

GALLUP®

Gallup Global Emotions

2020





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JON CLIFTON

Global Managing
Partner, Gallup

From Gallup's Global Managing Partner

Imagine all the G20 leaders in the same room. The president of the United States, the prime minister of India, the chancellor of Germany, the president of China, the king of Saudi Arabia, and the 15 other leaders of the largest economies in the world. They are all asked one question, "What metric or indicator do you follow most closely to know whether your country is on the right track?"

The answer might be easier to guess if it were posed to the CEOs of the world's largest companies, who — if they were being honest — would likely say, "the company's share price," or "our profit."

World leaders' answers might be tougher to guess. However, their answers would tell us what they are most fixated on — the one thing they are most obsessed with improving.

So, what would they say?

Would they say, "gross domestic product"? The stock market? Unemployment? The poverty rate? The GINI coefficient? Would the Saudi king say, "oil prices?"

Perhaps leaders would not mention an economic indicator at all. Instead, maybe they would talk about crime statistics, such as how many people have been arrested or lowering the number of crimes reported. Maybe the leaders of democracies would say, "my approval rating." Maybe the U.S. president would be even more brutally honest and say, "how I'm polling in swing states."

Regardless of what we think they would say, I know what they would *not* say: Not a single world leader would say, "how people's lives are going." At best, there might be a few who say, "I care most about how people's lives are going, but you can't measure that."

The *2020 Global Emotions Report* endeavors to fill this gap by providing a measure of how people are living their lives. This report attempts to quantify — at the country level — whether people are enjoying life and learning new and interesting things. It attempts to measure if people feel well-rested or if they feel extreme stress, sadness, worry or physical pain. In short, it strives to measure everything that makes life worth living.

The world is incredible at quantifying everything in our lives from when we are born, to everything we make and buy, to how and when we die. What the world is not incredible at is quantifying how we feel — even though how we feel affects all those other measures. This report is an attempt to correct that.

The measures and results are not the typical "transactional numbers" that most global leaders are used to, but they may inspire them to rethink the metrics they watch most closely — and the ones they lead with.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jon Clifton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

About This Report

Gallup's Positive and Negative Experience Indexes measure life's intangibles — feelings and emotions — that traditional economic indicators such as GDP were never intended to capture. Each index provides a real-time snapshot of people's daily experiences, offering leaders insights into the health of their societies that they cannot gather from economic measures alone.

The *2020 Global Emotions Report* presents the results from Gallup's latest measurements of people's positive and negative daily experiences based on more than 175,000 interviews with adults in more than 140 countries and areas in 2019.



POSITIVE EXPERIENCE INDEX QUESTIONS

- Did you feel **well-rested** yesterday?
- Were you **treated with respect all day** yesterday?
- Did you **smile or laugh a lot** yesterday?
- Did you **learn or do something interesting** yesterday?
- Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? How about **enjoyment**?

The Positive Experience Index score is the mean of all valid affirmative responses to these items multiplied by 100. Country-level index scores range from zero to 100. Higher scores indicate that positive emotions are more pervasive in a country. These scores strongly relate to people's perceptions about their living standards, personal freedoms and the presence of social networks.



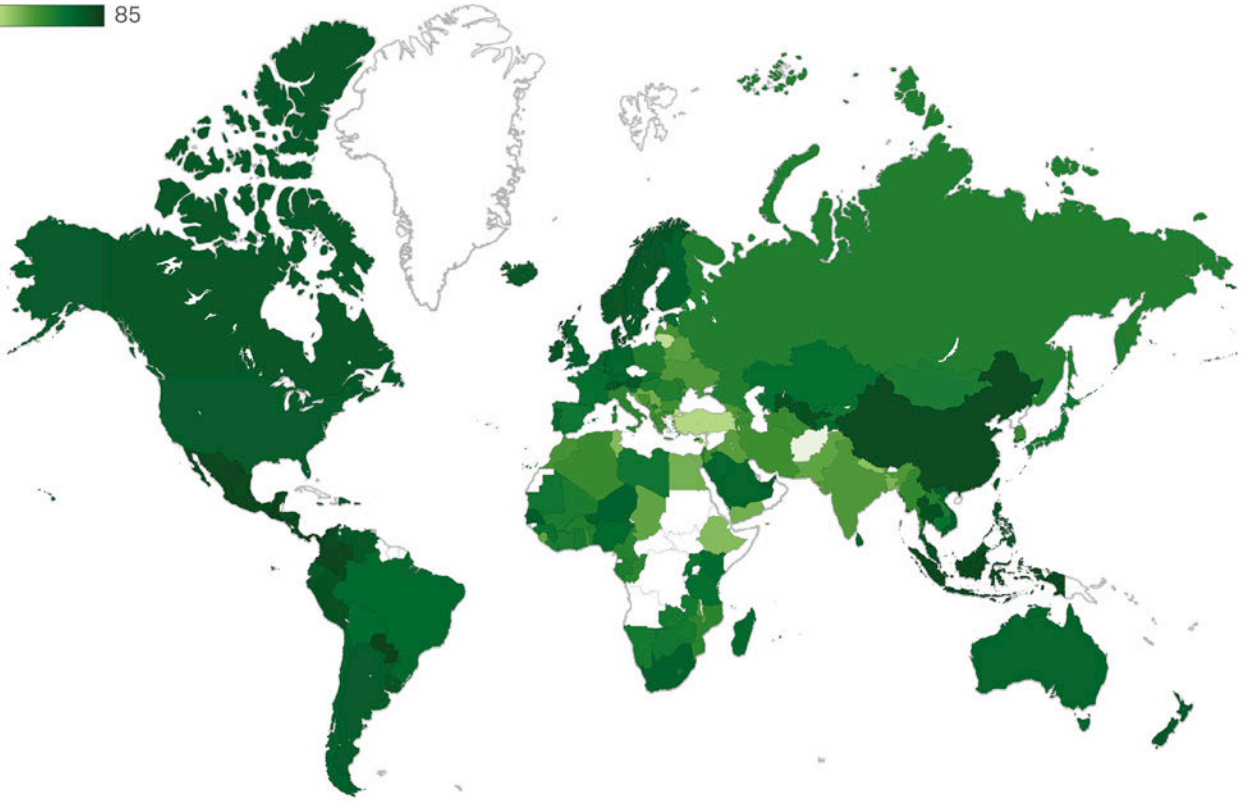
NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE INDEX QUESTIONS

- Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? How about **physical pain**?
- Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? How about **worry**?
- Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? How about **sadness**?
- Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? How about **stress**?
- Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? How about **anger**?

The Negative Experience Index score is the mean of all valid affirmative responses to the above items multiplied by 100. Country-level index scores range from zero to 100. The higher the score, the more pervasive negative emotions are in a country. People's experiences with health problems and their ability to afford food are predictive of higher negative scores.

Positive Experience Index in 2019

38  85



GALLUP WORLD POLL, 2019



Pre-COVID-19 Pandemic: Positive Experience Index Stable in 2019

Gallup asked adults in 145 countries and areas in 2019 if they had five positive experiences on the day before the survey. At least seven in 10 people worldwide said they felt well-rested (71%), experienced a lot of enjoyment (72%), smiled or laughed a lot (75%) and felt treated with respect (86%). People were far less likely, as is typical, to say they learned or did something interesting the day before the interview; in 2019, less than half of the world (49%) experienced this.

Gallup compiles the “yes” responses from these five questions into a Positive Experience Index score for each country and area. The global index score in 2019 — 71 — was stable.

The 2019 index was characterized by small changes in the percentages of people who felt well-rested (down one point), were treated with respect (down one point), smiled or laughed a lot (up one point) and experienced a lot of enjoyment (up one point) the previous day. The percentage who learned something interesting did not change.

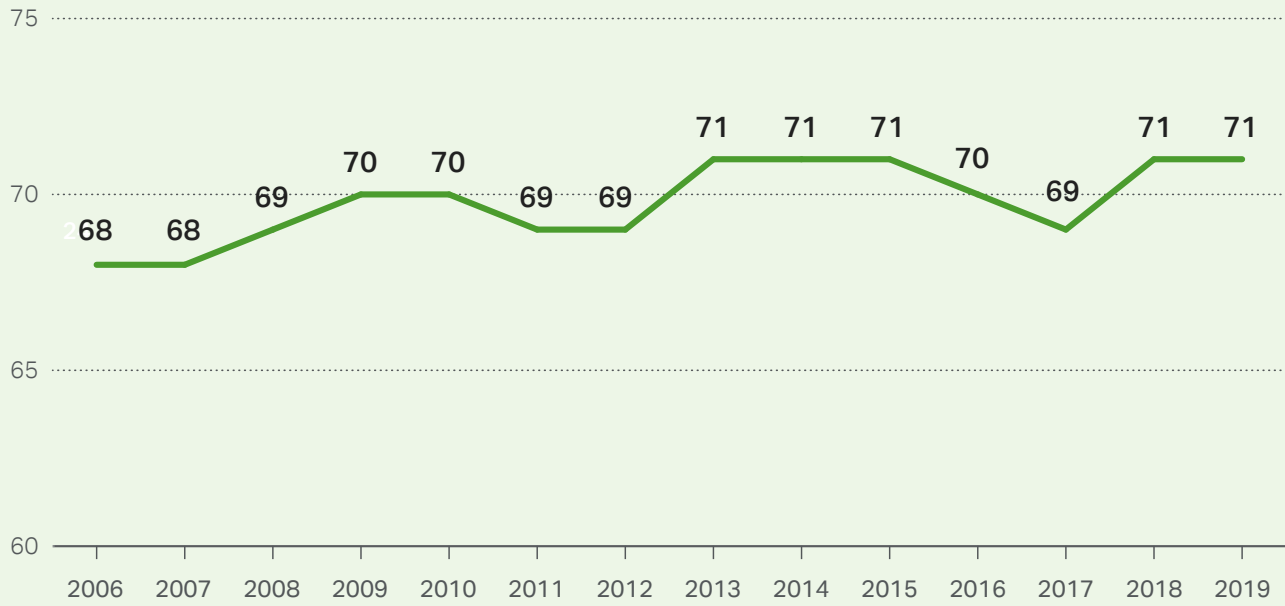
Scores worldwide ranged from a high of 85 in Panama to a low of 38 in Afghanistan. Afghanistan’s score dropped five points from where it was in 2018, marking its third consecutive year at the bottom of the rankings and a new low for the country. In the history of Gallup’s trend, only Syria has posted lower scores on the Positive Experience Index, with a score of 36 in 2015.



