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Views on National Economies Mixed as Many Countries Continue to Struggle

Mood positive in China, India, Australia; big differences across EU

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Views on National Economies Mixed as Many Countries Continue to Struggle

Mood positive in China, India, Australia; big differences across EU

Almost a decade after the global financial crisis rattled national economies, many in the world feel their respective countries' economies remain weak. A new Pew Research Center survey reveals a bleak picture in parts of Europe, with more than eight-in-ten in Greece, France and Spain describing their country's economic situation as bad. This gloom is not shared by all in the European Union, however – most Swedes, Germans and Dutch say their economy is doing well. And in China, India and Australia, views are mostly positive.

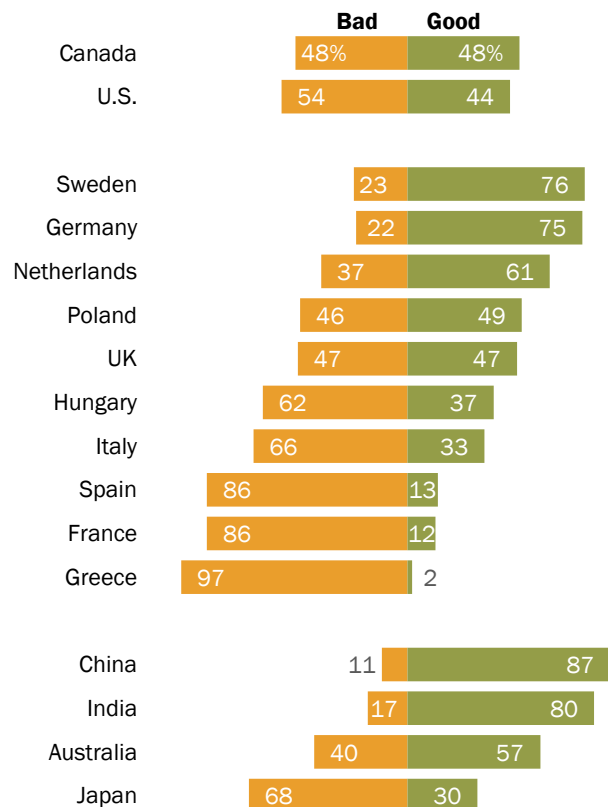
Just three of the 12 nations for which trends are available have seen an increase of public confidence in their national economy in the past year. This mirrors the International Monetary Fund's [projection](#) that 2016's global growth will be modest and fragile. In two major economies – Canada and Japan – views about economic conditions have become more negative than they were in 2015.

In many of the countries polled, though, there is little change in economic sentiment, with many, including the United States, struggling to improve to pre-recession levels.

These are among the main findings from a new survey by Pew Research Center, conducted in 16 countries among 20,132 respondents from April 4 to May 29, 2016, before the United Kingdom's so-called Brexit referendum to exit the EU.

Many see their economy as weak

The current economic situation in our country is ...



Source: Spring 2016 Global Attitudes Survey, Q3.

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Many have negative views of their country's economy

