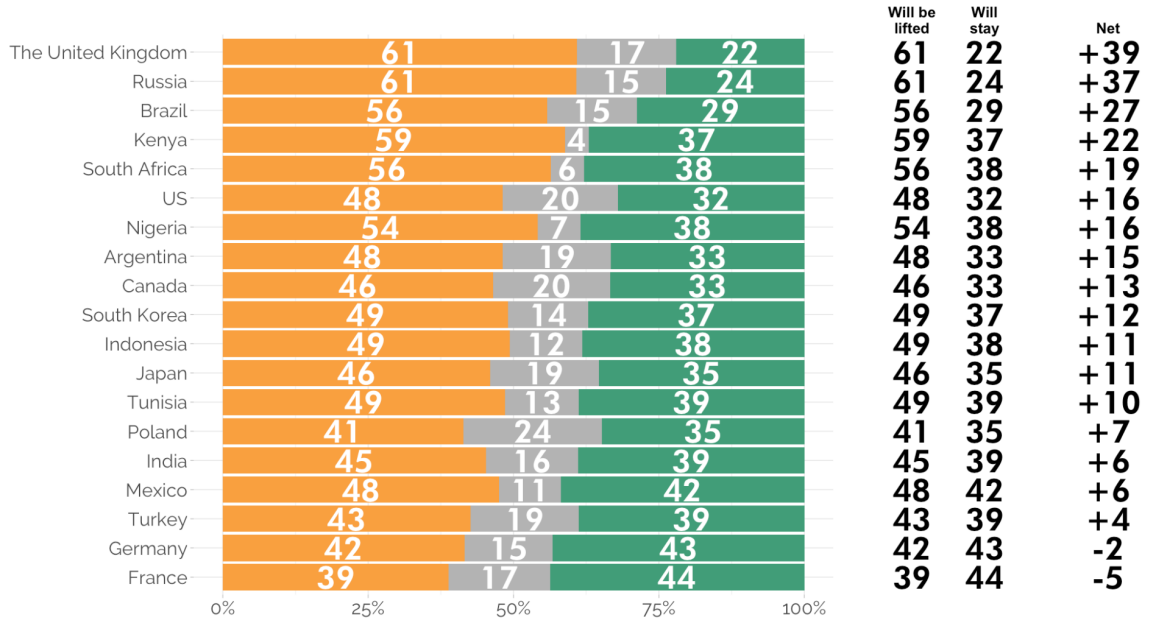
In countries where respondents were more split on whether or not COVID-19 measures would be lifted, political ideology was the stronger predictor of how respondents felt. For example, in Germany, only about 40 percent of those who identify as fully to the left politically believed Germany's emergency measures would stay in place, up to about 60 percent among those who identify as politically to the right. In some countries like Brazil, where there was general consensus that emergency measures would be lifted, respondents politically on the right were statistically split on this question.

Respondents' beliefs about whether their country *should* lift COVID-19 restrictions generally correlated highly with their beliefs that their country *would* lift those measures. However, in the majority of the countries in our sample, more respondents actually believed their country *should* lift restrictions than believed *would* lift restrictions. In other words, in most of the countries in the sample, at least some respondents believed their government would keep COVID-19 restrictions in place even though they wanted the government to lift them.

The share of respondents who felt this way ranged from about 4 percent of respondents in Russia to about 28 percent of respondents in France. Politically rightwing respondents tend to express more "pessimism" on this issue, i.e., respondents who identify as politically to the right are also more likely to believe their country *should* but *won't* lift its COVID-19 measures.

Notably, a small number of countries in our sample—Mexico, Argentina, and Nigeria—reported pessimism in the *opposite* direction, i.e., that a significant share of respondents felt that the government *would lift* its COVID-19 restrictions but that it *should not*. This divide is particularly acute among respondents in the Mexico sample, 48 percent of whom thought their government *would lift* its COVID-19 restrictions but only 15 percent of respondents thought that it *should*. The belief that the government's emergency response to COVID-19 *should* stay in place is ubiquitous across respondents in the Mexico sample, and pessimism is nearly the same across its political spectrum.

