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American Exceptionalism Subsides

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# The American-Western European Values Gap

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**Pew Global Attitudes Project:**

**Andrew Kohut,**

President, Pew Research Center

**Richard Wike,** Associate Director

**Juliana Menasce Horowitz,**

Senior Researcher

**Jacob Poushter,** Research Analyst

**Cathy Barker,** Research Assistant

**Pew Research Center:**

**James Bell,**

Director of International Survey Research,  
Pew Research Center

**Elizabeth Mueller Gross,**

Vice President, Pew Research Center

For Media Inquiries Contact:

Richard Wike

Vidya Krishnamurthy

202.419.4372

<http://pewglobal.org>

American Exceptionalism Subsides  
**The American-Western European Values Gap**

As has long been the case, American values differ from those of Western Europeans in many important ways. Most notably, Americans are more individualistic and are less supportive of a strong safety net than are the publics of Britain, France, Germany and Spain. Americans are also considerably more religious than Western Europeans, and are more socially conservative with respect to homosexuality.

Americans are somewhat more inclined than Western Europeans to say that it is sometimes necessary to use military force to maintain order in the world. Moreover, Americans more often than their Western European allies believe that obtaining UN approval before their country uses military force would make it too difficult to deal with an international threat. And Americans are less inclined than the Western Europeans, with the exception of the French, to help other nations.

These differences between Americans and Western Europeans echo findings from previous surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center. However, the current polling shows the American public is coming closer to Europeans in not seeing their culture as superior to that of other nations. Today, only about half of Americans believe their culture is superior to others, compared with six-in-ten in 2002. And the polling finds younger Americans less apt than their elders to hold American exceptionalist attitudes.

**Views of Individualism and the Role of the State**

*Which is more important?*

	<b>Freedom to pursue life's goals without state interference</b>	<b>State guarantees nobody is in need</b>	<b>DK</b>
	%	%	%
U.S.	58	35	7
Britain	38	55	7
Germany	36	62	2
France	36	64	0
Spain	30	67	3

*Success in life is determined by forces outside our control*

	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>DK</b>
	%	%	%
U.S.	36	62	3
Britain	41	55	4
Spain	50	47	3
France	57	43	0
Germany	72	27	1

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q15a & Q61.

These are among the findings from a survey by the Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project, conducted in the U.S., Britain, France, Germany and Spain from March 21 to April 14 as part of the broader 23-nation poll in spring 2011.

## Use of Military Force

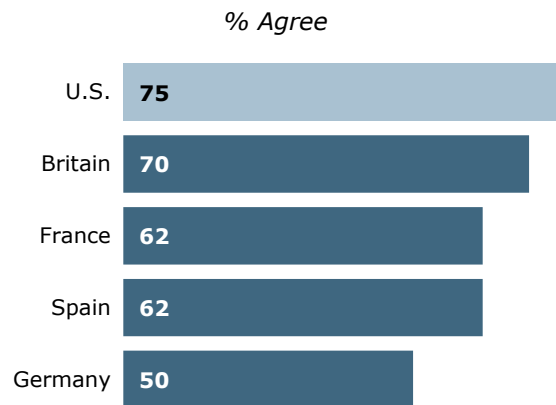
Three-quarters of Americans agree that it is sometimes necessary to use military force to maintain order in the world; this view is shared by seven-in-ten in Britain and narrower majorities in France and Spain (62% each). Germans are evenly divided, with half saying the use of force is sometimes necessary and half saying it is not.

Germans are more supportive of the use of military force than they have been in recent years. For example, in 2007, just about four-in-ten (41%) Germans agreed that it was sometimes necessary, while 58% disagreed. Opinions have been more stable in the U.S., Britain and France.

For the most part, opinions about the use of force do not vary considerably across demographic groups. In Germany and Spain, however, support for the use of military force is far more widespread among men than among women. Six-in-ten German men agree that it is sometimes necessary to use military force to maintain order in the world, compared with just 40% of women. And while majorities across gender groups in Spain believe the use of force may be necessary, more Spanish men than Spanish women say this is the case (68% vs. 56%).

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### It Is Sometimes Necessary to Use Military Force to Maintain Order in the World



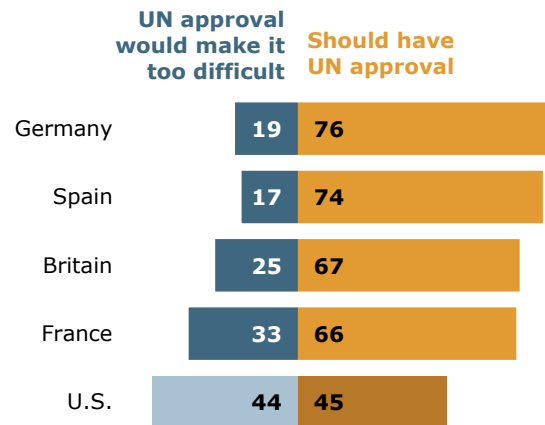
PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q15c.

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In Britain, France, Spain and the U.S., conservatives, or those on the political right, are more likely than liberals, or those on the left, to agree that the use of force is sometimes necessary to maintain world order. However, in the four countries, majorities across ideological groups express this view.<sup>1</sup>

When asked whether their country should have UN approval before using military force to deal with international threats, American opinion differs considerably from that of Western Europeans. Americans are almost evenly divided on the question, with 45% saying that the U.S. should have UN approval while 44% say this would make it too difficult to deal with threats; in contrast, solid majorities in the four Western European nations surveyed, including about three-quarters in Spain (74%) and Germany (76%) say their country should have UN approval before it takes military action.

