Global Law and Order 2021
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Sustainable Development Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

The United Nations’ most recent progress report on its Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 concludes that, in the second full year of the COVID-19 pandemic, “the world is still a long way from achieving the goal of peaceful, just and inclusive societies.” But for the world to keep moving forward, it will need to do so from a foundation of “peace, stability, respect for human rights, effective governance and the rule of law.”

Gallup’s latest global surveys on people’s perceptions of their own security and faith in the rule of law were collected throughout the first full year of the pandemic, and through the first half of the second, providing a sense of where this foundation is stronger and weaker.

The results overall show that not much changed between 2019 and 2020, and there is still much room to grow. Two of the security metrics Gallup asks about — people’s feelings of safety walking alone at night in the area where they live (an indicator of SDG 16) and their confidence in local police — ticked only slightly higher.

Gallup’s Law and Order Index uses four questions to gauge people’s sense of personal security and their personal experiences with crime and law enforcement.

**LAW AND ORDER INDEX**

- In the city or area where you live, do you have confidence in the local police force?
- Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where you live?
- Within the last 12 months, have you had money or property stolen from you or another household member?
- Within the past 12 months, have you been assaulted or mugged?

The 2021 Global Law and Order report presents the results from Gallup’s latest measurements of people’s answers to these questions, based on interviews with more than 120,000 adults in 115 countries and areas in 2020. It also features data from fieldwork in 51 countries released as of October 2021.
Law and Order Index

WORLDWIDE 2020
### Countries/Areas With Highest Law and Order Index Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>LAW AND ORDER INDEX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>93</td>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan, Province of China</td>
<td>91</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
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<td>Portugal</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

GALLUP WORLD POLL, 2020

Full results for all countries available at the back of the report.

### Countries/Areas With Lowest Law and Order Index Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>LAW AND ORDER INDEX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Namibia</td>
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<td>Mali</td>
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<td>Republic of Congo</td>
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<td>Zambia</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
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<td>Cameroon</td>
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<td>Uganda</td>
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<td>Guinea</td>
<td>57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gabon</td>
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<td>Venezuela</td>
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</table>

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Most of the World Remains Confident in Police, Feels Secure

Nearly seven in 10 people worldwide in 2020 said they feel safe walking alone at night where they live (72%) and have confidence in their local police (71%). About one in eight (13%) said they had money or property stolen from them or another household member in the past year, and 6% said they were assaulted or mugged.

These figures have not changed much for years, but in 2020, the percentages of people who said they feel safe walking alone at night and have confidence in their local police edged up just slightly, from 69% for each in 2019. The other figures remained in line with those from the past several years.

Gallup compiles the “positive” responses to these four questions into a Law and Order Index score for each country. The higher the score, the higher the proportion of the population that reports feeling safe. The index score for the world in 2020 was 82 out of a possible 100 — basically unchanged since 2017.

Because of the pandemic, Gallup was unable to field its surveys in two countries that have scored the highest and lowest on the index year after year — Singapore and Afghanistan.

Norway, which posted the highest score on the index in 2020 with a 94, consistently ranks near the top. Venezuela and Gabon, which posted the lowest scores on the index in 2020, with scores of 53, also consistently rank near the bottom. While data from Venezuela and Gabon are not yet available in 2021, the score for Norway in 2021 remained a high 93. Notably, the data in Norway were collected before the nation-shocking bow and arrow and stabbing attack in October that claimed five people’s lives.
Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America Face Security Challenges

For years, people in Latin America and the Caribbean and sub-Saharan Africa have been the least likely among all global regions to feel secure in their communities. However, for the first time in 2020, sub-Saharan Africa’s score on Gallup’s Law and Order Index was lower than the score for Latin America and the Caribbean — although just by one point, with a score of 65 that is on par with the 66 for Latin America.
## Law and Order Index by Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores by Region</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>Change</th>
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<td>86</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>87</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S. and Canada</td>
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<td>85</td>
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<td>85</td>
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<tr>
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<td>81</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>82</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle East and North Africa</td>
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<td>81</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
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<td>76</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>77</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
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<td>63</td>
<td>66</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GALLUP WORLD POLL, 2020**

In most regions, the 2020 scores on the Law and Order Index were relatively within the range of scores for the past few years. However, the score in sub-Saharan Africa ticked slightly downward, as did the score in Southeast Asia. Overall, in most regions, index scores for individual countries tended to change relatively little.

Lower security scores in a handful of countries in sub-Saharan Africa helped deflate the region’s overall score slightly in 2020. Index scores declined in Guinea, Nigeria, Mali, Cameroon and Kenya.

