



Financial Times/Harris Poll Monthly Opinions of Adults from Five European Countries and the United States

September 2007 - Below are the most recent data from the Financial Times/Harris Poll, a monthly poll of adults from six countries in Europe and the United States. The countries include France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Spain and the United States.

For more information about the polls and to view the articles by the Financial Times that are based on these data, visit www.ft.com. For inquiries, contact Nancy Wong at 609-919-2426 or nwong@harrisinteractive.com.

Source

This FT/Harris Poll was conducted online by Harris Interactive among a total of 6,473 adults (aged 16-64) within France (1,122), Germany (1,106), Great Britain (1,104), Spain (1,068) and the United States (1,061) and adults (aged 18-64) in Italy (1,012) between 6 and 17 September 2007.

Complete survey methodology

This **FT/Harris Poll** was conducted online by Harris Interactive among a total of 6,473 adults (aged 16-64) within France, Germany, Great Britain, Spain, and the United States and adults (aged 18-64) in Italy between 6 and 17 September 2007. Figures for age, sex, education, region and Internet usage were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

Unweighted bases for the survey are: Total (6,473); France (1,122); Germany (1,106); Great Britain (1,104); Italy (1,012); Spain (1,068) and the United States (1,061).

Weighted bases for the survey are: Total (6,473); France (1,122); Germany (1,106); Great Britain (1,104); Spain (1,068); Italy (1,012); and the United States (1,061).

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult populations within those countries that were surveyed. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls and the British Polling Council.

**TABLE 1
CAPITALIST ECONOMY**

“Now we would like to ask you some questions on [Great Britain’s, France’s, Germany’s, Italy’s, Spain’s, United States’] economy. Do you think a free-market, capitalist economy (an economic system in which prices and wages are determined by unrestricted competition between businesses, with limited government regulation or fear of monopolies) is the best economic system or not?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1104	1122	1012	1068	1106	1061
Yes	35	34	36	49	48	49
No	21	38	44	21	30	17
Not sure	44	28	20	30	21	34

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

While almost half of adults in Spain, Germany and the U.S. believe a capitalist economy is the best economic system, the other countries more are unsure. In Great Britain, more do, than do not, think a free-market, capitalist economy is the best economic system, while a plurality are not sure. French and Italian adults say it is not the best system but in both countries, especially France, it is close. At least one-fifth of adults in each of the countries are unsure.

**TABLE 2
POWER OF MULTI-NATIONAL COMPANIES**

“Do you think that multi-national companies have more, less or the same amount of power as the [British, French, Italian, Spanish, German, United States] government?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1104	1122	1012	1068	1106	1061
Multi-national companies have more power than the government	29	53	66	31	44	24
Multi-national companies have the same amount of power as the government	24	28	14	41	25	18
Multi-national companies have less power than the government	19	8	10	17	18	30
Not sure	27	11	10	12	12	28

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Majorities in France and Italy believe that multi-national companies have more power than their respective governments, while more than two in five Germans believe the same. Outside of the US, fewer than one in five adults in the European countries believe that these companies have less power than the government.

**TABLE 3
PROTECTING EMPLOYEES RIGHTS**

“In order to make the [British, French, Italian, Spanish, German, United States] economy more effective, should governmental regulations that protect the rights of employees (e.g. unfair dismissal laws) be relaxed, tightened or stay as they are?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1104	1122	1012	1068	1106	1061
The regulations should be relaxed	11	19	25	13	24	9
The regulations are fine as they are	41	20	27	26	44	34
The regulation should be tightened	31	52	39	40	27	38
Not sure	17	9	9	21	5	19

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

There is a difference in opinion among the adults in these countries as to what should happen to the regulations that protect employees, in order to make their respective economies more effective. German and British adults are more likely to believe that the regulations are fine just as they are. A majority of French adults believe they should be tightened as do two in five Spanish adults. Adults in the US are a bit more split with tightening the regulations just edging out keeping them the way they are. Whilst two-in-five Italians think regulations should be tightened, one quarter thinks they should be relaxed.

**TABLE 4
TRADE UNIONS**

“Do you think that trade unions have an important role in today’s work environment, or not?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1104	1122	1012	1068	1106	1061
Yes	53	41	42	63	63	47
No	28	51	51	29	31	26
Not sure	19	7	6	8	6	27

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Clear majorities in Spain and Germany believe trade unions still have an important role as do just more than half of British adults. Half of both French and Italian adults believe unions do not have an important role. This is interesting as they may be the two countries who have the strongest unions. While just under half of US adults believe unions have an important role, just over one-quarter of them are unsure.

**TABLE 5
ECONOMIC FUTURE OF INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY**

“Are you optimistic, pessimistic or neutral about the future of [Britain’s, France’s, Italy’s, Spain’s, Germany’s, The US] economy?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1104	1122	1012	1068	1106	1061
Optimistic	25	19	13	22	36	29
Neutral	34	21	16	25	30	24
Pessimistic	31	58	69	47	33	36
Not sure	10	3	2	6	2	10

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

While the Germans are slightly more optimistic about the future of their economy than other countries, overall there is definitely not a sense of optimism. More than half of French adults and seven-in-ten Italians are pessimistic about the future of their respective economies as are just under half of Spanish adults. The numbers are more mixed for British and US adults.