### Getting UN Approval Before Using Military Force to Deal With International Threats



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q71.

In Western Europe, those with a college degree are more likely than those with less education to say their country should have UN approval before using military force, although majorities across both groups share this view. For example, in Spain, 84% of those who graduated from college say UN approval should be obtained, compared with 70% of those who do not have a college degree. Double-digit differences are also evident in Britain (15 percentage points), Germany (11 points) and France (10 points). This is not the case in the U.S., where respondents across education groups offer nearly identical views.

In Germany, gender differences are also notable; even though German men are more likely than women to say the use of military force is sometimes necessary, more men than women say their country should have UN approval before using force (83% vs. 70%).

<sup>1</sup> In the U.S., respondents were asked, "In general, would you describe your political views as very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal or very liberal?" In Western Europe, respondents were asked, "Some people talk about politics in terms of left, center and right. On a left-right scale from 0 to 6, with 0 indicating extreme left and 6 indicating extreme right, where would you place yourself?" Throughout this report, we use the terms left/liberal and right/conservative interchangeably. In the U.S., an analysis of partisan differences shows that, for the most part, the views of Democrats align with those of liberals, while views of Republicans mirror those of conservatives; we refer to ideology rather than partisanship for a more direct comparison between Americans and Western Europeans.

The view that their country should have UN approval before using military force to deal with threats is far more prevalent among American liberals than among conservatives. Close to six-in-ten (57%) liberals favor obtaining UN approval, while 33% say this would make it too difficult for the U.S. to deal with threats; in contrast, most conservatives (52%) say getting UN approval would make it too difficult to deal with threats, while 38% say this is an important step. Political moderates fall between the other two groups, with 49% saying the U.S. should seek the approval of the UN before using military force and 42% saying this would make it too difficult to deal with threats. The same ideological difference is generally not evident in Western Europe.

### Views on International Engagement

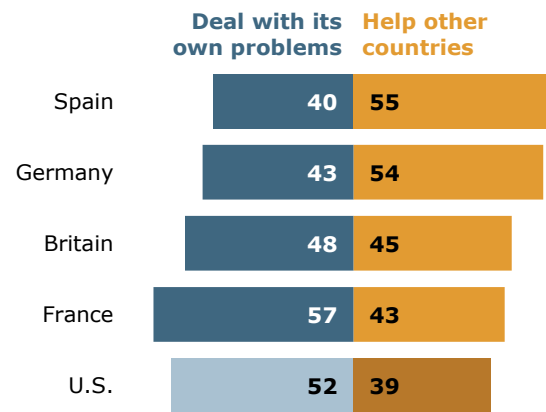
About four-in-ten (39%) Americans say the U.S. should help other countries deal with their problems, while a narrow majority (52%) says the U.S. should deal with its own problems and let other countries deal with their problems as best they can. In this regard, Americans are not drastically different from respondents in France, where 43% believe their country should help other countries and 57% say it should focus on its own problems.

The British are nearly evenly divided; 45% say their country should help other countries deal with their problems and about the same number (48%) believe Britain should deal with its own problems.

Compared with the U.S., France and Britain, Spain and Germany stand out as the only countries where majorities favor international engagement: 55% and 54%, respectively, say their countries should provide assistance to others, while 40% in Spain and 43% in Germany take the more isolationist view.

Opinions about international engagement have changed somewhat in the U.S., France and Spain since last year, but while publics in the two Western European countries are now more in favor of helping others than they were in 2010, more Americans currently take an isolationist position. Last year, about the

### Isolationism vs. Engagement



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q65.

same number of Americans said their country should help other countries (45%) as said it should let other countries deal with their own problems (46%). Similarly, the Spanish were nearly evenly divided, with 49% favoring engagement and 47% taking an isolationist approach. In France, where a majority continues to take an isolationist view, even more (65%) did so a year ago.

In the U.S. as well as in the four Western European countries surveyed, those with a college degree are far more likely than those with less education to offer an internationalist view. This is especially the case in Germany, where about three-quarters (73%) of those who graduated from college believe their country should help other countries deal with their problems, compared with a narrow majority (52%) of those without a college degree.

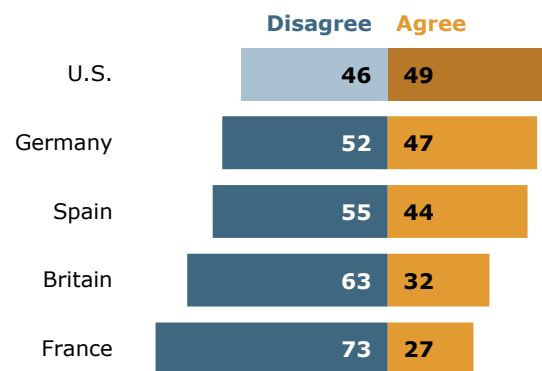
Political ideology is also a factor in Germany, France and Spain. In these three countries, those on the right are more likely than those on the left to take the isolationist view when it comes to international engagement. For example, while about half (48%) of left-wing French say their country should deal with its own problems and let other countries deal with theirs as best they can, about six-in-ten (59%) on the right offer this opinion.

## Cultural Superiority

About half of Americans (49%) and Germans (47%) agree with the statement, “Our people are not perfect, but our culture is superior to others;” 44% in Spain share this view. In Britain and France, only about a third or fewer (32% and 27%, respectively) think their culture is better than others.

While opinions about cultural superiority have remained relatively stable over the years in the four Western European countries surveyed, Americans are now far less likely to say that their culture is better than others; six-in-ten Americans held this belief in 2002 and 55% did so in 2007. Belief in cultural superiority has declined among Americans across age, gender and education groups.

