



**HARVARD Kennedy School**  
JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

# **Reflections on a Survey of Global Perceptions of International Leaders and World Powers**

Faculty Research Working Paper Series

---

Anthony Saich

Harvard Kennedy School

**December 2014**  
**RWP14-058**

Visit the **HKS Faculty Research Working Paper Series** at:  
<https://research.hks.harvard.edu/publications/workingpapers/Index.aspx>

The views expressed in the **HKS Faculty Research Working Paper Series** are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the John F. Kennedy School of Government or of Harvard University. Faculty Research Working Papers have not undergone formal review and approval. Such papers are included in this series to elicit feedback and to encourage debate on important public policy challenges. Copyright belongs to the author(s). Papers may be downloaded for personal use only.



HARVARD Kennedy School

**ASH CENTER**

for Democratic Governance  
and Innovation

# Reflections on a Survey of Global Perceptions of International Leaders and World Powers

---

Tony Saich

Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation  
John F. Kennedy School of Government  
Harvard University

December 2014

A recent survey asks citizens from 30 countries for their views on 10 influential national leaders who have a global impact (see Appendix). There are many rich findings among the data. However, two general trends stand out. The first is that the responses are influenced by geopolitics. Differences between nations and national leaders are clearly reflected in the attitudes of their own citizens. Thus, it is plain that the tensions between China and Japan result in very poor evaluations of China and its leader by Japanese citizens and vice versa. Second, there is a correlation in responses between the nature of the political system and citizen opinions of their own nation's leader. On the whole, in multiparty systems or genuine two-party systems such as in Europe and the US, citizens are more critical of their national leaders and policies than is the case in those nations where politics is less contested.

Not surprisingly, given the role that the US plays in global politics, President Obama enjoys the greatest awareness among respondents, receiving the highest percentage in 23 of the 30 countries (see **Figure One**). With the exception of only three countries, awareness of him exceeds 90%. For the other leaders, awareness tends to be regionally based. Thus, Chancellor Merkel is well known in Europe and Russia but far less so in Africa, Australasia, and Asia. President Xi Jinping is well known in Asia but, perhaps surprisingly, only 48.8% of Russian respondents and 59.8% of Vietnamese respondents were aware of him. This is despite the attempts to build a close relationship between China and Russia and the tensions that have existed between China and Vietnam. Prime Minister Abe is most clearly known in Korea and China but is not well recognized across much of the rest of the world. However, recognition does not mean approval, as opinions about Abe in China and Korea are extremely negative, as we shall see below. The same holds for President Putin who is well known across Europe but viewed poorly. He is less well-known in Africa but citizens of China, Japan, and Korea are well aware of him.

**Figure One: Awareness of 10 Key National Leaders among respondents in each of the 30 countries ( % )**

	Vladimir Putin	Cameron	Xi Jinping	François Hollande	Obama	Abe Shinzo	Angela Merkel	Dilma Rousseff	Modi	Zuma
Russia	96.7	65.4	48.8	62.6	92.1	21.6	88.9	17.4	18.5	11.7
Ukraine	95.7	68.9	29.4	65.2	95.7	15.8	90.9	11.4	8	4.7
France	78.2	80.7	37.8	97.1	97.3	14.1	94	32.2	7.6	22.6
UK	84	94	20	61	95.6	13	72.6	6.5	15.8	35.9
Spain	90	80.8	16.3	85	95.4	15	90	39.6	6.5	7.3
Germany	93.5	80.3	34.3	74.8	95.9	20.8	97.4	16.5	16.8	30
Italy	88.3	77.2	18.7	80.7	92.8	16.5	90.1	21.3	12.1	13.3
Finland	95.8	71.2	17.4	48.3	96.8	13.1	87.3	6.1	5.9	9.7
Australia	80.5	77.3	33.6	27.8	96.2	27	46	3.4	17.6	23.2
New Zealand	79.1	85	29	29.4	98	16.7	46.8	1.3	16.3	31
China	91	81.1	96.7	57.7	95.2	85.9	73.4	39.1	44.7	49.5
Japan	94.6	80.1	71.9	42.3	97.9	98.3	68.7	7.2	26.4	6.1
South Korea	87	35.7	84.7	45	96.6	88.8	57.1	11.8	6	6.1
Indonesia	63.9	44.4	33.5	18.5	93.4	52.4	37.6	9.3	12.1	11.4
Vietnam	81.9	32.4	59.8	21.6	91	56.7	38	6.4	13	7
Singapore	63.1	64.7	73.5	35.3	95.4	68.9	45.9	10.6	43.8	15.7
Malaysia	65.3	53	56.4	19.5	94.1	56.9	26.4	9.8	21.7	12.5
Thailand	57.2	56.8	58.2	14.2	91.7	50.1	20.9	10	11.8	9
Pakistan	39.7	57.6	71.8	9.8	76.3	12.2	24.8	4.6	71.1	7.8
India	60.9	59.8	65.5	19.8	86.7	47.8	29.2	14.1	94.8	21.8
Israel	91.8	80	6.3	70.3	97.8	7.4	84.9	12.3	4.9	6.5
Saudi Arabia	14.4	29	29.9	33.9	94.6	11.6	7.4	12.9	14	10.5
Egypt	31	33	31	48.5	91.7	12	7	24.5	10.6	15.1
Kenya	34.5	39.5	53.1	26.7	97.2	25.2	30.2	24.7	26.3	72.4
Tanzania	29.2	44	55.6	29	88.4	28	37.1	24.7	27.4	66.5
South Africa	68.3	66	28	30.6	96.9	14.6	44.6	12	15.4	98.1
US	75	53.7	30.2	24.7	96.6	20.7	37.7	9.1	11.7	14.8
Canada	82.1	60.3	27.9	41	97.9	16.6	40.8	6.5	10.1	17
Brazil	63.9	42.7	17.8	29.2	90.4	16.4	53.9	87.7	4.3	14.1
Chile	85.2	45	15	53.5	95.6	15.2	54.4	78.7	6.2	8.5