+ Positive Experience Index, 2006-2019

Worldwide

— Positive Experience Index



GALLUP WORLD POLL

Latin American Countries Continue to Lead in Positive Experiences

As they do year after year, Latin American countries dominated the list of countries in 2019 where adults reported a lot of positive emotions each day. The only countries outside this region that made the most-positive list were Indonesia, China and Denmark.

The high percentages reporting positive emotions in Latin America at least partly reflect the cultural tendency in the region to focus on life's positives. The single variable that Gallup finds predicts results on both the Positive and Negative Experience Indexes is country of origin, suggesting some cultural bias exists in how people answer these questions.



Highest Positive Experiences Worldwide

+ Positive Experience Index

Panama	85
El Salvador	84
Guatemala	84
Paraguay	83
Colombia	82
Indonesia	82
Mexico	82
Nicaragua	82
China	81
Costa Rica	81
Denmark	81
Honduras	81

Afghanistan Remains the Least-Positive Country in the World

Several countries and areas with the worst scores on the Positive Experience Index were experiencing some type of unrest — political, economic or otherwise — in 2019.

War-torn Afghanistan, for example, posted the lowest Positive Experience Index score in the world for the third year in a row.

However, its score of 38 was even lower than the year before and reflects how devastating the negative cycle of poverty and violence has been to Afghans' daily experiences. The 31% of Afghans who said in 2019 that they smiled or laughed the previous day is the lowest on record for any country.

Lebanon posted the next-lowest index score, at 45, marking a new low for the country, which was embroiled in political and economic turmoil in 2019 that drew hundreds of thousands of protesters to the streets.

Lebanon's score on the Positive Experience Index dropped 12 points in a year — the largest decline for any country between 2018 and 2019. Lebanese were substantially less likely in 2019 to say they had experienced each of the five positive experiences; most notably, the percentages who said they experienced enjoyment and felt well-rested declined by 18 and 19 points, respectively.

Lowest Positive Experiences Worldwide

+ Positive Experience Index

Egypt	56
Serbia	56
Yemen	56
Bangladesh	55
Northern Cyprus Region	55
Ethiopia	54
Tunisia	54
Nepal	53
Turkey	48
Lithuania	46
Lebanon	45
Afghanistan	38

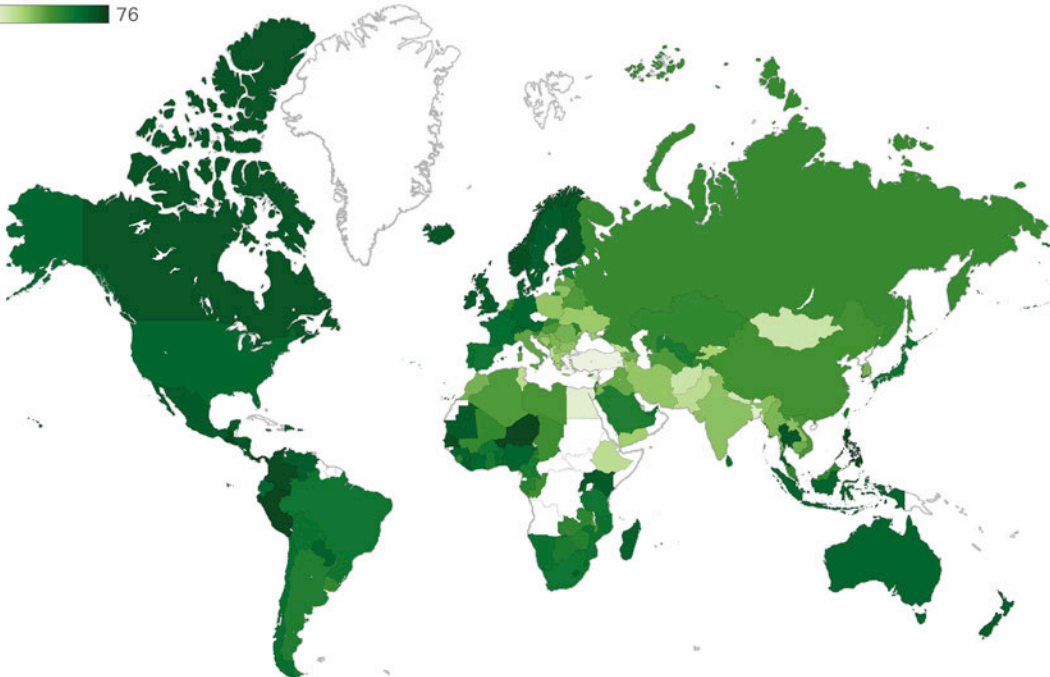


Less Than Half of Adults Learned or Did Something Interesting

Solid majorities reported experiencing four of the five items that make up the Positive Experience Index in 2019, but, unchanged from the previous year, less than half of people worldwide (49%) said they learned or did something interesting the day before the interview. This percentage was up from the 46% measured in 2017, but it is not the highest score on record. From 2013 to 2015, the percentage who learned or did something interesting was as high as 51%.