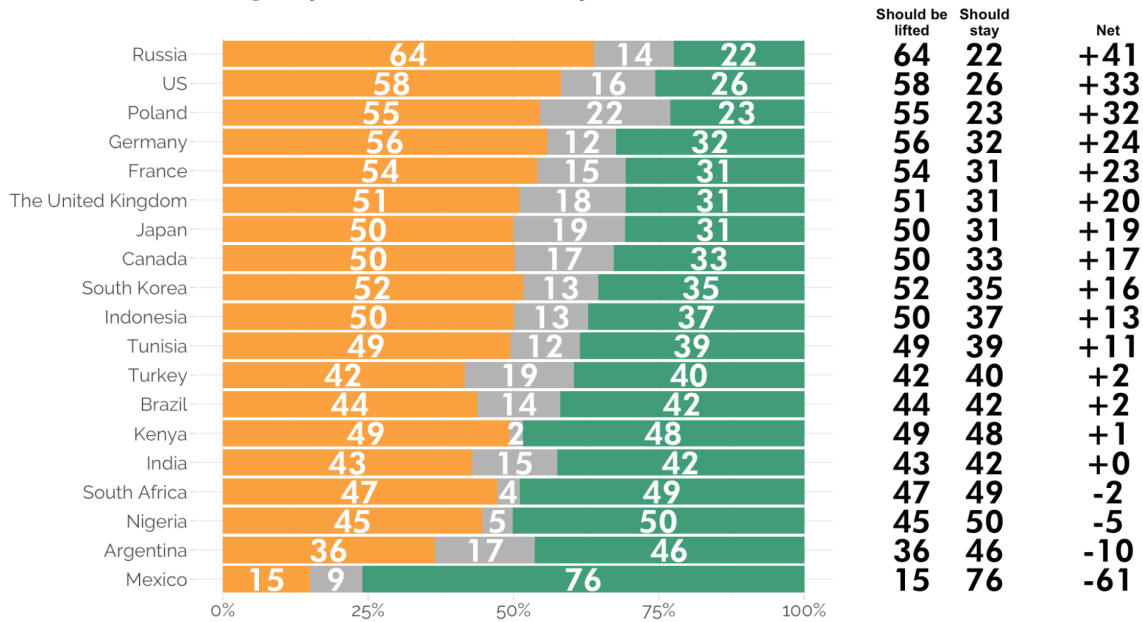
**Emergency Measures Likely To Stay In Place Or Be Lifted**



■ Even after the pandemic is over, most of my country's emergency measures are likely to stay in place  
■ Not sure  
■ Once the pandemic is over, my country is likely to lift most of its emergency measures

*And generally speaking, which of the following is closer to your view?*

**Emergency Measures Should Stay In Place Or Be Lifted**



■ Even after the pandemic is over, my country should keep most of its emergency measures in place to protect the public  
■ Not sure  
■ Even after the pandemic is over, my country should lift most of its emergency measures in place to let things get back to normal