The average ratings are highest for President Obama (93.9%) followed by President Putin (79.3%) with President Xi's recognition at 59.12% (see **Figure Two**). The least noticed national leaders are President Rousseff (25.4%) and President Zuma (27.8%). Clearly, neither is seen to play a strong role on the national stage.

**Figure Two: Awareness of 10 Key National Leaders among respondents in 30 countries ( % )**

	National Leader	Proportion (%)
1	Obama	93.9
2	Putin	79.3
3	Cameron	66.8
4	Xi Jinping	59.1
5	Merkel	58.7
6	Abe	49.8
7	Hollande	45.1
8	Modi	32.9
9	Zuma	27.8
10	Rousseff	25.4

Where the media tends to be dominated by the government, it is not surprising that the citizens of those countries claim to pay more attention to their own leaders. Thus, 93.9% of Chinese respondents claim to pay attention to President Xi, and 92.5% for both President Zuma and President Putin (see **Figure Three**). Only 74.4% of US respondents state that they pay attention to President Obama, while the percentages for countries in Western Europe are even lower. This profile changes when one asks citizens about the leaders that they pay attention to who come from other countries. Clearly, Presidents Obama, Putin, and Xi emerge as the leaders to which citizens pay the most attention. Again, given America's global role, it is not surprising that President Obama is ranked among the top three in 21 countries. However, Western European citizens do not pay so much attention to him nor do those living in Australasia. President Xi draws the attention of those in Asia and Africa where over 80% claim to pay attention but also there is a steady percentage of people in most countries surveyed who pay attention. President Putin is most closely followed in six countries: the UK, China, Vietnam, the US, Egypt, and Finland. Somewhat surprisingly, these all rate above the attention paid to him in Ukraine.

**Figure Three: News Report Attention Rate of 10 Key National Leaders among respondents in each of the 30 countries (%)**

	Vladimir Putin	Cameron	Xi Jinping	François Hollande	Obama	Abe Shinzo	Angela Merkel	Dilma Rousseff	Modi	Zuma
Russia	92.5	52.5	57.9	48.9	69.8	37.8	69.3	46.8	39.3	31.6
Ukraine	70.8	51.3	52.5	51.2	69.3	41.2	65.8	41	41.9	16
France	63.6	70.4	75.4	48.9	81.2	78	76.2	64.8	75	45.5
UK	80.9	52	53.1	38.9	40.7	32.4	27.6	41.5	50.8	46.4
Spain	65	32.6	43.5	36.2	42.9	24.3	51.1	36	29.4	44.7
Germany	66.3	57.5	52.5	58.1	75.1	53.3	74.1	48.1	51.8	42.3
Italy	51	61.5	50.7	50.2	75.4	54.5	69.6	39.8	43.3	40.1
Finland	87	29.2	32.6	25.9	48.3	15.9	31.9	18.8	35.5	15.6
Australia	85.9	26.8	59.3	25.4	42.5	26.7	18.3	36.3	45.2	49
New Zealand	79.8	28.3	57.6	33.8	38.8	34.1	16	28.6	54	52.1
China	84.7	57.5	93.9	54.9	82.7	67.1	70	47	51.1	40.6
Japan	59.5	43.9	59.9	40.2	67.2	71.6	51	30.8	61.5	40
South Korea	56.9	53.9	68.1	44.9	82.8	58.1	70.9	50	58	33.3
Indonesia	61.4	57.9	66.9	48.3	78.7	68.4	66.6	36	57.8	35.9
Vietnam	84.8	60.9	73.2	56	88.8	82.4	68.5	40	54.5	40
Singapore	66.6	53.4	65.3	42.4	70.2	59.9	51.5	49	52.2	35.4
Malaysia	51.8	55.2	62.4	43.1	74	56	54.8	25.8	48.1	24.4
Thailand	69.2	63.1	74.6	69.4	75.6	79.6	73.6	63.9	64.3	61.3
Pakistan	63.4	70	87.3	51.2	76.7	68.6	55.5	31.6	71.8	46.2
India	72.3	69.7	75.6	59.3	85.5	76.4	61.9	59.9	91.7	52.8
Israel	59.1	43.5	34.4	35.9	73.2	31.6	55.1	20.7	48	15.2
Saudi Arabia	62.8	67.6	67.3	66.3	63.1	76.2	75	47.1	48.7	47.4
Egypt	85	77.4	71.3	68.8	70.7	75.5	71.9	75.7	44.4	61.3
Kenya	51.6	74.2	79	46.6	84.8	55.9	45.4	32.3	67.6	59.3
Tanzania	62.1	81.2	89	83.7	88.6	73.9	78.2	65.6	38.4	78.9
South Africa	70.7	34.2	53.6	35.7	54.8	32.9	22.9	37	69	92.5
US	86	36.8	80.5	43.8	74.4	43.6	37.6	64.4	58.5	45.4
Canada	78.2	41.8	64.3	44.2	57.5	29.8	36.5	47	58.4	48.3
Brazil	62.3	60.4	61.1	55.3	82.5	61.6	70.3	82.3	42.9	35.1
Chile	61.6	44.9	47.4	47.5	73	45.6	43.5	54.5	50	36.4