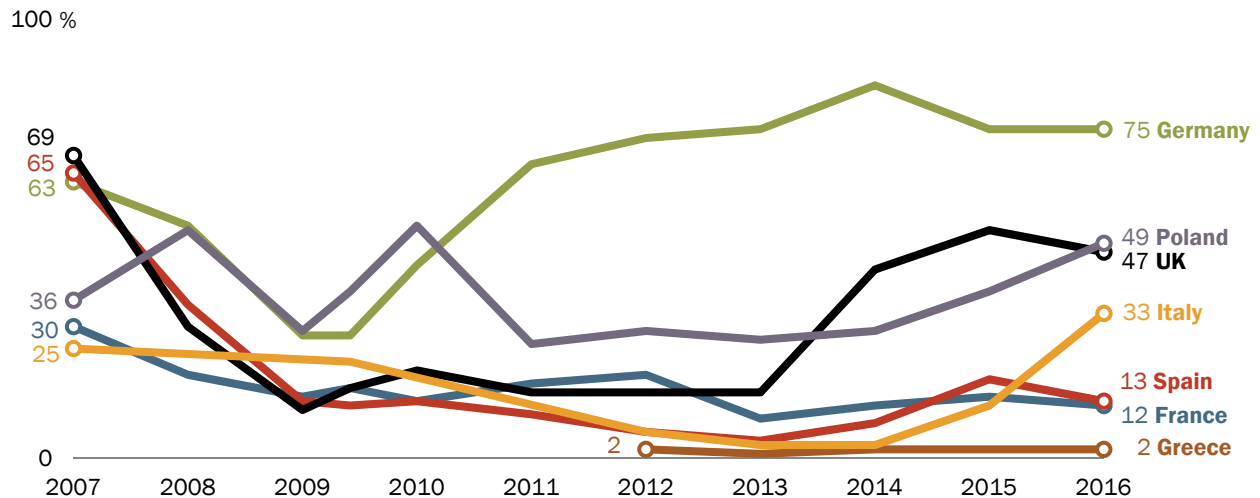
In only six of the 16 countries surveyed do a majority of people feel their national economy is in good shape. Even before the Brexit vote caused economic turmoil, Europeans generally took a depressed view of the economy. In seven of the 10 European countries surveyed, roughly half or less see their country's economic situation as good. Greeks stand out as the least happy, with only 2% saying the Greek economy is doing well. Similarly, just 12% in France and 13% in Spain give their economy a positive rating.

Swedes and Germans, on the other hand, are the most confident in their respective economies among the European Union countries surveyed, with 76% in Sweden and 75% in Germany saying the economic situation is good. Roughly six-in-ten (61%) in the Netherlands also express this view.

While there is still considerable economic gloom in Europe, sentiments have improved in several nations over the past few years. Ratings for the German economy are significantly better today than they were in the midst of the global financial crisis in 2009 (28% good). British and Polish views are much more positive than three years ago, and even though only a third of Italians rate their economy positively, this is much higher than the 3% who agreed in 2013. In contrast, the public mood has remained glum in Spain, France and Greece in recent years.

Some European publics view economy on the rebound, but others remain negative

The current economic situation in our country is good



Source: Spring 2016 Global Attitudes Survey. Q3.

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Across the Atlantic, Americans are slowly but consistently regaining confidence in their economy. A modest 44% of Americans currently think the U.S. economic situation is good, a full 27 percentage points higher than in 2009. Still, economic confidence remains lower than the pre-crisis 50% registered in 2007.

Canadians are now split on their opinions toward their economy, with equal shares of 48% saying the situation is good and bad. Notably, though, this year marks the second time since Pew

Research Center began polling in Canada in 2002 that the share of the public rating the economy positively has dropped below 50%. In 2009, during the global financial crisis, only 43% of Canadians said their economic situation was good.

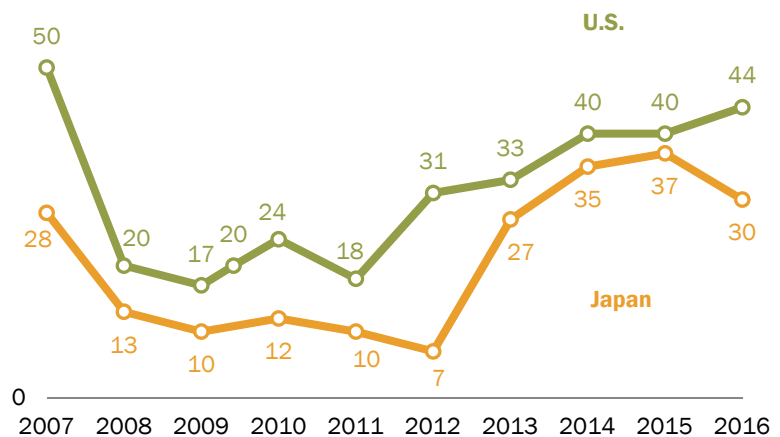
The Chinese and Indians stand out as particularly rosy about their countries' economies. Fully 87% in China and 80% in India say their economic situation is good. In Australia, 57% of the public gives the economy positive marks, similar to last year's 55%.