*And generally speaking, which of the following is closer to your view?*

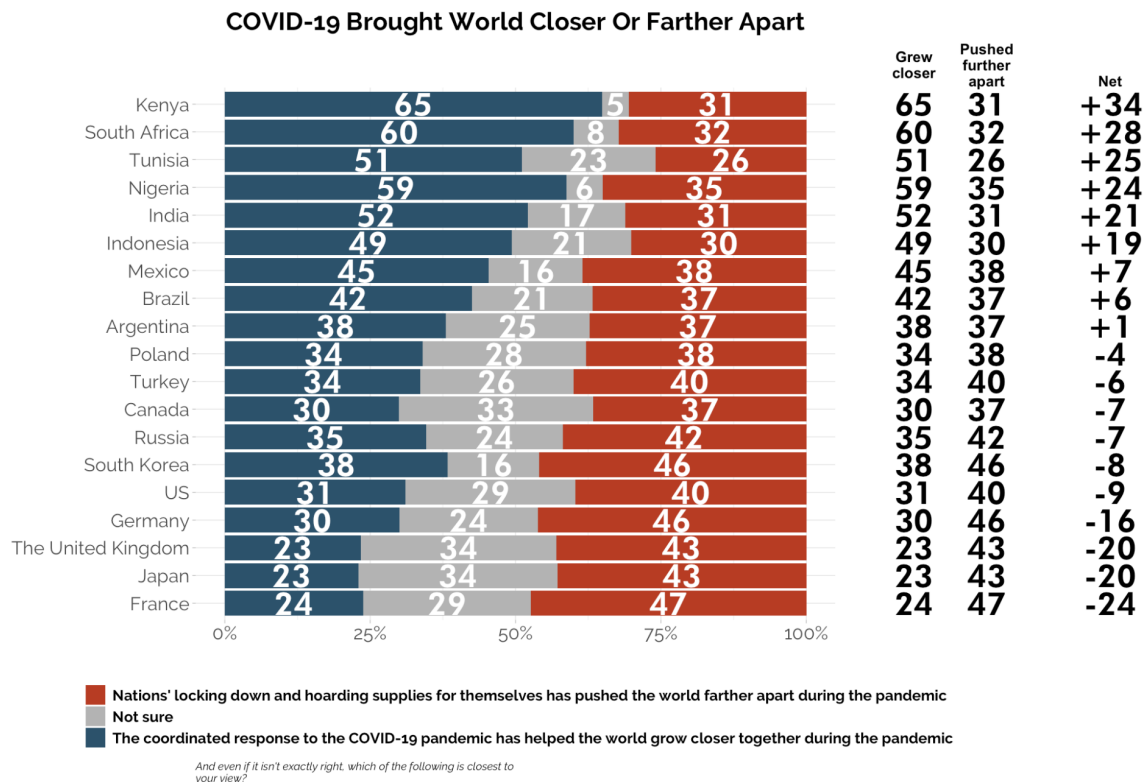
*Ambivalence around if pandemic has brought the world closer together or further apart*

Though respondents in much of the sample believed their government both *would* and *should* lift pandemic restrictions, they were broadly ambivalent about the effects the global pandemic has had on the global order. In just over half the sample, respondents on net believed the pandemic had pushed the world further apart, with the other countries saying that the coordinated response to the pandemic had actually helped bring the world closer. These results are displayed in the next graph.

France, Japan, the United Kingdom, Germany, and the US overall were the most pessimistic nations on this question. However, this result correlates only weakly on how poorly respondents think their own country performed on the question of COVID-19. In each of these countries, the political left tended to be closer to split on this question, and the political right more clearly viewed that the pandemic had pushed the world further apart. This effect was weaker in countries that had a more optimistic view of the pandemic’s consequences for global cooperation. We do not, however, see major differences in how this question is viewed across age cohorts in the sample. In most of the countries in the sample, younger respondents and

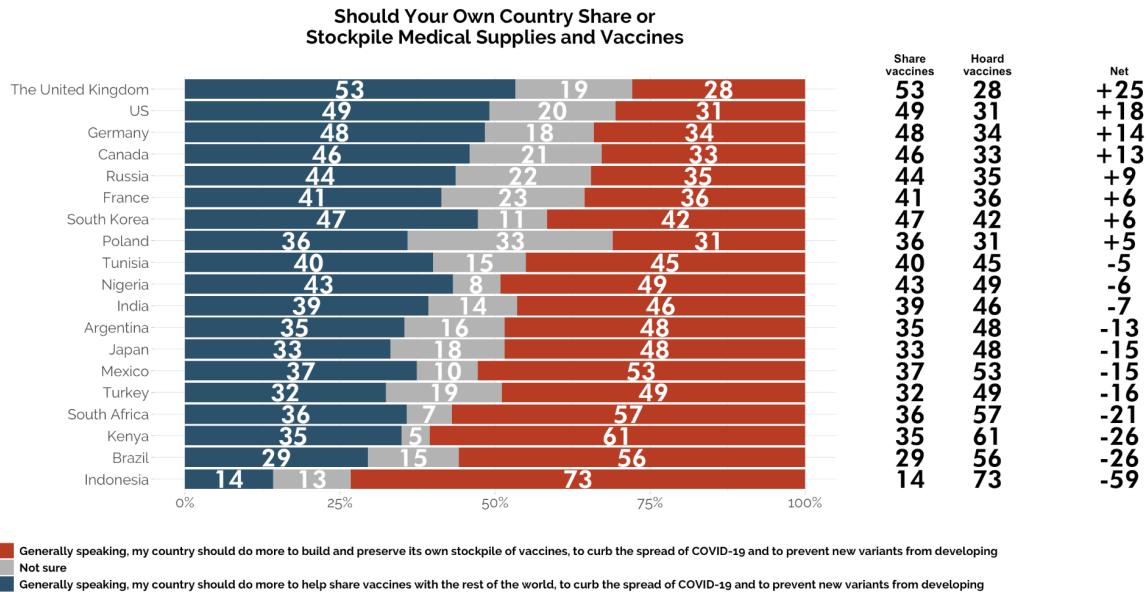
older respondents feel similarly about this item, and we also do not observe consistent results when broken out by other factors like political ideology.