We see a clear correlation between political systems and the ratings of their own leaders by the respondents. In countries where discussion of leaders is more constrained, the national leaders rate very highly (see **Figure Four**). President Xi receives a rating of 9 from his citizens and President Putin receives 8.7 (on a scale of 1 to 10). One can reasonably surmise that the rating of Prime Minister Modi is an anomaly as he was just recently elected and thus was enjoying a political honeymoon. In countries where the press is more open and critical, we see that leaders receive lower ratings from their citizens. Thus, President Obama receives just 6.2, Prime Minister Abe 6.0, and the deeply unpopular President Hollande 4.8.

**Figure Four: Scoring results of its leader among respondents in each of the 10 key countries**

	Country	Scoring results ( Ten point system )
1	Xi Jinping	9.0
2	Putin	8.7
3	Modi	8.6
4	Zuma	7.0
5	Merkel	6.7
6	Rousseff	6.3
7	Obama	6.2
8	Abe	6.0
9	Cameron	5.5
10	Hollande	4.8

When we look at how the 10 leaders are rated by others, a somewhat different picture emerges. Interestingly, Chancellor Merkel fares the best, being placed within the top three by 23 countries and even in 13 countries she is ranked first (see **Figure Five**). However, she has a low favorability in Russia (5.6), a country of which she has been deeply critical, and Spain (5.8), which has been critical of her financial policies following the global financial crisis. Despite somewhat unfavorable ratings by his fellow compatriots, President Obama rates fairly well in other countries with the exception, as one might expect, of Russia (4.9) and Pakistan (5.8). More surprisingly, he receives a rating of only 5.8 from those in Japan. President Xi is highly thought of in much of Asia, Africa, and Eastern Europe. The exception in Asia is, of course, Japan where he receives a rating of only 3.8. Interestingly, Chinese citizens view Prime Minister Abe a little more favorably at 5.4. President Xi also receives a poor rating from Vietnamese respondents, not surprising given the tensions between the two countries. He does not fare too well in Europe with five of the six countries polled giving him ratings below 6, with Italy giving him a 6. Prime Minister Abe fares well in Asia, with the exception of China and Korea, and also in Africa and North America. President Putin divides opinion with only one-third of the countries giving him a rating above 6. However, he is popular in Vietnam (8) and China (7.9).