### Our People Are Not Perfect but Our Culture Is Superior to Others



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q15b.

As in past surveys, older Americans remain far more inclined than younger ones to believe that their culture is better than others. Six-in-ten Americans ages 50 or older share this view, while 34% disagree; those younger than 30 hold the opposite view, with just 37% saying American culture is superior and 61% saying it is not. Opinions are more divided among those ages 30 to 49; 44% in this group see American culture as superior and 50% do not.

Similar age gaps are not as common in the Western European countries surveyed, with the exception of Spain, where majorities of older respondents, but not among younger ones, also think their culture is better than others; 55% of those ages 50 or older say this is the case, compared with 34% of those ages 30 to 49 and 39% of those younger than 30.

As is the case on other measures, opinions about

cultural superiority vary considerably by educational attainment. In the four Western European countries and in the U.S., those who did not graduate from college are more likely than those who did to agree that their culture is superior, even if their people are not perfect. For example, Germans with less education are twice as likely as those with a college degree to believe their culture is superior (50% vs. 25%); double-digit differences are also present in France (20 percentage points), Spain (18 points) and Britain (11 points), while a less pronounced gap is evident in the U.S. (9 points).

Finally, among Americans and Germans, political conservatives are especially likely to believe their culture is superior to others. In the U.S., 63% of conservatives take this view, compared with 45% of moderates and just 34% of liberals. Similarly, a majority (55%) of right-wing Germans see their culture as superior, while 47% of moderates and 34% of those on the political left agree.

### Demographic Differences in Views of Cultural Superiority

*% Agree that "our people are not perfect but our culture is superior"*

	U.S.	Germany	Spain	Britain	France
	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Total</b>	49	47	44	32	27
<b>Sex</b>					
Men	49	45	44	33	26
Women	50	48	43	31	27
<b>Age</b>					
18-29	37	45	39	38	20
30-49	44	42	34	20	20
50+	60	51	55	38	35
<b>Education</b>					
College degree	43	25	31	25	15
No college degree	52	50	49	36	35

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q15b.

## Individualism and the Role of the State

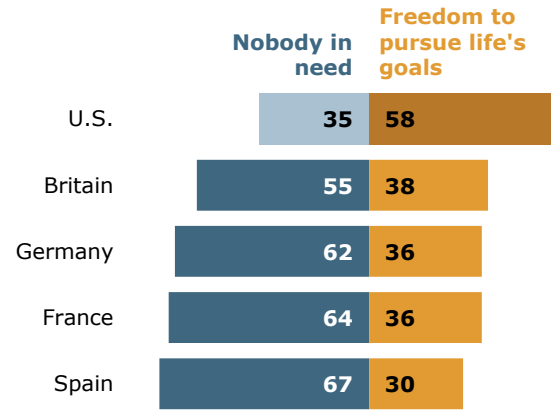
American opinions continue to differ considerably from those of Western Europeans when it comes to views of individualism and the role of the state. Nearly six-in-ten (58%) Americans believe it is more important for everyone to be free to pursue their life's goals without interference from the state, while just 35% say it is more important for the state to play an active role in society so as to guarantee that nobody is in need.

In contrast, at least six-in-ten in Spain (67%), France (64%) and Germany (62%) and 55% in Britain say the state should ensure that nobody is in need; about four-in-ten or fewer consider being free from state interference a higher priority.

In the U.S., Britain, France and Germany, views of the role of the state divide significantly across ideological lines. For example, three-quarters of American conservatives say individuals should be free to pursue their goals without interference from the state, while 21% say it is more important for the state to guarantee that nobody is in need; among liberals in the U.S., half would like the state to play an active role to help the needy, while 42% prefer a more limited role for the state.

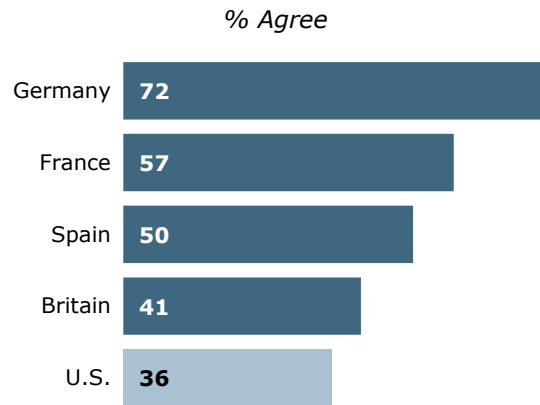
Those on the political right in Britain, France and Germany are also more likely than those on the left in these countries to prioritize freedom to pursue one's goals without state interference. Unlike in the U.S., however, majorities of those on the right in France (57%) and Germany (56%) favor an active role for the state, as do more than four-in-ten (45%) conservatives in Britain.

### Which Is More Important?



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q61.

### Success in Life Is Determined by Forces Outside Our Control



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q15a.



American opinions about the role of the state also vary considerably across age groups. About half (47%) of those younger than 30 prioritize the freedom to pursue life's goals without interference from the state and a similar percentage (46%) say it is more important for the state to ensure that nobody is in need; among older Americans, however, about six-in-ten consider being free a higher priority, with just about three-in-ten saying the state should play an active role so that nobody is in need. No such age difference is evident in the four Western European countries surveyed.

Asked if they agree that “success in life is pretty much determined by forces outside our control,” Americans again offer more individualistic views than those expressed by Western Europeans. Only 36% of Americans believe they have little control over their fate, compared with 50% in Spain, 57% in France and 72% in Germany; Britain is the only Western European country surveyed where fewer than half (41%) share this view.