Percentage Who Learned or Did Something Interesting, 2019

20  76

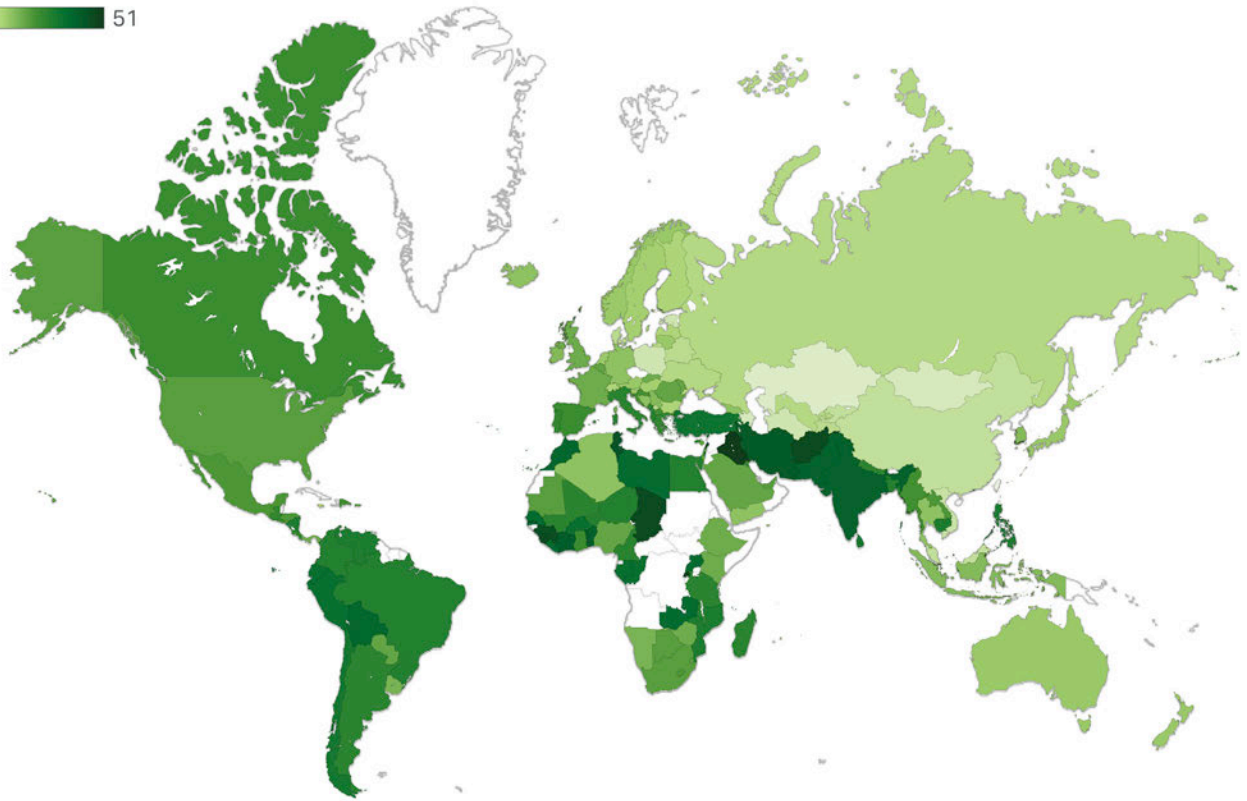


GALLUP WORLD POLL, 2019

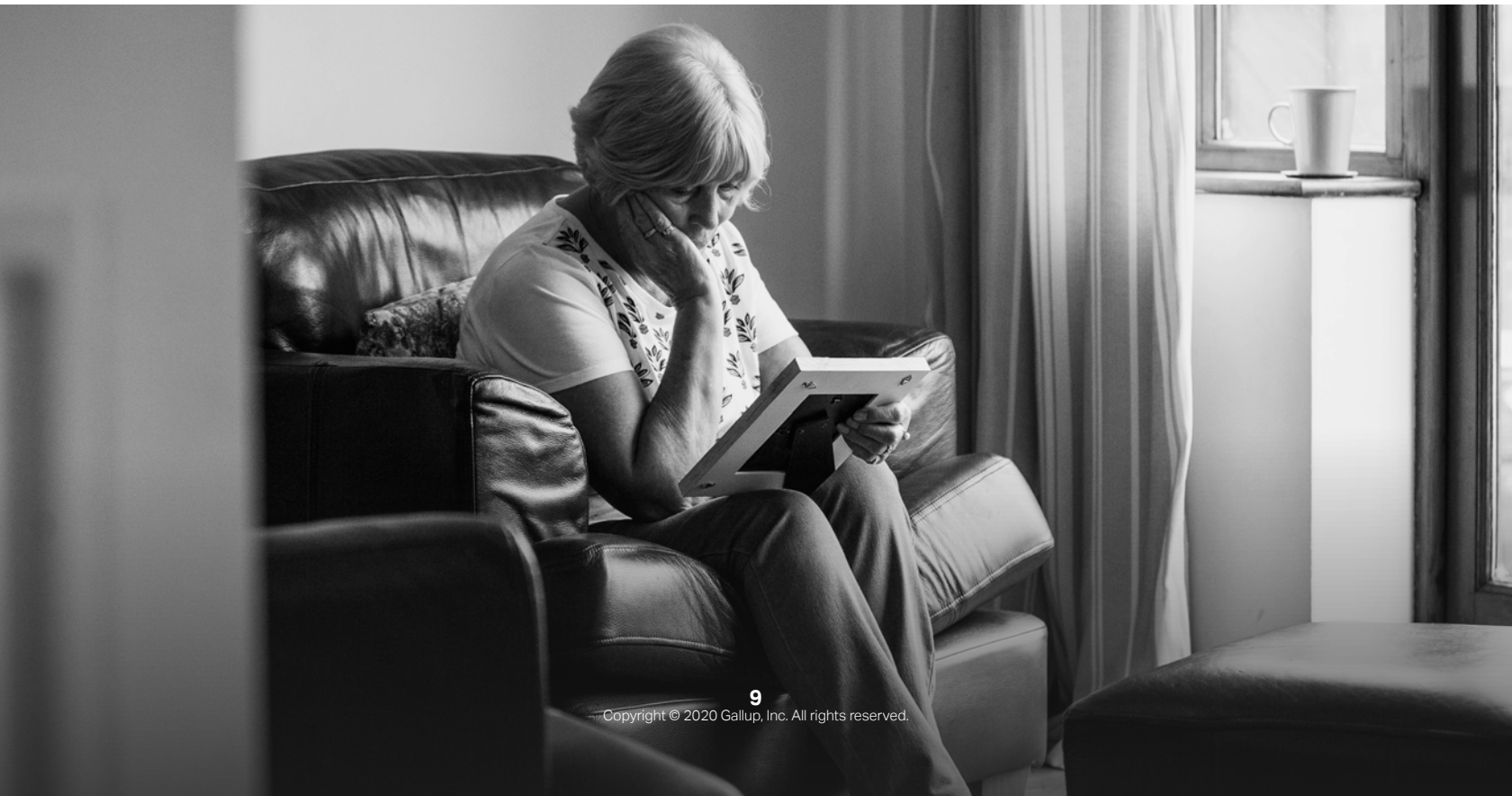
Percentages worldwide who said they had learned or did something interesting the day before ranged from as low as 20% in Turkey — a new low for the country — to as high as 76% in Panama.