**Figure Five: Scoring results of 10 Key National Leaders among respondents in each of the 30 countries**

	Vladimir Putin	Cameron	Xi Jinping	François Hollande	Obama	Abe Shinzo	Angela Merkel	Dilma Rousseff	Modi	Zuma
Russia	8.7	4.1	7.8	4.8	4.9	5.9	5.6	7.2	7.2	6.5
Ukraine	3.6	6.4	7	5.9	6.7	7.1	6.4	6.7	6.5	6.2
France	3.3	5.8	4.6	4.8	6.8	6.3	6.6	5.9	5.7	5.7
UK	3.1	5.5	5.3	5.6	6.7	6.1	6.8	6.2	6.1	5.7
Spain	3.1	6.1	4.6	5.4	6.4	6.5	5.8	5.2	6.2	5.8
Germany	3	5.7	4.9	5.6	6.3	6	6.7	5.7	5.9	5.9
Italy	6.9	7.2	6	6.8	8.3	6.5	7.9	6.1	6.2	6.2
Finland	2.4	6.9	4.9	6.5	6.7	7.2	7.3	6.6	6	6.2
Australia	3	6.9	5.9	6	7	6.7	7.5	6.7	6.8	5.8
New Zealand	3.2	6.6	5.5	5.6	6.9	6.2	7.1	5.1	6.7	5.4
China	7.9	6.6	9	6.7	6.2	5.4	7.6	7.1	6.5	7
Japan	4.2	5.7	3.8	5.7	5.8	6	6.1	5.9	6.6	6.2
South Korea	4.6	6.4	6.1	5.9	7	5.1	7.3	6.1	6.6	6.4
Indonesia	5.9	6.9	7.2	6.6	6.9	7.6	7.3	6.9	7.1	6.7
Vietnam	8	7.5	4.7	7.5	8.2	8.5	8.3	7.4	7.5	7.4
Singapore	5.1	6.7	6.7	5.9	7.1	6.4	7.1	6.4	6.3	6
Malaysia	5.1	6.4	7	6.2	6.3	6.8	7	5.5	6.7	5.8
Thailand	6.7	7.2	7.6	7.7	7.3	8	7.9	7.4	7.2	7.3
Pakistan	6.7	6.6	8.9	6.3	5.8	8.1	7.5	6.3	5.9	7.1
India	6.9	7.1	6.7	7	7.8	8.1	7.5	7.3	8.6	6.9
Israel	4.2	6.3	5.7	5.8	6	6.4	7.1	5.5	7	5.7
Saudi Arabia	6.5	6.9	6.9	6.4	6.6	7.5	7.2	6.6	6.6	6.4
Egypt	7.3	6.6	7	6.7	6.6	7.3	7	7	6.8	6.5
Kenya	5.2	7.2	8	5.8	8.1	6.3	6.2	5.6	6	6.5
Tanzania	6.5	7.5	8.4	7.4	8.5	7.1	7.4	6.4	7	8
South Africa	4.7	6.9	6.3	6.2	7	6.8	7.7	6.5	6.4	7
US	3.5	7.1	5.7	6.5	6.2	6.9	7.2	7.4	6.9	6.9
Canada	3.5	6.8	5.2	6.1	6.9	6.8	7.3	6.3	6.4	5.9
Brazil	4.6	6.8	5.9	6.5	7	7.2	7.5	6.3	6.9	6.2
Chile	5	6.5	5.8	6.1	6.4	6.9	7.7	5.7	6.6	6.3



This divide in opinion is shown by the fact that the average ranking across the 30 countries for Putin is the lowest of all leaders surveyed (6). President Xi obtains the highest rating (7.5) because, with the exception of Japan, he is reasonably well received in all countries in the survey. President Obama nestles in at sixth place (6.6), while Merkel ranks third (7.2) (see **Figure Six**).

**Figure Six: Scoring results of 10 Key National Leaders among respondents in 30 countries**

	National Leader	Scoring results ( Ten point system )
1	Xi Jinping	7.5
2	Modi	7.3
3	Merkel	7.2
4	Zuma	6.8
5	Rousseff	6.8
6	Obama	6.6
7	Cameron	6.5
8	Hollande	6.3
9	Abe	6.1
10	Putin	6.0

We can observe the same phenomenon with respect to the confidence citizens have in how their own leaders are handling domestic and international affairs. President Xi tops the list of both categories at 94.8% and 93.8% respectively (see **Figure Seven**). President Putin comes third on both lists (86.2% and 86% respectively); again, I have discounted Modi as he was just elected. Leaders do not fare so well in countries where the press and public are more critical of their leaders and policy. Thus, Chancellor Merkel receives 63.2% confidence for her handling of both domestic and international affairs. President Obama enjoys a confidence level in his handling of domestic affairs of 51.7% and 49.1% for international affairs. Poor President Zuma of South Africa comes off worst in both categories with a rating of 12.8% for confidence in his handling of domestic affairs and 18% for his handling of international affairs.

**Figure Seven: Ranking of domestic confidence of its leader on handling domestic/international affairs among respondents in each of the 10 key countries ( % )**

	Confidence on handling domestic affairs		Confidence on handling international affairs	
	Country	Proportion	Country	Proportion
1	Xi Jinping	94.8	Xi Jinping	93.8
2	Modi	93.2	Modi	93.3
3	Putin	86.2	Putin	86.0
4	Merkel	63.2	Merkel	63.2
5	Obama	51.7	Cameron	49.4
6	Abe	50.3	Obama	49.1
7	Cameron	48.6	Abe	48.0
8	Rousseff	29.5	Rousseff	36.4
9	Hollande	24.8	Hollande	34.0
10	Zuma	12.8	Zuma	18.0