Rather, while countries in the “Global North” tended to express more pessimism about COVID-19’s impact on international relations, countries in the Global South are more optimistic. Our results also suggest that the countries more optimistic about how the recovery effort brought the world closer together also view global institutions more favorably overall, as we demonstrate below. Countries that are generally more optimistic about the ability of international organizations to help tackle the world’s problems are also more optimistic about how countries can cooperate in times of crisis.



Yet respondents also said they believed their country acted sensibly by prioritizing their own self-interests in the vaccination process. If forced to choose between whether they believed their country should stockpile vaccines and medical supplies or if their country should share those vaccines with the world, respondents overwhelmingly reported they believed their country should focus on stockpiling for itself. The following chart shows the results for an item where we asked respondents if they believed their country should focus on sharing their vaccine supplies with the rest of the world, or on building up their own stockpiles. There, respondents in about

half of the countries in the sample said they should focus on building up their own stockpiles, with another one-third or so of the sample being split on this question, and a smaller share saying to focus on sharing their supplies. While a few wealthier countries in the sample prioritized sharing their supplies, most countries we surveyed were split or were on net against the idea of doing so.

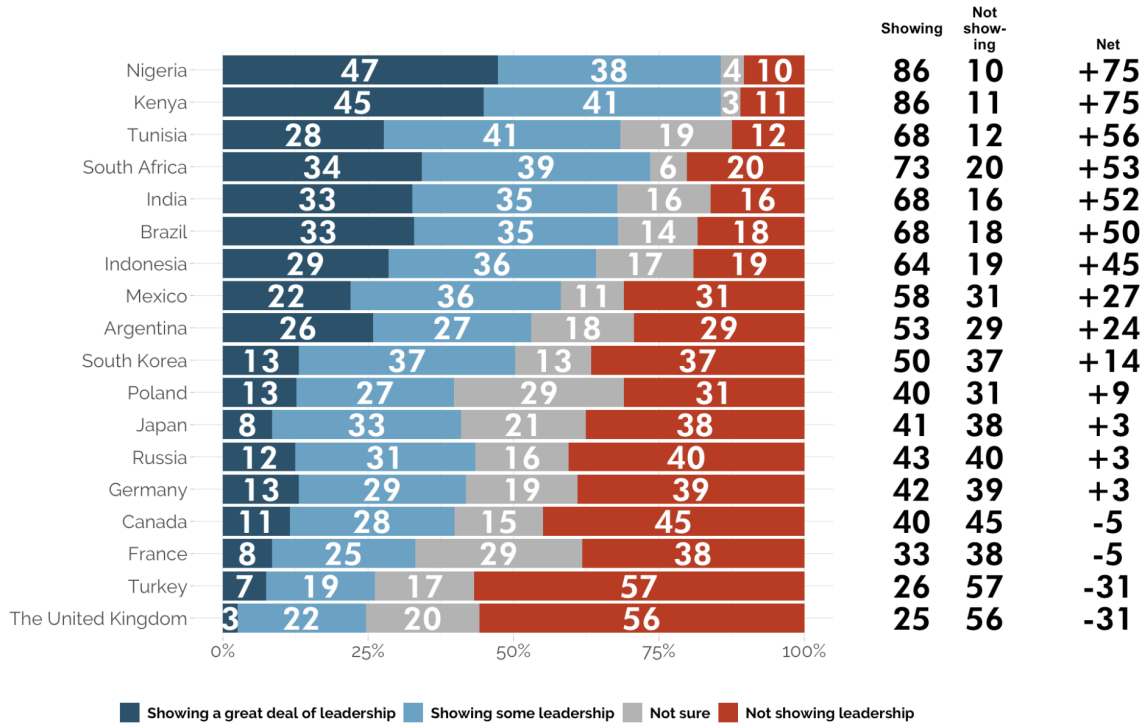


*Views of US leadership on COVID-19 are varied yet improving under Joe Biden*

US favorability is widely varied on the subject of dealing with COVID-19, with significantly lower ratings from allied states such as Canada and several European countries. The following chart breaks out attitudes toward US leadership on dealing with COVID-19 by country. While countries in the Global South view US leadership on COVID-19 overwhelmingly favorably, allied states such as Japan, Germany, Canada, France, and the UK, are split or overall negative on the question of dealing with COVID-19.



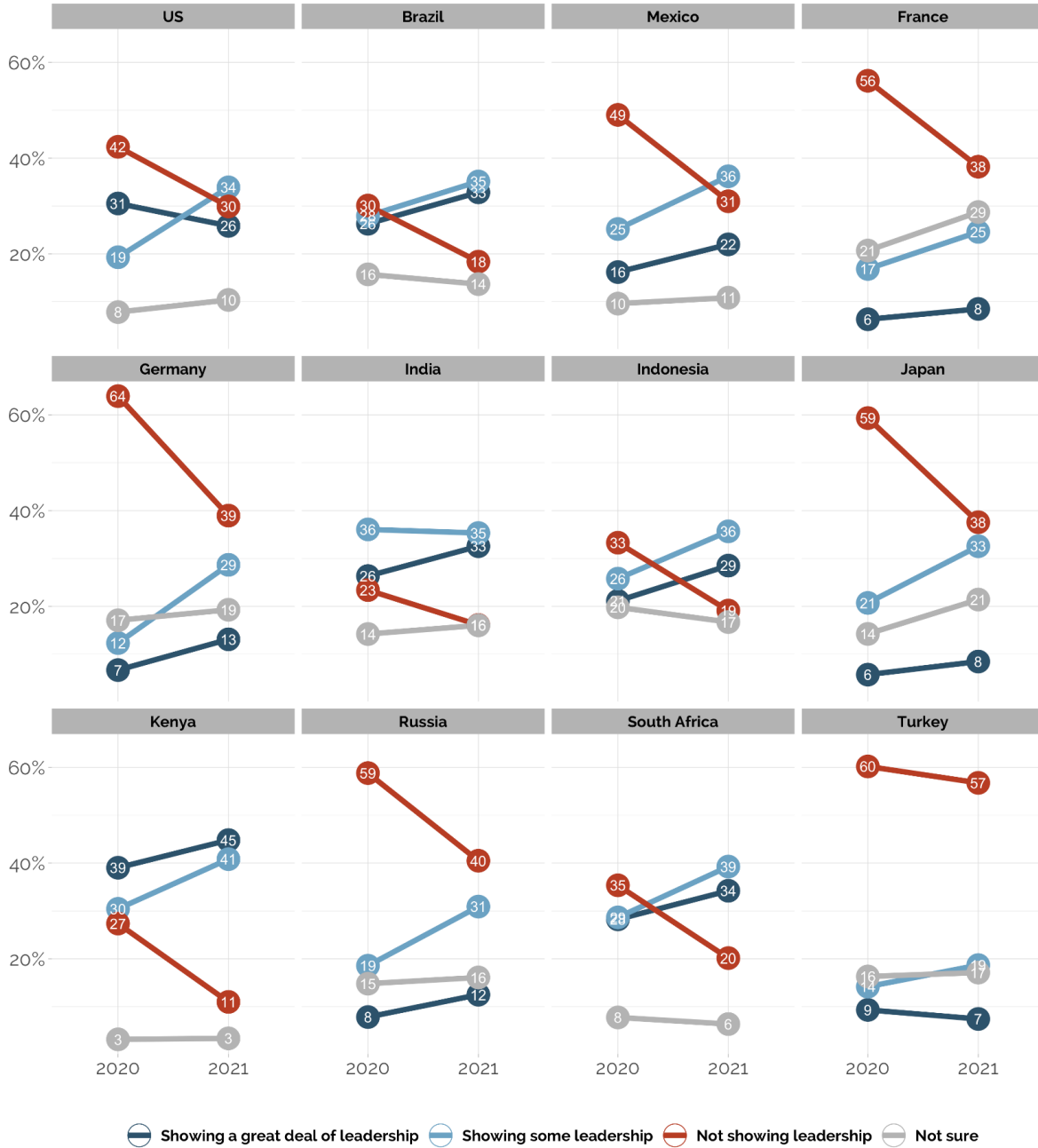
**Global View of US Leadership on COVID**