Such sentiment stands in sharp contrast to Japan, where only 30% are confident in the economy. In fact, the rising public faith in the Japanese economy in recent years seems to have reversed itself, and the country is now experiencing a downturn in sentiment for the first time in four years.

Ratings for U.S. economy continue post-crisis climb, but views of Japan's economy sputter

The current economic situation in our country is good

70%



Source: Spring 2016 Global Attitudes Survey. Q3.

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In a handful of countries across Europe and the Asia-Pacific region, income level is closely tied to views of the economy: Those with lower incomes tend to view the economy more negatively. This is particularly true in the Netherlands, where 50% of those who make less than the median household income in their country think the economy is good – a full 26 points lower than the sentiment among those who make more than the median income. In Germany and the UK, those with higher incomes are more likely to view their economy positively (15 points in both), and that difference is 14 points in Poland. Significant income gaps are also found in Australia and Japan.

In several countries, those with higher incomes are more positive on economy

The current economic situation in our country is good

	Lower income	Higher income	Diff
	%	%	
Netherlands	50	76	+26
Germany	68	83	+15
UK	39	54	+15
Poland	41	55	+14
Australia	50	63	+13
Japan	23	32	+9

Note: Only statistically significant differences shown. Income categorization based on income levels that are higher and lower than the median household income within each country.

Source: Spring 2016 Global Attitudes Survey, Q3.

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In most countries, men and women have similar views of their country's economy. However, across several European nations, men are more likely than women to take an upbeat view when it comes to the national economy. In the UK, 52% of men see the economic situation as good, whereas only 43% of British women feel the same. Similarly, in Germany, France and Spain there is an 8-point gender gap, with men feeling more positively about the country's economy than their female counterparts.

Ideology also plays a role in how publics see their economy. Those who fall on the same end of the political spectrum as their country's governing party are more likely to think their economic situation is good. In four of the 10 European countries surveyed, those who place themselves on the right of the ideological spectrum are more likely than those on the left to believe the economy is doing well. In all four of those countries, the government is led by a right-leaning party.

In Hungary, where the right-wing Fidesz party controls Parliament, 53% of those who identify

Ideological divides on the economy

The current economic situation in our country is good

	Left	Center	Right	Right-left diff
	%	%	%	
Hungary	24	35	53	+29
Poland	43	48	58	+15
UK	43	46	55	+12
Spain	6	14	15	+9
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Cons-lib diff
	%	%	%	
U.S.	55	45	37	-18

Note: Only statistically significant differences shown.

Source: Spring 2016 Global Attitudes Survey, Q3.

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as politically on the right feel that the Hungarian economy is robust, whereas only 24% of those who identify as politically on the left feel the same.

In PiS-led Poland, 58% of those on the right see the economic situation as good, compared with only 43% of those on the left. In the UK, where the Conservative Party leads the government, 55% of the right-leaners say the British economy is sound, compared with 43% of left-leaners. And in Spain, which is led by the center-right People's Party, 15% of the politically right see their economy positively, compared with only 6% of the politically left.

The same pattern is found in the U.S. In America, where the president is a Democrat, 55% of those who identify as liberal think the economy is doing well, whereas only 37% of conservatives feel the same.

CORRECTION (April 2017): The topline accompanying this report has been updated to reflect a revised weight for the Netherlands data, which corrects the percentages for two regions. The changes due to this adjustment are very minor and do not materially change the analysis of the report. For a summary of changes, see [here](#). For updated demographic figures for the Netherlands, please contact info@pewresearch.org.

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Methodology

About the Pew Research Center's Spring 2016 Global Attitudes Survey

Results for the survey are based on telephone and face-to-face interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International and TNS BMRB. The results are based on national samples, unless otherwise noted. More details about our international survey methodology and country-specific sample designs are available on our [website](#).