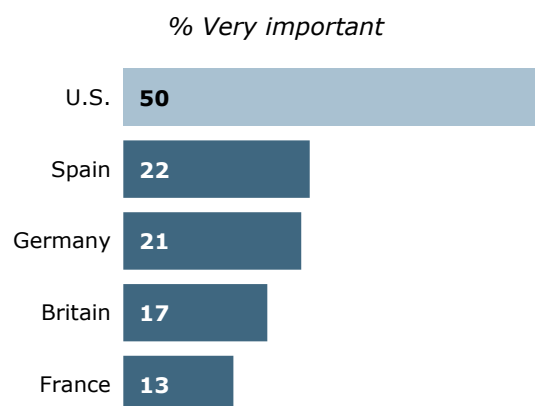
In the U.S. and in Western Europe, those without a college degree are less individualistic than those who have graduated from college; this is especially the case in the U.S. and Germany. About three-quarters (74%) of Germans in the less educated group believe that success in life is largely determined by forces beyond one's control, compared with 55% of college graduates. Among Americans, 41% of those without a college degree say they have little control over their fate, while just 22% of college graduates share this view.

## Religion More Important to Americans

Americans also distinguish themselves from Western Europeans on views about the importance of religion. Half of Americans deem religion *very* important in their lives; fewer than a quarter in Spain (22%), Germany (21%), Britain (17%) and France (13%) share this view.

Moreover, Americans are far more inclined than Western Europeans to say it is necessary to believe in God in order to be moral and have good values; 53% say this is the case in the

### Importance of Religion



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q118.

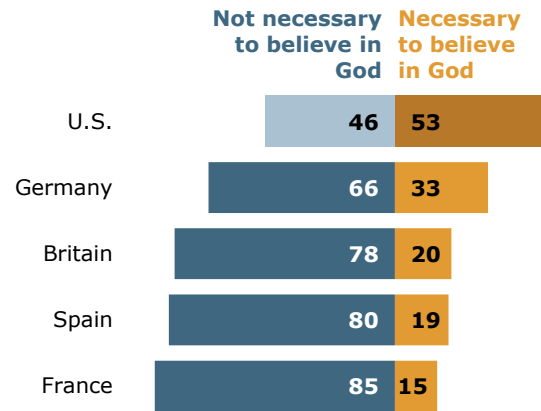
U.S., compared with just one-third in Germany, 20% in Britain, 19% in Spain and 15% in France.

In the U.S., women and older respondents place more importance on religion and are more likely than men and younger people to say that faith in God is a necessary foundation for morality and good values. About six-in-ten (59%) American women say religion is very important in their lives, compared with 41% of men; and while a majority (56%) of Americans ages 50 and older say religion is very important to them, 48% of those ages 30 to 49 and 41% of those younger than 30 place similar importance on religion.

Similarly, while a majority of American women (58%) say it is necessary to believe in God in order to be moral and have good values, men are nearly evenly divided, with 47% saying belief in God is a necessary foundation for morality and 51% saying it is not. Among Americans ages 50 and older, 58% say one must believe in God in order to be moral and have good values; 50% of those ages 30 to 49 and 46% of those younger than 30 share this view.

Education also plays a role in views of religion in the U.S., to some extent. Although Americans with a college degree are about as likely as those without to say religion is very important to them (47% and 51%, respectively), the less educated are far more inclined to say that one must believe in God in order to be moral; 59% of those without a college degree say this, compared with 37% of those who have graduated from college.

## Morality and Belief in God



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q17.

## Views of Religion in the U.S.

	Religion is very important	It is necessary to believe in God to be moral
	%	%
<b>Total</b>	50	53
<b>Sex</b>		
Men	41	47
Women	59	58
<b>Age</b>		
18-29	41	46
30-49	48	50
50+	56	58
<b>Education</b>		
College degree	47	37
No college degree	51	59
<b>Ideology</b>		
Conservative	67	66
Moderate	45	52
Liberal	29	26

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q17 & Q118.

Views of religion and whether belief in God is a necessary foundation for morality vary little, if at all, across demographic groups in the Western European countries surveyed. In Spain, however, respondents ages 50 and older place more importance on religion than do younger people, although relatively few in this age group say it is very important to them; 33% say this is the case, compared with 16% of those ages 30 to 49 and 11% of those younger than 30.

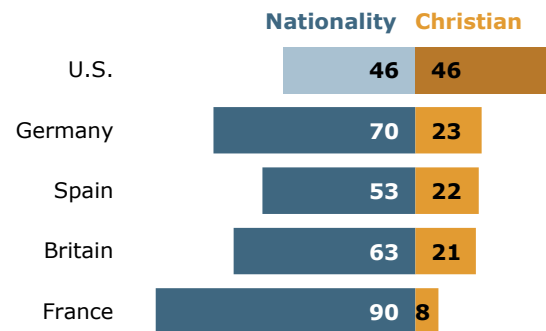
Politically, conservatives in the U.S., Spain and Germany are more likely than liberals to say it is necessary to believe in God in order to be moral and have good values, but while solid majorities of conservatives in the U.S. (66%) take this position, fewer than half of conservatives in Spain (31%) and Germany (45%) share this view. Meanwhile, just 26% of liberals in the U.S., 11% in Spain and 19% in Germany say belief in God is a necessary foundation for morality. Conservatives in the U.S. are also far more likely than liberals to consider religion very important in their lives (67% vs. 29%); in Western Europe, few across ideological groups place high importance on religion.