While US leadership on the COVID-19 pandemic remains one of its weakest areas among several crucial allied states, attitudes toward US leadership in this area have improved strongly since the first wave of the survey. The share of respondents in every country that we included in both wave one and wave two of the survey who said the US was “not showing leadership” on the subject of COVID-19 declined. Likewise, the share of respondents who said the US is showing “some leadership” on the topic of COVID-19 has increased across the board, in some cases by double-digits (Germany: +17 change, US: +15 change, Japan and Russia: +12). That said, in France, Germany, Japan, Russia, and Turkey, the prevailing view remains that the US is not showing leadership on the subject of COVID-19.

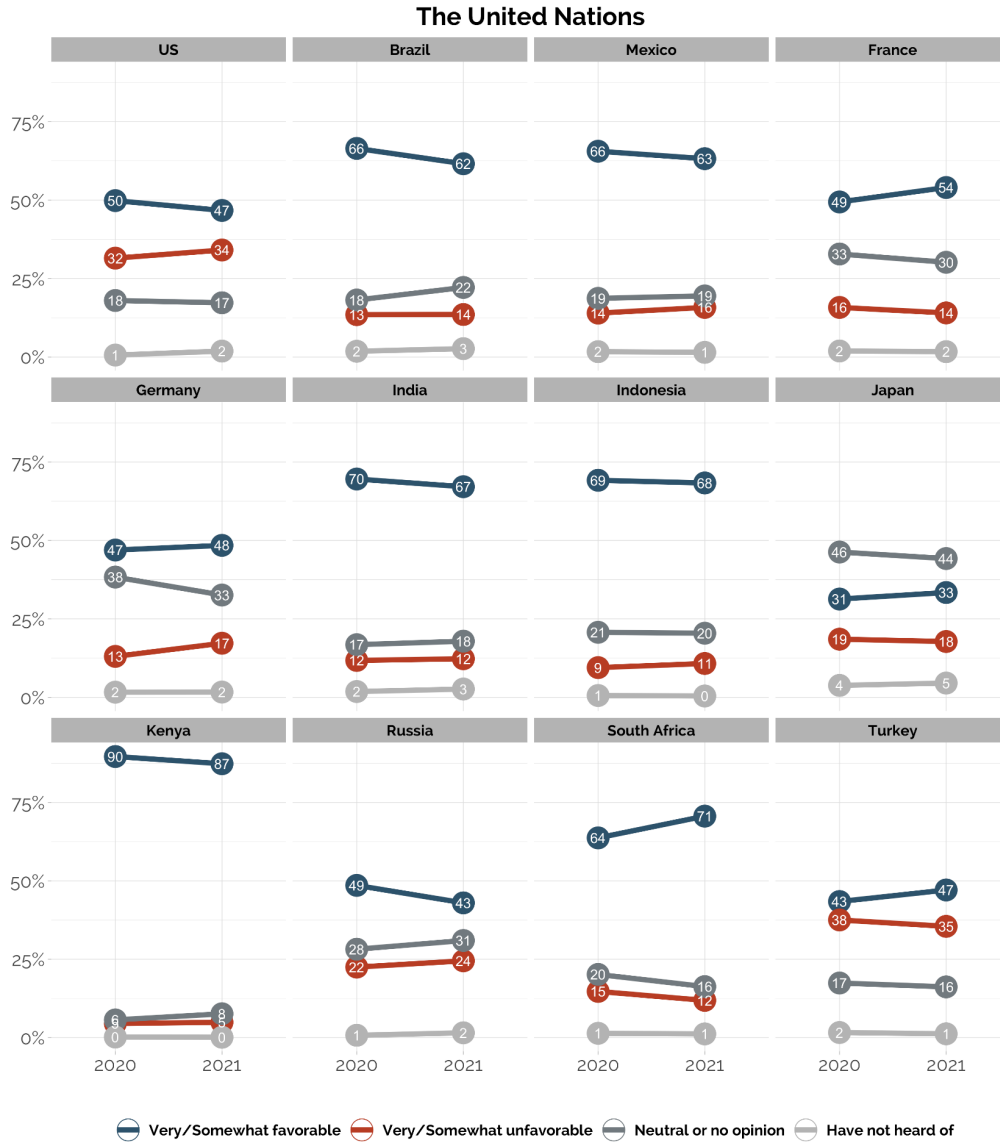
Additionally, the results suggest that the share of respondents who say the US is showing “a great deal of leadership” remains low. In other words, overall belief in US leadership remains tepid, if gradually improving. The following chart shows changes in belief in the United States’s leadership on the subject of COVID-19 over the 2020-2021 waves of the survey.