When we look at the wider range of the respondents from the 30 countries, we get a more nuanced picture and we can see clearly the influences of geopolitics. Chancellor Merkel receives high marks for her handling of both domestic and international affairs. In total, 23 countries place her in the top three, 12 in Europe and four in the Americas where she is highly regarded (see **Figures Eight and Nine**). Given the frictions with Russia over the Ukraine and other questions, she receives the lowest ratings from Russian respondents for confidence in her handling of domestic and international affairs (43.9% and 37.8% respectively). Again, her lowest appreciation in Europe is with Spanish respondents who rate confidence in her handling of domestic affairs at 58% and in international affairs at 53.6%. President Xi Jinping enjoys high confidence in his handling of domestic affairs across Asia, with the exception of Japan, and especially in Africa. His approval rating in Europe tends to be lower with the highest rating in England (54.9%) and the lowest in Spain at 31.8%. Again, it is no surprise that only 13.6% of Japanese respondents have confidence in his handling of domestic affairs. The same results are found with respect to confidence in his handling of international affairs; in Japan, he enjoys only a 14.3% confidence level. Perhaps his emphasis on building good relations with the US may be bearing fruit as he enjoys a 68.5% confidence level among US respondents for his handling of international affairs. With the exception again of Europe, his ratings in other countries remain good. The lowest rating in Europe is in Spain (21.2%) and his highest is in Italy at 46.6%. Prime Minister Abe fares reasonably well on both counts with the obvious exception of China (14.1% for his handling of domestic affairs and 13.1% for international affairs), and Korea (56.1% and 51.1% respectively). He enjoys relatively high standing in the US—higher than President Obama receives from Japan. For confidence in his handling of domestic affairs, Prime Minister Abe receives a rating of 78.7%, third in American eyes behind Chancellor Merkel and Prime Minister Cameron. Presidents Obama and Putin tend to divide opinion, especially with respect to international affairs. For his handling of domestic affairs, President Obama enjoys support in Africa and in Western and Northern Europe, but in Russia only 12.6% approve of his handling of domestic affairs, while in China it is 59.1%, slightly higher than American appreciation of President Xi's handling of China's domestic policy (52.6%). President Putin enjoys high ratings from a few countries such as China (89.7%) and Vietnam (93.7%) but very low approval from others such as the US (27.6%) and Finland (10.7%). Given Russia's involvement in the Ukraine crisis, approval for his domestic policies are low (35.8%), although these ratings are not as low as those from other countries within Western and Northern Europe. Putin's handling of international affairs does not enjoy widespread support. Respondents from only six countries give him a rating of over 70% for his handling of international affairs; these include Vietnam (90.6%) and China (89.1%). In the UK, the rating is only 15.3%, Germany 16.3%, and Finland 9.3%. The Ukraine is 35.4%, perhaps reflecting the divided nature of that country with remaining pro-Russian sentiment. Approval in the US was a little higher than in Europe at 24.9%.

**Figure Eight: Confidence of 10 key national leaders on handling domestic affairs among respondents in each of the 30 countries ( % )**

	Vladimir Putin	Cameron	Xi Jinping	François Hollande	Obama	Abe Shinzo	Angela Merkel	Dilma Rousseff	Modi	Zuma
Russia	86.2	32.5	86.1	28.8	12.6	60.6	43.9	72.3	76	54.8
Ukraine	35.8	68.4	81	49.2	61.1	78.8	64.8	49.2	69.7	36
France	18.8	63.3	30.3	24.8	78.2	77.1	74.1	57	50	45.5
UK	20.8	48.7	54.9	49.6	75.2	66.7	79.1	49	52.3	36.8
Spain	21.8	67.8	31.8	50.7	71.4	76.9	58	40.3	52.9	50
Germany	17.3	54.2	31.9	41.6	61.5	57.5	63.2	37.6	45.2	36.5
Italy	30	70.5	48.7	41.1	80.4	76.5	71.3	38.6	40.2	46.8
Finland	10.7	75	40.2	60	76.1	79.7	82.2	46.9	64.5	54.9
Australia	20.4	79.5	67.1	64.6	75.8	76.7	90	68.1	65.2	37.7
New Zealand	21.1	77.7	55.7	59.4	80.5	78	91.7	42.9	75.3	35.5
China	89.7	63	94.7	63.4	59.1	14.1	88	69.6	59.9	69.2
Japan	26.5	51.4	13.6	48.1	51	50.3	62.6	52.3	74.5	52.7
South Korea	83.4	76.1	91.5	69.8	88.8	56.1	93.9	63.3	82	66.7
Indonesia	57.9	81.5	84	66.4	74.6	94.6	89.4	65.3	74.2	68.5
Vietnam	93.7	82.4	56.5	78.5	90.6	93.9	95.4	67.2	82.1	73.4
Singapore	46.2	77.1	79.9	56	78.7	72.1	90	67.2	60.9	47.6
Malaysia	41.5	67	79.7	62	60.1	77.9	82.2	32.8	60.4	48.6
Thailand	62.9	73.9	87.7	78.8	71.5	91.8	87.9	77.1	69.4	69.3
Pakistan	81.6	84.6	97	76.8	69.6	89.2	90.8	73.7	42.2	78.4
India	76.4	82	77.5	76.7	89.6	93.1	90.7	73.9	93.2	69.2
Israel	24.8	59.9	50	38.4	48.8	68.4	77.6	20.7	68	15.2
Saudi Arabia	61.5	71.3	82.1	72.2	64.7	90.5	82.5	78.5	67.1	77.2
Egypt	88.2	79.2	89	80.1	59.4	92.8	82.5	88.1	82.7	82.2
Kenya	59.1	81.2	89.8	59	90.4	60.3	66.2	43.6	54.9	57.7
Tanzania	71.7	86.1	94.3	79.6	93.1	76.8	75.5	62.4	74.8	89.6
South Africa	47.9	86.9	79.8	77.9	82.9	86.3	93.8	65.8	73.2	12.8
US	27.6	86.9	52.6	73.6	51.7	78.7	86.3	78.1	74.7	68.1
Canada	27.5	77.8	54.8	60.9	75	81.6	88.8	52.9	68	52.8
Brazil	25.9	71.1	54.9	57.8	73.9	80.4	79.4	29.5	57.1	41.2
Chile	47.4	73.1	61.6	55.8	70.4	77.2	89.4	41.3	65.6	61.4