Negative Experience Index in 2019

13 51



GALLUP WORLD POLL, 2019

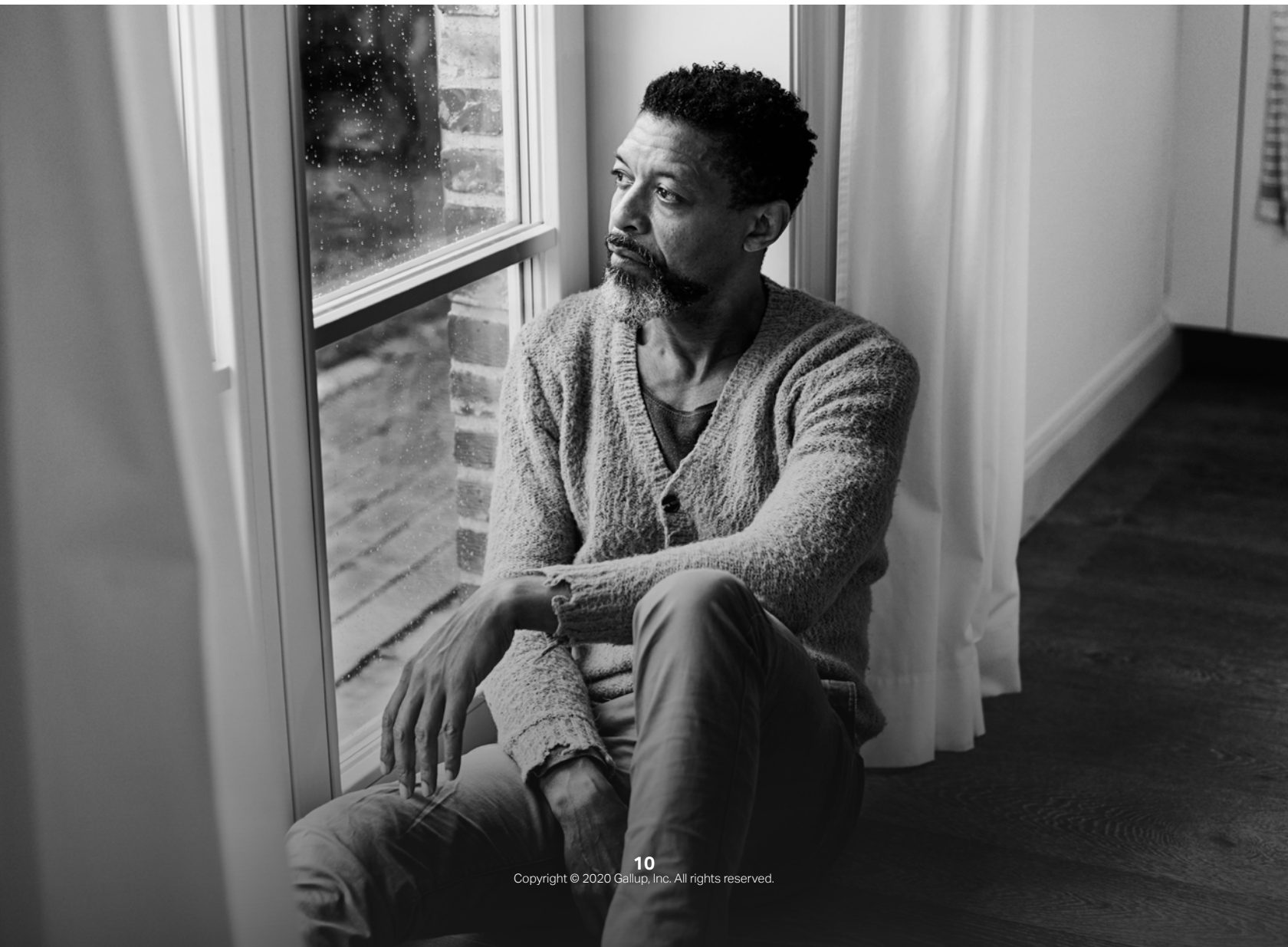


Globally, Negative Experience Index Edged Higher in 2019

Gallup asked adults in 144 countries and areas in 2019 if they had five different negative experiences on the day before the survey. More than one in three people said they experienced a lot of worry (39%) or stress (35%), and three in 10 experienced a lot of physical pain (31%). At least one in five experienced sadness (26%) or anger (22%).

Experiences of worry, stress, pain and anger remained unchanged from the previous year and at or near record