**US Leadership On Combatting COVID-19**



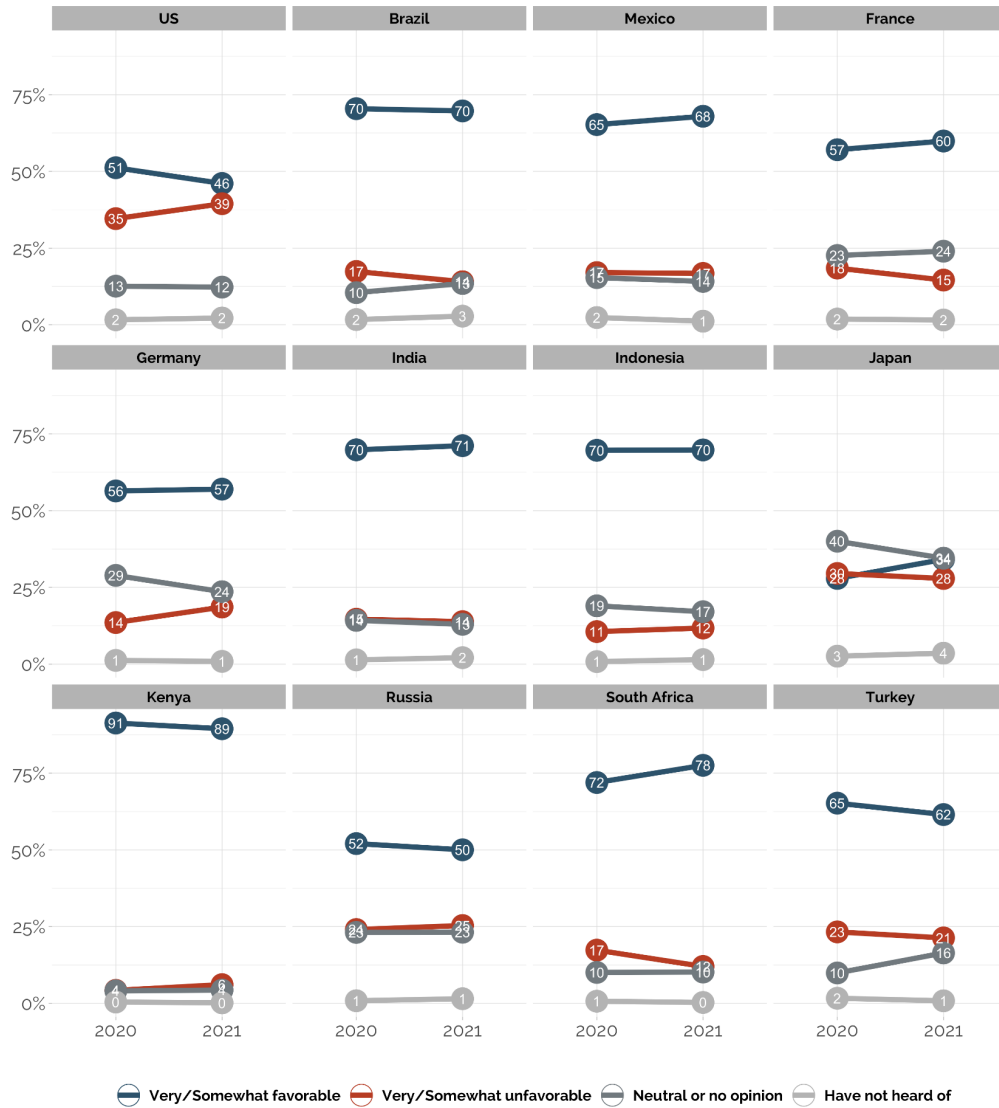
Notably, the United Nations’s reputation overall is stable from the first wave of our survey. The following chart shows favorability ratings for the United Nations from the survey’s first wave to the second wave. In only one country, Brazil, has the share of respondents rating the United