**Figure Nine: Confidence of 10 key national leaders on handling international affairs among respondents in each of the 30 countries ( % )**

	Vladimir Putin	Cameron	Xi Jinping	François Hollande	Obama	Abe Shinzo	Angela Merkel	Dilma Rousseff	Modi	Zuma
Russia	85.9	27.9	79.7	22.4	16.7	48.6	37.8	64.5	58.6	36.9
Ukraine	35.4	64.1	71.5	49.4	59.3	72.9	57	49.2	62.8	44
France	18.3	64	32.2	34	76.3	62.7	72.9	46.3	34.3	37
UK	15.7	49.4	39.5	47.8	68.7	61.9	71.6	51	48.4	32.6
Spain	20.3	60	21.2	54.3	66.9	69.2	53.6	36.9	41.2	42.1
Germany	16.3	54.8	30.1	49.7	58.1	54.5	63.2	39.1	40.8	39
Italy	30.7	66.4	46.6	43.9	75.8	69.7	67.5	39.7	34	49.5
Finland	9.3	71.8	36.9	57.3	68.9	79.7	77	59.4	48.4	45.1
Australia	15	81.5	61.1	65.2	74.8	73.3	86.4	54.5	66.1	32.5
New Zealand	15.5	76.7	48.8	55.1	77.5	73.6	85.9	28.6	67.4	35.5
China	89.1	64.6	93.9	65	62.5	13.1	86.3	68.4	57.3	64.8
Japan	27.9	51.3	14.3	53	55	48	62.3	44.6	60.2	49.1
South Korea	79.9	79.2	89.6	69	90.1	51.1	91.8	57.1	76	64.7
Indonesia	54.2	77	78.1	63.7	67.5	87.2	84.1	62.7	71.2	60.8
Vietnam	90.6	79.9	47.4	76.9	90.7	92.4	90.6	67.3	75.9	68.3
Singapore	41	78	74.4	57.1	79.9	67.2	85.3	67.3	64	52.4
Malaysia	37.3	61.9	69.6	60.4	60.6	64.8	74.5	29.3	41.9	36.5
Thailand	60.5	75.2	79.5	82.2	73.3	88.7	85.6	77.1	66.3	68
Pakistan	73.7	75.6	97.4	64.7	61.5	85.3	85	81.6	36.6	70.8
India	74.8	83.2	74.7	77.8	89.8	92.3	88.7	75.9	93.3	70.9
Israel	23.9	50.4	34.4	32.6	43.4	52.6	68.7	14.3	44	9.1
Saudi Arabia	57.7	72.6	74.7	70.1	60.7	90.4	77.5	80	71.1	71.9
Egypt	89.4	70.4	85.5	73	55.5	89.8	79	86.1	79.3	73.3
Kenya	55.9	84.5	88.1	59	87.4	54.4	61.4	48.8	50	56.2
Tanzania	66.9	86.5	94.7	85.7	93.1	82.4	80.3	64.8	69.7	89.3
South Africa	43.1	85.4	67.9	76.7	80.8	82.4	89.2	69.4	67.4	18
US	24.9	81.4	51.3	68.5	49.1	73.1	81.8	75.9	74.7	67.4
Canada	22.6	76.6	53.5	61	71.4	73.6	88.7	52.9	52.8	42.7
Brazil	28.3	70.5	50	62.4	65.2	78.2	80.8	36.4	57.1	49.1
Chile	41	69.6	60.2	59.4	64.6	73.4	86.6	50.2	65.7	65.9

In terms of overall assessment, Chancellor Merkel rated first for confidence in her handling of domestic affairs (79.7%), President Xi ranked second at 78.5%, Obama fifth (64.5%), Putin seventh (60.2%), and Abe worst (42.5%) (see **Figure Ten**). The rankings are similar with respect to confidence in the handling of international affairs with Merkel ranked highest (77.2%), President Xi second (76.5%), Obama fifth (60%), Putin eighth (58.9%), and Abe faring worst at 40.3%. This leaves us with four leaders that enjoy high levels of confidence for their handling of domestic and international affairs: Xi Jinping, Putin, Modi, and Merkel. Presidents Rouseff, Hollande, and Zuma appear not to enjoy confidence in their handling of either domestic or international affairs.