highs. However, the percentage worldwide who experienced sadness continued to rise in 2019 and increased by two points from the previous year.

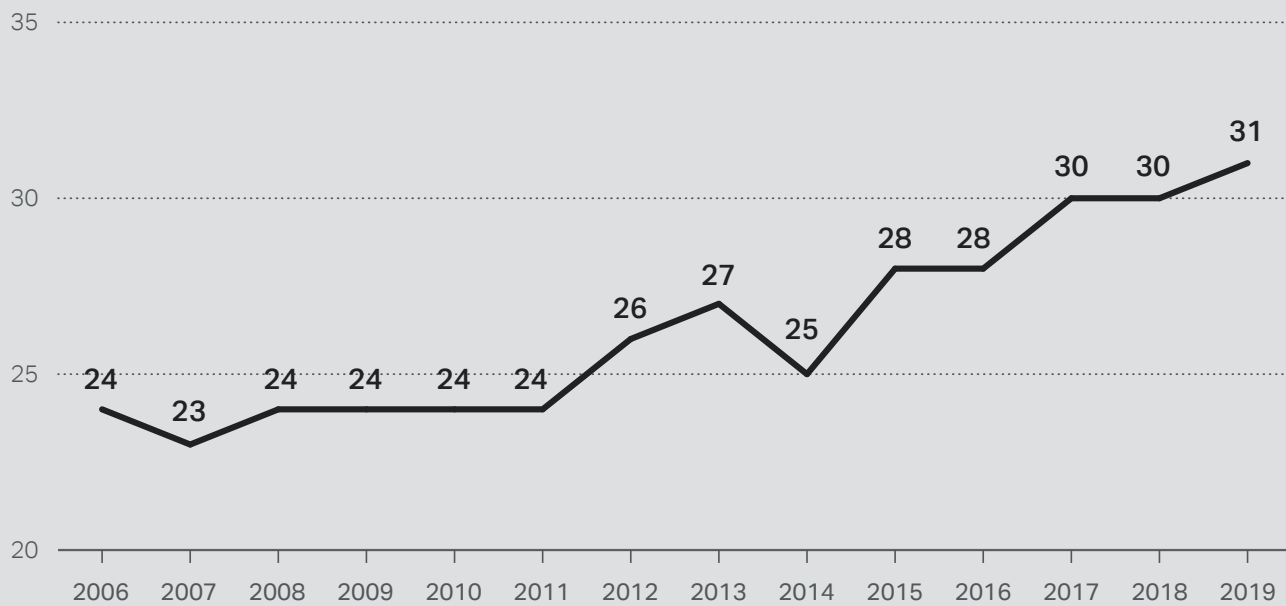
Gallup compiles the “yes” responses from these five questions into a Negative Experience Index score for each country. The percentages on most index items kept the score elevated, and the higher incidence of sadness nudged the overall score to 31.



— Negative Experience Index, 2006-2019

Worldwide

— Negative Experience Index



GALLUP WORLD POLL

Scores worldwide ranged from a **high of 51 in Iraq** to a **low of 13 in Taiwan**.