Nations “very favorably” decreased noticeably (from 41 percent to 34 percent). Across the countries included in both samples, the UN’s favorability ratings are stable.



The following chart breaks out the same set of results for the World Health Organization. Although the organization has been seen as pivotal in various countries’ response to the COVID-19 pandemic (for better or for worse), attitudes toward the organization do not seem to have changed much over the past year.

**The World Health Organization (WHO)**



Among the membership organizations which include most or all of the nations in our sample, the World Health Organization remains the most popular, with 62 percent of respondents rating it very or somewhat favorably. The United Nations is close behind, with 58 percent favorability.

## Conclusion

Respondents across the sample generally reported favorable views of how their own country handled the pandemic, and expressed optimism that various rules and restrictions related to the pandemic will be lifted. Perceptions of US leadership on the pandemic are mixed at best, but have shown improvement over the past year.

After over a year of crisis, this study shows that trust in international institutions has remained surprisingly robust. As the UN prepares for its second annual meeting of the General Assembly during this pandemic, this survey shows that people across a range of countries trust the UN are skeptical of opting out of international institutions, and are eager to cooperate across countries.

## Appendix A: Sampling and Weighting Methodology

This report is based on 19,176 interviews conducted by YouGov on the internet among respondents in various countries. In constructing this sample, YouGov selected respondents who were representative of the various populations available to them within each of the following countries:

- The Argentina sample (n = 1,064) is nationally representative and weighted according to age, gender, and region. The project was fielded in localized Spanish.
- Responses in Brazil (n = 1,014) are nationally representative and weighted according to age, gender, education, and region. It was fielded in localized Portuguese.
- The Canada sample (n = 1,012) is representative of Canadian voters and was weighted according to age, gender, education, region, and 2019 vote choice. The project was fielded in French Canadian and Canadian English.
- The French sample (n = 1,042) is representative of French voters and was weighted according to gender, age, urban/rural status, education, region, and 2017 Presidential vote. The project was fielded in French.
- The German sample (n = 1,009) is representative of German voters and was weighted according to gender, age, education, state, party identification, and political interest. The project was fielded in German.
- The sample from Indonesia (n = 1,087) 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 project was fielded in Bahasa.
- The sample from India (n = 1,016) is representative of online respondents in that country and was weighted based on demographic variables like age, gender, religion, and region. The project was fielded in localized English.
- The sample from Japan (n = 1,073) is nationally representative and was weighted according to age, gender, and region. The project was fielded in Japanese.
- The Poland sample (n = 1,005) is representative of voters in that country and was weighted according to region, 2019 vote, age, gender, education, and political interest. It was fielded in Polish.
- The South Korea sample (n = 1,032) is nationally representative of that country and was weighted according to age, region, and gender. It was fielded in Korean.
- The sample from Tunisia (n = 507) is representative of online respondents and was weighted according to age and gender. It was fielded in Arabic.
- The sample from the United Kingdom (n = 1,082) is representative of voters in that country and was weighted according to age, gender, education, past vote, political attention, and respondents' social grade. It was fielded in localized English.
- 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 both 2016 and 2020 Presidential vote choice. The project was fielded in English.
- The sample from Kenya (n = 1,002, fielded in localized English), Mexico (n = 1,009, fielded in localized Spanish), Russia (n = 1,026, fielded in Russian), Turkey (n = 1,007,

fielded in Turkish), Nigeria (n = 1,036, fielded in localized English), and South Africa (n = 1,050, fielded in localized English) is representative of online respondents in each of those countries and was weighted based on demographic variables like age, gender, and region.