## Religious vs. National Identity

American Christians are more likely than their Western European counterparts to think of themselves first in terms of their religion rather than their nationality; 46% of Christians in the U.S. see themselves primarily as Christians and the same number consider themselves Americans first. In contrast, majorities of Christians in France (90%), Germany (70%), Britain (63%) and Spain (53%) identify primarily with their nationality rather than their religion.

In Britain, France and Germany, more Christians now see themselves in terms of their nationality than did so five years ago, when national identification was already widespread in these countries. This change is especially notable in Germany, where the percentage seeing themselves first as Germans is up 11 percentage points, from 59% in 2006.

### What Do You Consider Yourself First?



Asked of Christians only.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q35chr.

Among Christians in the U.S., white evangelicals are especially inclined to identify first with their faith; 70% in this group see themselves first as Christians rather than as Americans, while 22% say they are primarily American. Among other American Christians, more identify with their nationality (55%) than with their religion (38%).

## Homosexuality

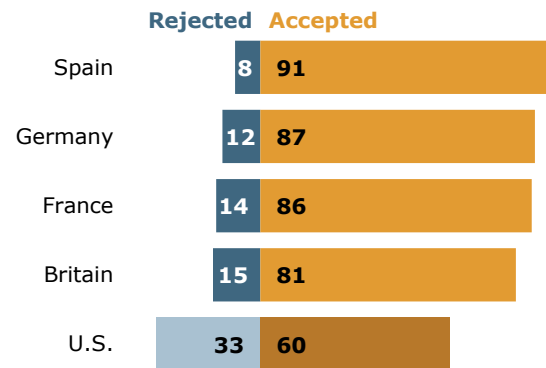
Tolerance for homosexuality is widespread in the U.S. and Western Europe, but far more Western Europeans than Americans say homosexuality should be accepted by society; at least eight-in-ten in Spain (91%), Germany (87%), France (86%) and Britain (81%), compared with 60% in the U.S.

Acceptance of homosexuality has increased in recent years, and the shift is especially notable in the U.S., where only slightly more said it should be accepted (49%) than said it should be rejected (41%) in 2007. Today, more Americans accept homosexuality than reject it by a 27-percentage point margin.

While there are some differences in opinions of homosexuality across demographic groups in the Western European countries surveyed, overwhelming majorities across age, education and gender groups believe homosexuality should be accepted by society. In the U.S., however, these differences are somewhat more pronounced. For example, while 67% of American women believe homosexuality should be accepted, a much narrower majority of men (54%) share that view. Among Americans with college degrees, 71% accept homosexuality, compared with 56% of those with less education. Finally, about two-thirds (68%) of Americans younger than 30 say homosexuality should be accepted by society; 61% of those ages 30 to 40 and 55% of those ages 50 and older share this view.

In addition to demographic differences, an ideological divide on views of homosexuality is also notable in the U.S., where more than eight-in-ten (85%) liberals and 65% of moderates express tolerant views, compared with 44% of conservatives. In the four

### Homosexuality Should Be...



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q18.

Western European countries surveyed, at least three-quarters across ideological groups say homosexuality should be accepted by society.

## Trend Table

<i>Success in life is determined by outside forces</i>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2011</b>	<i>Should have UN approval before using military force</i>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2011</b>
	%	%	%		%	%
U.S.	32	33	36	U.S.	41	45
Britain	48	42	41	Britain	64	67
France	55	52	57	France	63	66
Germany	68	70	72	Germany	80	76
Spain	--	53	50	Spain	--	74
<i>Our people are not perfect, but our culture is superior</i>				<i>Consider myself first as Christian*</i>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2011</b>
U.S.	60	55	49		%	%
Britain	37	31	32	U.S.	43	46
France	33	32	27	Britain	24	21
Germany	40	42	47	France	14	8
Spain	--	50	44	Germany	33	23
				Spain	14	22
<i>Sometimes necessary to use military force to maintain order</i>				<i>Should help other countries deal with their problems</i>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
U.S.	--	77	75		%	%
Britain	--	67	70	U.S.	45	39
France	--	67	62	Britain	43	45
Germany	--	41	50	France	35	43
Spain	--	65	62	Germany	52	54
				Spain	49	55
<i>Necessary to believe in God to be moral</i>						
U.S.	58	57	53			
Britain	25	22	20			
France	13	17	15			
Germany	33	39	33			
Spain	--	25	19			
<i>Homosexuality should be accepted</i>						
U.S.	51	49	60			
Britain	74	71	81			
France	77	83	86			
Germany	83	81	87			
Spain	--	82	91			
<i>State should play an active role so nobody is in need</i>						
U.S.	34	--	35			
Britain	61	--	55			
France	62	--	64			
Germany	57	--	62			
Spain	--	--	67			
<i>Religion is very important</i>						
U.S.	59	56	50			
Britain	--	18	17			
France	11	12	13			
Germany	21	24	21			
Spain	--	18	22			

\* Asked of Christians only.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q15a-c, Q17, Q18, Q35CHR, Q61, Q65, Q71 & Q118.

## About the Pew Global Attitudes Project

The *Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project* conducts public opinion surveys around the world on a broad array of subjects ranging from people's assessments of their own lives to their views about the current state of the world and important issues of the day. The project is directed by Andrew Kohut, president of the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" in Washington, DC, that provides information on the issues, attitudes, and trends shaping America and the world. The *Pew Global Attitudes Project* is principally funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts.

The *Pew Global Attitudes Project* is co-chaired by former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, currently principal, the Albright Stonebridge Group, and by former Senator John C. Danforth, currently partner, Bryan Cave LLP.