For more detailed information on survey methods for this report, see here:

http://www.pewglobal.org/international-survey-methodology/?year_select=2016

For more general information on international survey research, see here:

<http://www.pewresearch.org/methodology/international-survey-research/>

Topline Questionnaire

**Pew Research Center
Spring 2016 Survey
August 9, 2016 Release**

Methodological notes:

- Survey results are based on national samples. For further details on sample designs, see Methodology section and our [international survey methods database](#).
- Due to rounding, percentages may not total 100%. The topline “total” columns show 100%, because they are based on unrounded numbers.
- Since 2007, the Pew Research Center has used an automated process to generate toplines for its Global Attitudes Surveys. As a result, numbers may differ slightly from those published prior to 2007.
- Throughout this report, trends from India in 2013 refer to a survey conducted between December 7, 2013, and January 12, 2014 (Winter 2013-2014).
- For some countries, trends for certain years are omitted due to differences in sample design or population coverage. Omitted trends often reflect less representative samples than more recent surveys in the same countries. Trends that are omitted include:
 - India prior to Winter 2013-2014
- Not all questions included in the Spring 2016 survey are presented in this topline. Omitted questions have either been previously released or will be released in future reports.
- Throughout this topline, data from the Netherlands in 2016 have been updated to reflect a revised weight, which corrects the percentages for two regions.

		Q3. Now thinking about our economic situation, how would you describe the current economic situation in (survey country) — is it very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad?					
		Very good	Somewhat good	Somewhat bad	Very bad	DK/Refused	Total
United States	Spring, 2016	5	39	33	21	2	100
	Spring, 2015	4	36	32	24	4	100
	Spring, 2014	2	38	34	24	2	100
	Spring, 2013	2	31	35	30	2	100
	Spring, 2012	3	28	38	30	2	100
	Spring, 2011	1	17	38	42	1	100
	Spring, 2010	1	23	41	34	1	100
	Fall, 2009	1	19	44	34	2	100
	Spring, 2009	2	15	42	41	1	100
	Spring, 2008	2	18	41	36	3	100
	Spring, 2007	9	41	32	16	3	100
Summer, 2002	4	42	39	13	2	100	
Canada	Spring, 2016	3	45	35	13	4	100
	Spring, 2015	7	50	32	7	4	100
	Spring, 2013	6	61	26	6	1	100
	Spring, 2009	4	39	42	14	2	100
	Spring, 2007	19	61	13	5	2	100
	Summer, 2002	12	58	24	4	2	100
France	Spring, 2016	2	10	50	36	1	100
	Spring, 2015	1	13	56	29	1	100
	Spring, 2014	1	11	54	34	0	100
	Spring, 2013	0	9	53	38	0	100
	Spring, 2012	1	18	52	29	0	100
	Spring, 2011	0	17	52	31	0	100
	Spring, 2010	1	12	56	31	0	100
	Fall, 2009	1	15	60	24	0	100
	Spring, 2009	0	14	58	27	0	100
	Spring, 2008	0	19	61	20	0	100
	Spring, 2007	1	29	53	17	0	100
	Summer, 2002	1	44	47	6	2	100
Germany	Spring, 2016	15	60	18	4	3	100
	Spring, 2015	15	60	20	3	2	100
	Spring, 2014	14	71	13	2	1	100
	Spring, 2013	10	65	22	3	1	100
	Spring, 2012	12	61	22	5	0	100
	Spring, 2011	9	58	27	5	1	100
	Spring, 2010	2	42	47	8	1	100
	Fall, 2009	1	27	58	12	1	100
	Spring, 2009	1	27	54	16	2	100
	Spring, 2008	4	49	39	7	1	100
	Spring, 2007	8	55	25	11	1	100
	Summer, 2002	1	26	55	16	1	100
	Greece	Spring, 2016	0	2	20	77	0
Spring, 2014		0	2	30	67	0	100
Spring, 2013		0	1	27	72	0	100
Spring, 2012		0	2	20	78	0	100
Hungary	Spring, 2016	2	35	47	15	1	100
	Fall, 2009	1	5	44	50	1	100
Italy	Spring, 2016	4	29	34	32	1	100
	Spring, 2015	1	11	45	43	0	100
	Spring, 2014	0	3	38	58	0	100
	Spring, 2013	0	3	38	58	0	100
	Spring, 2012	1	5	37	56	1	100
	Fall, 2009	3	19	48	28	2	100
	Spring, 2007	1	24	56	14	5	100
Summer, 2002	0	36	51	11	2	100	
Netherlands	Spring, 2016	5	57	28	10	1	100