**Figure Ten: Confidence of 10 key national leaders on handling domestic/international affairs among respondents in 30 countries ( % )**

	Confidence on handling domestic affairs		Confidence on handling international affairs	
	National Leader	Proportion (%)	National Leader	Proportion (%)
1	Merkel	79.7	Merkel	77.2
2	Xi Jinping	78.5	Xi Jinping	76.5
3	Modi	72.5	Modi	69.8
4	Cameron	67.2	Cameron	66.8
5	Obama	64.5	Obama	64.2
6	Zuma	62	Rouseff	60
7	Putin	60.2	Zuma	59.2
8	Rouseff	59.9	Putin	58.9
9	Hollande	57.4	Hollande	58.7
10	Abe	42.5	Abe	40.3

The leaders in the survey rule over countries that have adopted disparate development strategies ranging from almost full market-based policies to nations where state engagement and control of key sectors is more prevalent. Looking at the responses from all 30 countries, very surprisingly, India (87.8%) tops the list of those who feel that their own country's development strategy is correct (see **Figure Eleven**). Again, this might be distorted by the recent election in India. Russia places third (79.6%) and China fourth (78.6%). Americans have a much more critical view of their own development, perhaps influenced by the gridlock in Washington, and ranks 20th (44.8%). The UK comes out middling in 15th place (51.5%), while Italians show little faith in their country's development, as only 17% believe that it is on the correct path. Most surprisingly, Korea comes in 29th place (25.1%) while Japan comes in at 30.4%. One wonders if this is related to perceived limits to the East Asian model of development once it has reached an advanced level.

**Figure Eleven: Ranking of proportion for domestic recognition on own country's development strategy in 30 countries ( % )**

	Country	Proportion (%)
1	India	87.8
2	Tanzania	81.9
3	Russia	79.6
4	China	78.6
5	New Zealand	70.3
6	Singapore	66.6
7	Canada	66.0
8	Indonesia	65.5
9	Kenya	63.3
10	Australia	58.3
11	Thailand	58.1
12	Vietnam	57.9
13	Chile	56.5
14	Germany	53.5
15	UK	51.5
16	Saudi Arabia	51.5
17	Israel	49.1
18	Brazil	45.1
19	Egypt	44.9
20	US	44.8
21	Malaysia	44.8
22	France	42.2
23	Pakistan	40.9
24	Finland	37.5
25	Ukraine	34.5
26	Japan	30.4
27	South Africa	29.3
28	Spain	28.8
29	South Korea	25.1
30	Italy	17.0

---

However, this perception is not shared by other countries when they look at Japan and Korea. Over 24 countries had in excess of 50% of respondents who thought positively about Japan's development direction. However, geopolitics plays a role in assessment and only 7.7% of Koreans and 9.4% of Chinese felt this way (see **Figure Twelve**). This is surprising given the similarities in economic approach during the early phase of economic take-off. The responses of these two countries are almost certainly influenced by the sovereignty and historical disputes between the nations. China's spectacular growth in recent decades has clearly impressed some in Asia, Africa, and Latin America where it enjoys a high evaluation. Again, we see the influence of geopolitics with only 1.8% of Japanese being impressed and 15.9% of Vietnamese, despite the obvious similarities of political structure and economic policy in Vietnam. Pro-market US respondents are not so impressed, with only 8.6% indicating that the overall development strategy is correct. Russia's development strategy is most highly prized by the Chinese (62.1%) and the Egyptians (60.3%) but is thought of poorly by the Europeans, the US, and Japan. In an overall evaluation, Germany tops the charts (66.3%) with the UK second (56.5%). China comes in third (54.7%) while the US ranks seventh (43.5%) with Russia bringing up the rear (38.5%).