Since its inception in 2001, the *Pew Global Attitudes Project* has released numerous major reports, analyses, and other releases, on topics including attitudes toward the U.S. and American foreign policy, globalization, terrorism, and democracy.

*Pew Global Attitudes Project* team members include Richard Wike, Juliana Menasce Horowitz, Jacob Poushter, and Cathy Barker. Other contributors to the project include Pew Research Center staff members Director of International Survey Research James Bell and Vice President Elizabeth Mueller Gross, as well as Neha Sahgal, Carroll Doherty, and Michael Dimock. Additional members of the team include Mary McIntosh, president of Princeton Survey Research Associates International, and Jodie T. Allen. The *Pew Global Attitudes Project* team regularly consults with survey and policy experts, regional and academic experts, journalists, and policymakers whose expertise provides tremendous guidance in shaping the surveys.

All of the project's reports and commentaries are available at [www.pewglobal.org](http://www.pewglobal.org). The data are also made available on our website within two years of publication. Findings from the project are also analyzed in *America Against the World: How We Are Different and Why We Are Disliked* by Andrew Kohut and Bruce Stokes, published by Times Books. A paperback edition of the book was released in May 2007.

For further information, please contact:  
 Richard Wike  
 Associate Director, Pew Global Attitudes Project  
 202.419.4400 / [rwike@pewresearch.org](mailto:rwike@pewresearch.org)

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### Pew Global Attitudes Project Public Opinion Surveys

<u>Survey</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Interviews</u>
Summer 2002	44 Nations	38,263
November 2002	6 Nations	6,056
March 2003	9 Nations	5,520
May 2003	21 Publics*	15,948
March 2004	9 Nations	7,765
May 2005	17 Nations	17,766
Spring 2006	15 Nations	16,710
Spring 2007	47 Publics*	45,239
Spring 2008	24 Nations	24,717
Spring 2009	25 Publics*	26,397
Fall 2009	14 Nations	14,760
Spring 2010	22 Nations	24,790
Spring 2011	23 Publics*	29,100

\* Includes the Palestinian territories.

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## Methodological Appendix

<b><u>Country</u></b>	<b><u>Sample size</u></b>	<b><u>Margin of Error (pct. points)</u></b>	<b><u>Field dates</u></b>	<b><u>Mode</u></b>
U.S.	1,001	±4.0	March 25 – April 14	Telephone
Britain	1,000	±3.5	March 22 – April 13	Telephone
France	1,004	±3.5	March 21 – April 5	Telephone
Germany	1,001	±4.5	March 21 – April 11	Telephone
Spain	1,000	±3.5	March 22 – April 5	Telephone

Note: For more comprehensive information on the methodology of this study, see the Methods in Detail.



## Methods in Detail

### About the 2011 Pew Global Attitudes Survey

Results for the survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. Survey results are based on national samples. For further details on sample designs, see below.

The descriptions below show the margin of sampling error based on all interviews conducted in that country. For results based on the full sample in a given country, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus the margin of error. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

Country: **Britain**  
Sample design: Random Digit Dial (RDD) probability sample representative of all telephone households (roughly 99% of all British households)  
Mode: Telephone adults 18 plus  
Languages: English  
Fieldwork dates: March 22 – April 13, 2011  
Sample size: 1,000  
Margin of Error: ±3.5 percentage points  
Representative: Telephone households (including cell phone only households)

Country: **France**  
Sample design: Random Digit Dial (RDD) sample representative of all telephone households (roughly 99% of all French households) with quotas for gender, age and occupation and proportional to region size and urban/rural population  
Mode: Telephone adults 18 plus  
Languages: French  
Fieldwork dates: March 21 – April 5, 2011  
Sample size: 1,004  
Margin of Error: ±3.5 percentage points  
Representative: Telephone households (including cell phone only households)

Country: **Germany**  
Sample design: Random Last Two Digit Dial (RL(2)D) probability sample representative of roughly 95% of the German population proportional to population size  
Mode: Telephone adults 18 plus  
Languages: German  
Fieldwork dates: March 21 – April 11, 2011  
Sample size: 1,001  
Margin of Error:  $\pm 4.5$  percentage points  
Representative: Telephone households (excluding cell phone only households — between 5% and 10%)

Country: **Spain**  
Sample design: Random Digit Dial (RDD) probability sample representative of telephone households (about 99% of Spanish households) stratified by region and proportional to population size  
Mode: Telephone adults 18 plus  
Languages: Spanish/Castilian  
Fieldwork dates: March 22 – April 5, 2011  
Sample size: 1,000  
Margin of Error:  $\pm 3.5$  percentage points  
Representative: Telephone households (including cell phone only households)

Country: **United States**  
Sample design: Random Digit Dial (RDD) probability sample representative of all telephone households in the continental U.S. stratified by county  
Mode: Telephone adults 18 plus  
Languages: English  
Fieldwork dates: March 25 – April 14, 2011  
Sample size: 1,001  
Margin of Error:  $\pm 4.0$  percentage points  
Representative: Telephone households in continental U.S. (including cell phone only households)

**Pew Global Attitudes Project**  
**2011 Spring Survey Topline Results**  
**November 17, 2011 Release**

Methodological notes:

- Survey results are based on national samples. For further details on sample designs, see Methods in Detail.
- Due to rounding, percentages may not total 100%. The topline “total” columns show 100%, because they are based on unrounded numbers.
- Since 2007, the Global Attitudes Project has used an automated process to generate topline. As a result, numbers may differ slightly from those published prior to 2007.
- Not all questions included in the Spring 2011 survey are presented in this topline. Omitted questions have either been previously released or will be released in future reports.