		Q3. Now thinking about our economic situation, how would you describe the current economic situation in (survey country) — is it very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad?					
		Very good	Somewhat good	Somewhat bad	Very bad	DK/Refused	Total
Poland	Spring, 2016	3	46	38	8	6	100
	Spring, 2015	1	37	46	13	3	100
	Spring, 2014	1	28	52	16	3	100
	Spring, 2013	2	25	51	19	2	100
	Spring, 2012	3	26	46	23	3	100
	Spring, 2011	1	25	49	22	3	100
	Spring, 2010	5	48	36	8	3	100
	Fall, 2009	2	36	47	12	3	100
	Spring, 2009	2	27	50	15	6	100
	Spring, 2008	3	49	36	6	6	100
	Spring, 2007	0	36	48	13	3	100
Summer, 2002	0	7	40	51	2	100	
Spain	Spring, 2016	1	12	36	50	1	100
	Spring, 2015	2	16	37	44	1	100
	Spring, 2014	1	7	30	63	0	100
	Spring, 2013	1	3	17	79	1	100
	Spring, 2012	1	5	22	72	0	100
	Spring, 2011	1	9	27	62	0	100
	Spring, 2010	1	12	40	48	0	100
	Fall, 2009	1	11	43	45	1	100
	Spring, 2009	1	12	38	47	2	100
	Spring, 2008	1	34	43	19	3	100
	Spring, 2007	9	56	29	5	1	100
Sweden	Spring, 2016	9	67	17	6	1	100
	Spring, 2007	25	59	11	2	3	100
United Kingdom	Spring, 2016	4	43	33	14	5	100
	Spring, 2015	5	47	29	16	3	100
	Spring, 2014	2	41	37	18	2	100
	Spring, 2013	2	13	44	39	2	100
	Spring, 2012	1	14	47	37	1	100
	Spring, 2011	1	14	45	40	1	100
	Spring, 2010	2	18	40	39	1	100
	Fall, 2009	2	14	45	38	2	100
	Spring, 2009	1	10	38	49	2	100
	Spring, 2008	2	28	47	20	2	100
	Spring, 2007	13	56	20	8	3	100
Summer, 2002	8	57	24	8	4	100	
Australia	Spring, 2016	5	52	31	9	3	100
	Spring, 2015	7	48	33	9	4	100
	Spring, 2013	13	54	20	10	3	100
	Spring, 2008	11	58	22	6	3	100
China	Spring, 2016	33	54	10	1	3	100
	Spring, 2015	25	65	7	1	3	100
	Spring, 2014	27	62	5	1	5	100
	Spring, 2013	26	62	9	1	3	100
	Spring, 2012	17	66	9	1	7	100
	Spring, 2011	19	69	8	0	3	100
	Spring, 2010	19	72	7	0	2	100
	Spring, 2009	19	69	9	1	2	100
	Spring, 2008	5	77	13	1	4	100
	Spring, 2007	16	66	13	1	4	100
	Summer, 2002	3	49	37	10	1	100
India	Spring, 2016	35	45	11	6	3	100
	Spring, 2015	27	47	16	8	2	100
	Spring, 2014	10	54	19	11	5	100
	Winter, 2013-2014	10	47	24	18	2	100

		Q3. Now thinking about our economic situation, how would you describe the current economic situation in (survey country) — is it very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad?					
		Very good	Somewhat good	Somewhat bad	Very bad	DK/Refused	Total
Japan	Spring, 2016	1	29	53	15	3	100
	Spring, 2015	1	36	46	14	2	100
	Spring, 2014	1	34	50	13	2	100
	Spring, 2013	1	26	55	16	1	100
	Spring, 2012	0	7	44	49	0	100
	Spring, 2011	1	9	46	42	1	100
	Spring, 2010	1	11	49	39	0	100
	Spring, 2009	1	9	47	43	1	100
	Spring, 2008	1	12	57	28	1	100
	Spring, 2007	1	27	54	17	2	100
Summer, 2002	0	6	42	51	0	100	