In each of these five countries, people’s confidence in their local police moved in a negative direction, including substantial drops from 55% to 40% in Nigeria — where allegations of police brutality led to violent protests — and 56% to 40% in Guinea. Further, the percentage who felt safe walking alone at night did not top 50% in any of them in 2020, except for Kenya, where 56% said they felt safe.
# Law and Order Index Scores in Sub-Saharan Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>DIFFERENCE</th>
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<td>Mali</td>
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<td>Cameroon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
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<td>63</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of the Congo</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
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<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
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<td>-1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
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<td>75</td>
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<td>Zimbabwe</td>
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<td>-1</td>
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<td>Namibia</td>
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<td>-1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Ghana</td>
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<td>69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>Gabon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mauritius</td>
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<td>83</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivory Coast</td>
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<td>71</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GALLUP WORLD POLL, 2020
Venezuelans, Gabonese Least Likely in the World to Feel Safe Walking Alone at Night Where They Live

The two countries with the lowest scores on the Law and Order Index, Venezuela and Gabon, were also the least likely in 2020 to say they feel safe walking alone in their area at night — 31% of the populations in each said they felt this way. These percentages are similar to those from 2019, when people in Venezuela and Gabon were, after Afghans, the least likely in the world to feel safe. Notably, the 31% in Venezuela who feel safe is the highest percentage to say so in the country since 2012. The record low for Venezuela was 12% in 2016.

The countries in which residents are least likely to say they feel safe walking alone at night are exclusively a mix of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean and sub-Saharan Africa. Six of them also ranked among the least safe in 2019 — Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Namibia, South Africa, Gabon and Venezuela.

In most economically developed countries and territories with strong rule of law, high majorities of residents say they feel safe walking alone in their area at night. The same is true in countries where populations are under tighter state control. For example, these feelings were nearly universal in 2020 in the United Arab Emirates (95%), Norway (93%), China (91%) and Slovenia (91%). So far in 2021, Norwegians (93%) and UAE residents (92%) largely feel the same way.

In 2020, the U.S. was slightly above the global average at 78%, when Americans were interviewed during the heart of the pandemic lockdown in March through early May 2020. A year later, in 2021, slightly fewer (73%) Americans said they felt safe walking alone at night.
### Countries/Areas Where People Feel Safest Walking Alone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>% FEEL SAFE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GALLUP WORLD POLL, 2020

### Countries/Areas Where People Feel Least Safe Walking Alone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>% FEEL SAFE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namibia</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabon</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Confidence in the Local Police

More than seven in 10 adults worldwide (71%) in 2020 said they have confidence in their local police. The results vary significantly by region, however, from a low of 49% in Latin America and the Caribbean to 82% in Western Europe and Northern America.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern America</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asia</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East and North Africa</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>72</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>66</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The relatively low average on this measure in Latin America and the Caribbean is not surprising, given the region’s poor performance on all of the Law and Order Index component metrics in 2020 and in previous years. The 49% who were confident in 2020 is unchanged from the previous year, but it is also on the higher end for historical scores in the region.

With rare exceptions, confidence in the police remained stable or improved across most of Latin America and the Caribbean in 2020. Confidence plummeted 10 points in Bolivia, which was rocked by violent protests that virtually brought the country to a standstill. Bolivians’ confidence in police dropped from 45% in 2019 — which was a record high — to 35% the next year. In 2021, the situation is no better; 34% in Bolivia are confident in their local police.
71% of adults worldwide have confidence in their local police.
### Percentage Confident in Local Police in Latin America

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>DIFFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>51%</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Ecuador</td>
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<td>60%</td>
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<td>57%</td>
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<td>54%</td>
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<td>Bolivia</td>
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<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>26%</td>
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## Law and Order Index Scores for 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY/TERRITORY</th>
<th>LAW AND ORDER INDEX SCORE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>94</td>
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<tr>
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GALLUP WORLD POLL, 2020
Methodology

Results for the 2020 perceptions of law and order are based on nationally representative, probability-based samples among the adult populations, aged 15 and older, in 115 countries and areas throughout 2020. In most countries/areas, surveys were conducted over mobile and landline telephones; some in-person interviews were conducted in Republic of the Congo, India, Mali, Pakistan and Senegal.

For results based on the total sample of national adults, the margin of sampling error ranges from ±1.1 to ±5.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.


Results for the 2021 perceptions of law and order are based on nationally representative, probability-based samples among the adult populations, aged 15 and older, in 51 countries and areas surveyed between April and August 2021. Surveys were conducted either through telephone or face-to-face interviews.

For results based on the total sample of national adults, the margin of sampling error ranges from ±2.8 to ±5.0 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

The margin of error reflects the influence of data weighting. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.
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