**TABLE 6
ECONOMIC FUTURE OF EUROPE**

“Are you optimistic, pessimistic or neutral about the future of the European economy as a whole?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1104	1122	1012	1068	1106	1061
Optimistic	18	23	28	30	36	30
Neutral	39	33	37	34	40	34
Pessimistic	31	40	31	32	22	11
Not sure	12	4	4	5	2	25

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

In comparison to the economic future of their own country, people feel less pessimistic about the European economy as a whole. With the exception of France, all of the countries are more likely to say they are neutral about the future of the European economy rather than say they are pessimistic.

TABLE 7
DOING BUSINESS IN EUROPE

“How good or bad an environment is Europe for [British, French, Italian, Spanish, German, American] companies to do business in?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1104	1122	1012	1068	1106	1061
GOOD (NET)	32	36	41	65	61	35
Very good	5	5	4	19	13	5
Good	27	31	37	46	48	30
Neither bad nor good	30	26	29	21	26	26
BAD (NET)	16	31	22	7	9	11
Bad	11	24	20	5	8	10
Very bad	5	8	3	3	1	1
Not sure	21	6	8	7	4	27

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Clear majorities of Spanish and German adults think Europe is a good place for their country’s companies to do business in, but adults in the other countries are not as sure. A plurality of Italians also thinks this, as do just over one-third of French and US adults, and as do just under one-third of British adults. Nearly one-quarter of French and one-in-five Italian adults think Europe is a bad environment for their country’s companies to do business in.

TABLE 8
EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

“How confident are you that the European Central Bank fulfills its primary roles of keeping the prices of goods and services stable and promoting economic growth within the entire EU area?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1104	1122	1012	1068	1106
CONFIDENT (NET)	7	13	10	17	30
Extremely confident	2	2	2	3	7
Very confident	5	11	8	14	24
NOT CONFIDENT (NET)	60	72	74	75	63
Somewhat confident	30	51	41	57	47
Not at all confident	30	21	33	17	16
Not sure	34	15	17	8	7

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Across the board, these five European countries show little confidence in the European Central Bank fulfilling its role of keeping prices stable and promoting economic growth. The Germans are the only ones to have a bit more confidence. Also, one-third of British adults say they are unsure, but since they are not in the Euro zone, that does make sense.

**TABLE 9
EUROPE VERSUS ASIA**

“Do you think the European economy can compete effectively against other rising economies in Asia, such as China and India?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1104	1122	1012	1068	1106	1061
Yes	25	25	34	42	44	37
No	41	63	56	36	45	31
Not Sure	34	12	10	22	11	32

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

The issue of the rising Asian economies is one that may be worrisome. More than half of French and Italian adults as well as a plurality of British adults do not believe the European economy can effectively compete with economies in Asia. German adults are divided on this issue, while more Spanish and US adults believe, than those who do not, that Europe can compete. One-third of adults in both Great Britain and the US are not sure.

**TABLE 10
EUROPE LIKE THE UNITED STATES?**

“Do you think Europe’s economy should be more like that of the United States?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and US adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1104	1122	1012	1068	1106	1061
Yes	20	15	38	21	11	30
No	46	73	46	58	78	29
Not Sure	34	12	16	21	11	41

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

The consensus among the five European countries is that Europe’s economy should not be more like the economy of the United States. German and the French adults feel most strongly about this, followed by the Spanish. While just under half of British adults say Europe’s economy should not be like the US economy, one-third, again, are not sure. In the US, feelings are split on this issue with a plurality saying they are unsure.

TABLE 14
GREATEST THREAT TO GLOBAL STABILITY

Q1660_1 “Which one, if any, of the following countries do you think is the greatest threat to global stability?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and in the U.S.

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1104	1122	1012	1068	1106	1061
US	27	24	18	41	24	11
China	25	38	39	24	34	30
Iran	11	15	17	11	9	15
Iraq	9	8	11	10	12	12
North Korea	7	5	3	5	5	16
Russia	9	4	5	1	7	3
Pakistan	*	*	*	-	-	-
No one country - all are a threat	*	-	*	-	-	1
Afghanistan	*	-	*	-	*	*
No country – terrorist organizations	*	-	-	-	-	-
Middle East (not specified)	-	-	-	*	-	-
Muslim Countries (not specified)	-	*	-	-	-	-
Saudi Arabia	-	*	*	-	-	*
Israel	-	*	-	*	*	*
No country – religious fundamentalists	-	-	-	*	-	-
Palestine	-	-	-	*	-	-
UK	-	-	-	-	*	*
Turkey	-	-	-	-	*	-
Syria	-	-	-	-	-	*
Africa (country not specified)	-	-	-	-	-	*
India	*	*	*	-	*	*
Other	*	*	*	1	*	1
None	11	5	5	6	9	10
Not sure	1	*	*	*	*	*

*Less Than 0.5%

“-“ Not Applicable

About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive is the 13th largest and one of the fastest-growing market research firms in the world. The company provides innovative research, insights and strategic advice to help its clients make more confident decisions which lead to measurable and enduring improvements in performance. Harris Interactive is widely known for The Harris Poll, one of the longest running, independent opinion polls and for pioneering online market research methods. The company has built what it believes to be the world's largest panel of survey respondents, the Harris Poll Online. Harris Interactive serves clients worldwide through its North American, European and Asian offices, and through a global network of independent market research firms. More information about Harris Interactive may be obtained at www.harrisinteractive.com.

To become a member of the Harris Poll Online and be invited to participate in online surveys, register at www.harrispollonline.com.