Iraq: The Most Negative Country in the World

After years of posting some of the highest scores in the world on the Negative Experience Index, Iraq topped the list in 2019 with a score of 51. This figure represents a slight increase from its score of 49 in 2018.

The country's 2019 score reflects the turmoil in Iraq amid some of the largest and bloodiest protests in years. In late 2019, Iraqis' approval of their country's leadership plummeted from an already low 22% to just 13%. Nine in 10 Iraqis said corruption was widespread throughout their government.

Negative experiences remained fairly common for most of the population in 2019, with at least roughly half of Iraqis experiencing each of the five experiences in the survey. Notably, Iraqis led the world in experiencing anger — which was on full display in the streets in 2019 and 2020 — with 46% saying they felt a lot of anger the previous day.

No other country posted a Negative Experience Index score higher than Iraq's, but, as in past years, people in several countries with high negative scores in 2019 were typically contending with some type of turmoil. Many have been at the top of the list for several years, including Chad, which was the most negative country in the world in 2018. However, there were several new appearances in 2019: Rwanda, Afghanistan, Lebanon and Tunisia.

Highest Negative Experiences Worldwide

■ Negative Experience Index

Iraq	51
Rwanda	49
Afghanistan	48
Chad	48
Lebanon	48
Sierra Leone	48
Guinea	47
Tunisia	46
Iran	45
Togo	45



GALLUP WORLD POLL, 2019

Countries at the Bottom of the Negative Experience List

Countries with the lowest negative scores do not necessarily have the highest positive scores. Many of the countries with the lowest scores on the Negative Experience Index in 2019 have appeared on this list for years.

It is worth noting again that country of origin is related to results on this index, suggesting that cultural bias exists in how people answer these questions.



Lowest Negative Experiences Worldwide

■ Negative Experience Index

China	19
Kyrgyzstan	19
Malaysia	19
Vietnam	18
Estonia	17
Poland	17
Turkmenistan	17
Azerbaijan	16
Mongolia	16
Kazakhstan	15
Taiwan, Province of China	13

GALLUP WORLD POLL, 2019

The Emotional Roller Coaster in Lebanon

Lebanese adults experienced the most emotional whiplash of any population in the world between 2018 and 2019; their Positive Experience Index score dropped 12 points, while their Negative Experience Index score rose 18 points.

In fact, no other country in the world saw negative experiences skyrocket across the board in 2019 as much as Lebanon. The percentage of Lebanese who experienced sadness more than doubled, from 19% to 40%, and nearly twice as many were angry in 2019 (43%) as in 2018 (23%). Levels of stress, worry and pain also soared to record levels in 2019.

Lebanese adults' ratings of their lives in general also dropped to a historic low in 2019, as hundreds of thousands of protesters demanded the complete overhaul of the country's political system. Just 4% of Lebanese rated their lives positively enough to be considered "thriving" — the worst score in Gallup's record for the country and one of the worst ratings in the world in 2019.

Only Afghanistan, a nation torn by decades of war, underdevelopment and a major drug trade, had worse numbers than Lebanon. No Afghans rated their lives well enough to be considered thriving in 2019.

Negative and Positive Experiences in Lebanon

	2018 %	2019 %	Difference (pct. pts.)
▣ Negative Experience Index			
Worry	40	65	25
Sadness	19	40	21
Anger	23	43	20
Stress	46	61	15
Physical pain	23	31	8
▣ Positive Experience Index			
Well-rested	66	47	-19
Enjoyment	49	31	-18
Smiled or laughed	44	33	-11
Treated with respect	93	84	-9
Learned something interesting	32	28	-4

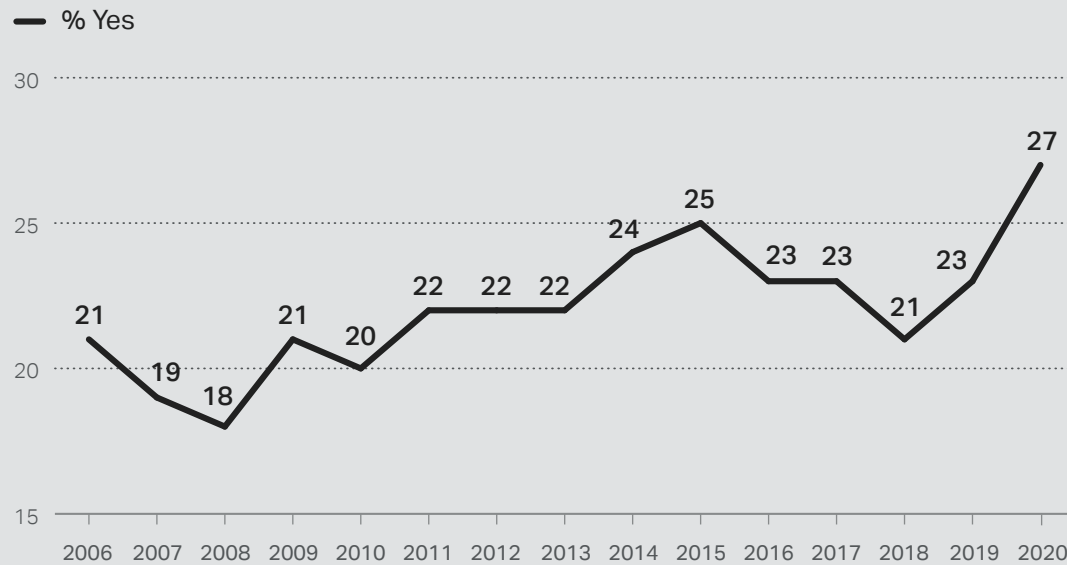
Looking Ahead: The World's Emotional State Post-COVID-19