		Q15a Please tell me whether you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree or completely disagree with the following statements: a. Success in life is pretty much determined by forces outside our control					
		Completely agree	Mostly agree	Mostly disagree	Completely disagree	DK/Refused	Total
United States	Spring, 2011	9	27	39	23	3	100
	Fall, 2009	6	23	43	25	3	100
	Spring, 2009	10	29	38	22	2	100
	Spring, 2007	7	26	41	23	3	100
	Summer, 2002	9	23	39	26	3	100
Britain	Spring, 2011	9	32	37	18	4	100
	Fall, 2009	10	31	38	17	4	100
	Spring, 2009	13	34	36	15	2	100
	Spring, 2007	11	31	40	16	3	100
	Summer, 2002	14	34	31	17	4	100
France	Spring, 2011	19	38	25	18	0	100
	Fall, 2009	20	32	27	20	0	100
	Spring, 2009	16	37	31	17	0	100
	Spring, 2007	18	34	26	22	0	100
	Summer, 2002	20	35	30	14	2	100
Germany	Spring, 2011	22	50	22	5	1	100
	Fall, 2009	18	48	22	9	3	100
	Spring, 2009	21	48	21	8	2	100
	Spring, 2007	23	47	24	7	0	100
	Summer, 2002	23	45	25	7	1	100
Spain	Spring, 2011	10	40	37	10	3	100
	Fall, 2009	10	41	32	10	8	100
	Spring, 2009	13	39	33	9	5	100
	Spring, 2007	14	39	29	10	8	100
	Spring, 1991	27	29	19	10	15	100

		Q15b Please tell me whether you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree or completely disagree with the following statements: b. Our people are not perfect, but our culture is superior to others					
		Completely agree	Mostly agree	Mostly disagree	Completely disagree	DK/Refused	Total
United States	Spring, 2011	14	35	29	17	5	100
	Spring, 2007	18	37	24	16	6	100
	Summer, 2002	23	37	23	13	3	100
Britain	Spring, 2011	7	25	34	29	4	100
	Spring, 2007	8	23	35	29	6	100
	Summer, 2002	9	28	32	26	4	100
France	Spring, 2011	6	21	30	43	0	100
	Spring, 2007	9	23	32	36	0	100
	Summer, 2002	10	23	33	34	1	100
Germany	Spring, 2011	8	39	32	20	1	100
	Spring, 2007	9	33	35	22	1	100
	Summer, 2002	8	32	32	26	2	100
Spain	Spring, 2011	10	34	38	17	1	100
	Spring, 2007	11	39	33	9	8	100

		Q15c Please tell me whether you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree or completely disagree with the following statements: c. It is sometimes necessary to use military force to maintain order in the world.					Total
		Completely agree	Mostly agree	Mostly disagree	Completely disagree	DK/Refused	
United States	Spring, 2011	26	49	15	8	2	100
	Spring, 2010	30	47	13	7	3	100
	Spring, 2007	35	42	14	6	3	100
Britain	Spring, 2011	17	53	17	10	3	100
	Spring, 2010	23	50	14	10	3	100
	Spring, 2007	19	48	19	9	5	100
	Spring, 1991	41	43	8	6	2	100
France	Spring, 2011	18	44	20	17	0	100
	Spring, 2010	19	38	20	23	0	100
	Spring, 2007	26	41	18	15	0	100
	Spring, 1991	39	38	12	9	3	100
Germany	Spring, 2011	10	40	28	22	0	100
	Spring, 2010	13	33	29	25	0	100
	Spring, 2007	11	30	29	29	1	100
	Spring, 1991	15	37	23	16	8	100
Spain	Spring, 2011	13	49	24	12	1	100
	Spring, 2010	10	45	28	15	2	100
	Spring, 2007	11	54	18	9	9	100
	Spring, 1991	28	18	19	29	7	100

		Q17 Which one of these comes closest to your opinion, number 1 or number 2?			Total
		Number 1 – It is not necessary to believe in God in order to be moral and have good values	Number 2 – It is necessary to believe in God in order to be moral and have good values	DK/Refused	
United States	Spring, 2011	46	53	2	100
	Spring, 2007	41	57	2	100
	Summer, 2002	40	58	2	100
Britain	Spring, 2011	78	20	2	100
	Spring, 2007	75	22	3	100
	Summer, 2002	73	25	2	100
France	Spring, 2011	85	15	0	100
	Spring, 2007	83	17	0	100
	Summer, 2002	86	13	1	100
Germany	Spring, 2011	66	33	1	100
	Spring, 2007	60	39	2	100
	Summer, 2002	66	33	1	100
Spain	Spring, 2011	80	19	1	100
	Spring, 2007	71	25	4	100

		Q18 And which one of these comes closer to your opinion, number 1 or number 2?				Total
		Number 1 – Homosexuality is a way of life that should be accepted by society	Number 2 – Homosexuality is a way of life that should not be accepted by society	DK/Refused		
United States	Spring, 2011	60	33	7	100	
	Spring, 2007	49	41	10	100	
	Summer, 2002	51	42	7	100	
Britain	Spring, 2011	81	15	3	100	
	Spring, 2007	71	21	8	100	
	Summer, 2002	74	22	4	100	
France	Spring, 2011	86	14	0	100	
	Spring, 2007	83	17	0	100	
	Summer, 2002	77	21	2	100	
Germany	Spring, 2011	87	12	1	100	
	Spring, 2007	81	17	2	100	
	Summer, 2002	83	15	2	100	
Spain	Spring, 2011	91	8	1	100	
	Spring, 2007	82	9	9	100	