**Figure Twelve: Recognition on development strategy of 10 key countries among respondents in each of the 30 countries ( % )**

	China	Russia	UK	France	US	Japan	Germany	Brazil	India	South Africa
Russia	87	79.6	34.9	37.7	15.3	57	44.1	62.2	58.9	28.6
Ukraine	66.3	24.4	68.2	58.8	53.3	72.3	64.2	31.1	30	19
France	28.3	13.4	63.7	42.2	58.6	56.2	71	40	33.1	38.2
UK	35.1	7.4	51.5	44.7	47.9	48.6	61.2	31	32.5	32.5
Spain	43.1	15.6	72.1	58.7	62.9	68.7	66.7	27.1	24.4	24.6
Germany	29.6	8.6	51.7	51	37.8	43.8	53.5	32.1	28	31.7
Italy	38.5	15.7	64.1	47.9	55.9	60	62	28.6	23.9	24.4
Finland	33.5	5.1	65.2	60.4	34.7	66.3	74.2	33.9	31.1	31.4
Australia	47.5	8.1	63.8	50.8	52.8	60.3	61.7	28.1	36.3	29
New Zealand	39.8	7.7	62.6	46.2	46.2	55.6	56	24.8	29.2	31.7
China	78.6	62.1	49.6	57.8	32.2	9.4	74.2	59.2	33.3	55
Japan	1.8	4.9	26.7	29.5	23.1	30.4	41.3	16.8	27.7	13.7
South Korea	38.7	16.2	53.8	54.8	51.8	7.7	72.7	30.2	29.8	23.9
Indonesia	74.8	38.8	77.7	70.6	51.9	90.3	83.7	51.9	57.2	46.6
Vietnam	15.9	58	77	76	67.2	87.6	77.8	53.5	56.4	38.5
Singapore	62.8	21.9	61.2	46.6	58.3	63.9	65.5	32.8	44.9	28
Malaysia	65	29	67	57.2	43.9	83.3	68.9	35.7	36.7	33.2
Thailand	65.6	29.4	59.9	58.4	50.4	84	62.2	41	36.7	27.3
Pakistan	94.8	44.7	64	55.2	28.1	85.1	71.6	44.7	33.7	48.4
India	48.1	47.9	67.2	59.9	64.4	83.8	67.4	50.5	87.8	51.2
Israel	59.3	19	59.1	32.1	56.9	67.5	74.8	27.2	37.2	24.3
Saudi Arabia	71.4	29	57.2	53.3	46.1	84.9	69.9	37.3	42.6	27.7
Egypt	83.5	60.3	52	56	33.3	89.6	80.3	58.6	55.8	41.6
Kenya	84.2	30.1	66.2	49.7	75.5	62.2	54.5	39	47.5	63.3
Tanzania	88.2	56	72.4	72.2	74.4	73.8	70.2	64.3	70	78.3
South Africa	57	26	71.1	59.5	56.5	63.3	78	48.6	41.7	29.3
US	28.6	12.4	62	49	44.8	52.8	53.4	34.9	33	29.4
Canada	35.5	12.2	64.5	58.2	48.1	57.1	61.6	40.1	33.6	31.7
Brazil	60.9	33.8	71	67	59.2	85.5	81.8	45.1	33.2	33.5
Chile	68.8	34	71	67.9	54.8	81.9	81.2	34.6	31.3	29.6



Finally, in terms of appreciation of President Xi Jinping, visits by leaders to particular countries make a significant difference in two respects. First, regarding people's trust in President Xi's domestic and international policies, appreciation rises 10% for those countries that he has visited (see **Figure Thirteen**). Perhaps less surprisingly, awareness of President Xi also rises 10% if he has visited a country. This would seem to argue for the value of state visits.

**Figure Thirteen: Recognition Comparison among countries that Xi Jinping has paid state visit with those he has not**

	Countries have been visited	Countries have not been visited
Appreciation of Chinese culture ( % )	22.0	25.3
Appreciation of China's development strategy ( % )	54.4	49.7
Awareness rate of Xi Jinping ( % )	50.0	38.4
News report attention rate of Xi Jinping ( % )	69.7	67.8
Scoring result of Xi Jinping ( 10 point system )	6.6	6.2
Confidence in Xi Jinping on handling domestic affairs ( % )	75.5	65.1
Confidence in Xi Jinping on handling international affairs ( % )	71.9	60.7

**Note:** Countries that President Xi has paid a state visit include South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, India, Tanzania, South Africa, Brazil, Russia, France, and Germany.

---

## Appendix

### *Ten National Leaders*

President Putin	Russia
Prime Minister Cameron	United Kingdom
President Xi Jinping	People's Republic of China
President Hollande	France
President Obama	United States of America
Prime Minister Abe	Japan
Chancellor Merkel	Germany
President Rouseff	Brazil
Prime Minister Modi	India
President Zuma	South Africa

### *Countries Surveyed*

#### Asia (12)

China

Japan

Korea

Indonesia

Vietnam

Singapore

Malaysia

Thailand

India

Pakistan

Saudi Arabia

Israel

#### Europe (8)

Russia

Ukraine

France

United Kingdom

Spain

Germany

Italy

Finland

Americas (4)

The United States

Canada

Brazil

Chile

Africa (4)

Egypt

Kenya

Tanzania

Southern Africa

Australasia (2)

Australia

New Zealand