With 2020 Gallup World Poll surveys currently being conducted as of the writing of this report, the data presented here serve as a pre-COVID-19 pandemic baseline for the world's emotional health. The data suggest that people in many countries around the world entered the pandemic in an already heightened negative state, which may not bode well for their post-pandemic lives.

For example, polling in mid-2020 in the U.S. suggests that Americans' negative experiences are ticking upward, with their Negative Experience Index increasing to 32 in 2020 from 30 the previous year. Further, Americans in 2020 are sadder than they had been in most years over the past decade, with more than one in four (27%) reporting experiencing a lot of sadness the previous day.

Rising Sadness in the U.S.

Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? How about sadness?



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Methodology

Results for surveys in 2019 are based on telephone and face-to-face interviews with approximately 1,000 adults, aged 15 and older, conducted throughout the year in 145 countries and areas for the Positive Experience Index and 144 countries and areas for the Negative Experience Index. For results based on the total sample of national adults, the margin of sampling error ranged from ± 2.1 percentage points to ± 5.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. All reported margins of sampling error include computed design effects for weighting.

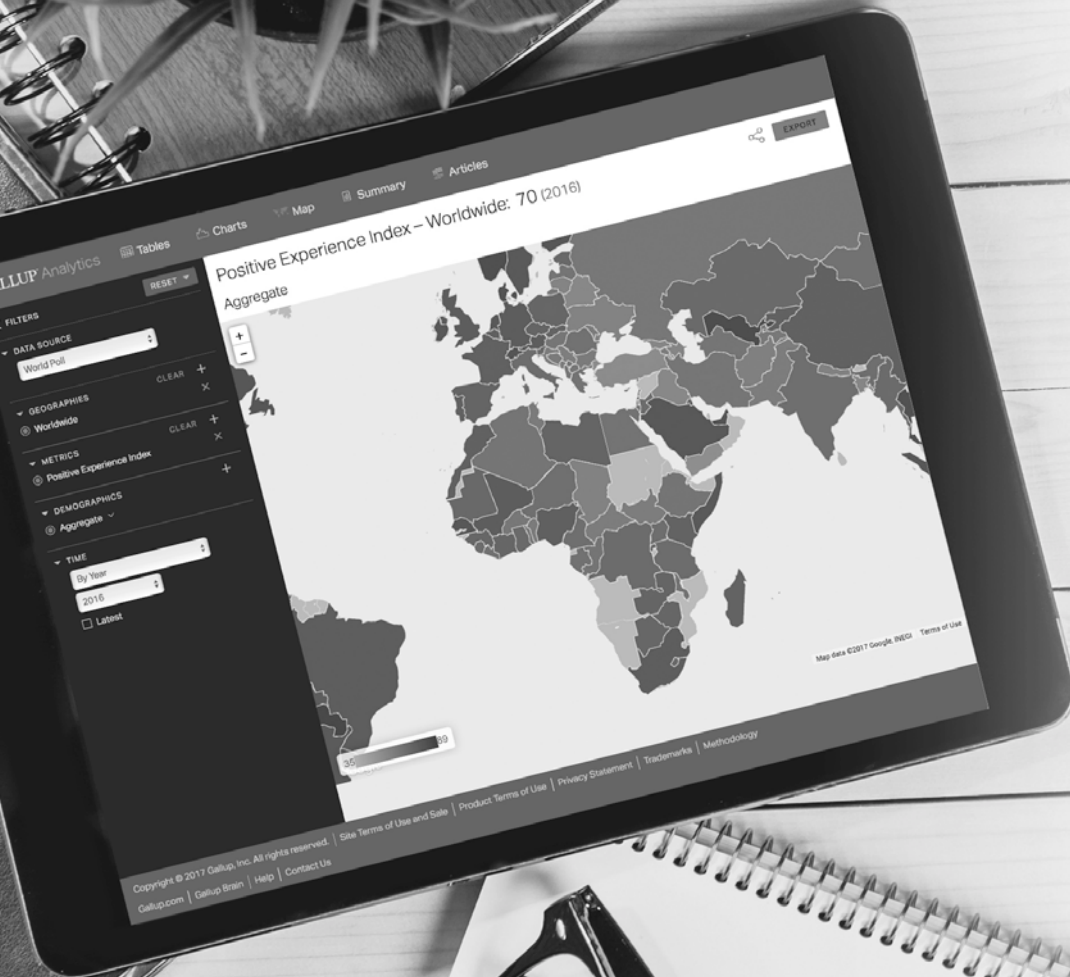
For the complete methodology and specific survey dates, please review [Gallup's Country Data Set details](#).

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