		Q35CHR ASK IF CHRISTIAN: Do you think of yourself first as (name of survey country's people) or first as a Christian?					Total	N
		(Name of survey country's people)	Christian	Both equally (DO NOT READ)	Other (DO NOT READ)	DK/Refused		
United States	Spring, 2011	46	46	6	1	1	100	768
	Spring, 2006	47	43	8	1	2	100	820
Britain	Spring, 2011	63	21	10	4	1	100	463
	Spring, 2006	59	24	8	7	2	100	215
France	Spring, 2011	90	8	1	0	0	100	819
	Spring, 2006	83	14	3	0	0	100	325
Germany	Spring, 2011	70	23	6	1	1	100	616
	Spring, 2006	59	33	8	1	0	100	285
Spain	Spring, 2011	53	22	21	2	2	100	565
	Spring, 2006	60	14	21	4	1	100	384

		Q61 What's more important in (survey country) society that everyone be [In Britain: is] free to pursue their life's goals without interference from the state or that the state play an active role in society so as to guarantee that nobody is in need?			
		Freedom to pursue life's goals without interference	Nobody in need	DK/Refused	Total
United States	Spring, 2011	58	35	7	100
	Fall, 2009	55	36	9	100
	Summer, 2002	58	34	8	100
Britain	Spring, 2011	38	55	7	100
	Fall, 2009	44	47	9	100
	Summer, 2002	33	61	5	100
	Spring, 1991	33	59	8	100
France	Spring, 2011	36	64	0	100
	Fall, 2009	27	73	0	100
	Summer, 2002	36	62	2	100
	Spring, 1991	44	51	5	100
Germany	Spring, 2011	36	62	2	100
	Fall, 2009	34	62	4	100
	Summer, 2002	39	57	4	100
	Spring, 1991	47	47	7	100
Spain	Spring, 2011	30	67	3	100
	Fall, 2009	29	64	7	100
	Spring, 1991	34	57	9	100

		Q65 Which of these statements comes closer to your view?					Total
		(Survey country) should deal with its own problems and let other countries deal with their own problems as best they can	(Survey country) should help other countries deal with their problems	Neither (DO NOT READ)	Both (DO NOT READ)	DK/Refused	
United States	Spring, 2011	52	39	1	4	4	100
	Spring, 2010	46	45	1	4	3	100
Britain	Spring, 2011	48	45	1	4	2	100
	Spring, 2010	49	43	1	4	3	100
France	Spring, 2011	57	43	0	0	0	100
	Spring, 2010	65	35	0	0	0	100
Germany	Spring, 2011	43	54	0	2	0	100
	Spring, 2010	44	52	1	2	1	100
Spain	Spring, 2011	40	55	1	4	1	100
	Spring, 2010	47	49	1	1	1	100

		Q71 Do you think (survey country) should have UN approval before it uses military force to deal with an international threat or do you think that would make it too difficult for our country to deal with international threats?			Total
		Should have UN approval	Would make it too difficult to deal with threats	DK/Refused	
United States	Spring, 2011	45	44	11	100
	March, 2004	41	48	10	100
Britain	Spring, 2011	67	25	8	100
	March, 2004	64	30	7	100
France	Spring, 2011	66	33	0	100
	March, 2004	63	36	2	100
Germany	Spring, 2011	76	19	5	100
	March, 2004	80	15	5	100
Spain	Spring, 2011	74	17	10	100

		Q118 How important is religion in your life - very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?					Total
		Very important	Somewhat important	Not too important	Not at all important	DK/Refused	
United States	Spring, 2011	50	27	10	11	1	100
	Spring, 2010	56	25	9	9	1	100
	Fall, 2009	55	27	8	9	1	100
	Spring, 2009	53	29	8	9	1	100
	Spring, 2008	55	27	9	7	2	100
	Spring, 2007	56	26	9	8	1	100
	Spring, 2006	54	29	10	6	1	100
	Summer, 2002	59	25	8	6	1	100
Britain	Spring, 2011	17	21	21	40	1	100
	Spring, 2010	17	25	23	34	1	100
	Fall, 2009	19	26	23	31	1	100
	Spring, 2009	21	25	22	31	1	100
	Spring, 2008	18	24	23	34	1	100
	Spring, 2007	18	24	24	34	1	100
France	Spring, 2011	25	37	26	13	1	100
	Spring, 2010	13	23	25	38	0	100
	Spring, 2010	12	22	24	43	0	100
	Fall, 2009	13	24	27	36	0	100
	Spring, 2009	13	24	23	39	1	100
	Spring, 2008	10	27	26	36	0	100
	Spring, 2007	12	26	27	36	0	100
	Spring, 2006	13	31	25	30	0	100
Germany	Summer, 2002	11	27	28	33	1	100
	Spring, 2011	21	31	23	24	1	100
	Spring, 2010	25	32	20	23	1	100
	Fall, 2009	25	32	18	24	1	100
	Spring, 2009	24	32	18	25	1	100
	Spring, 2008	22	35	21	21	0	100
	Spring, 2007	24	32	20	24	1	100
	Spring, 2006	30	30	20	21	0	100
Spain	Summer, 2002	21	28	25	25	0	100
	Spring, 2011	22	27	19	31	1	100
	Spring, 2010	24	30	16	30	0	100
	Fall, 2009	23	32	21	24	1	100
	Spring, 2009	23	29	19	28	1	100
Spring, 2008	19	27	23	30	1	100	



		Q118 How important is religion in your life - very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?					Total
		Very important	Somewhat important	Not too important	Not at all important	DK/Refused	
	Spring, 2007	18	26	24	31	1	100
	Spring, 2006	25	23	24	27	1	100