

Perceptions of Changes in Health Care Over the Last Five Years in 44 Countries

This is an unusual issue of the Harris Interactive *Health Care News* in that it contains no data generated by Harris Interactive but presents some fascinating data from **The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press**, which we think will be of great interest to our readers. Specifically these data come from the Pew Research Center's survey conducted in 44 countries entitled "Views of a Changing World." Three of the questions addressed health care issues, and the answers to these three questions are shown below.

We are very grateful to Andy Kohut, the director of the Pew Research Center, for his permission to publish these important and valuable data.

Methodology

The survey titled "Views of a Changing World" by the Pew Research Center was conducted in the fall of 2002. In most countries, the sample size was 1,000. In the United States, it was 1,501. In China, it was 3,000. In a few other countries, it was 500.

The Big Picture

As there are huge differences between regions and countries, it is dangerous to attempt to summarize the results of this research. However, in most countries the research found that:

- Most people believed that **health care had become less affordable** over the previous five years.
- Most people thought that **modern medicines and treatments had become more available**.

And that

- Most people thought that the **spread of diseases had become worse**.

However, these generalizations mask the many and important exceptions, countries where majorities did not feel this way.

♦ EDITORS ♦

Humphrey Taylor

Chairman of *The Harris Poll*®

Robert Leitman

Group President, Health Care,
Education & Public Policy

What's Ahead in Health Care News?

During this year, Harris Interactive and IMS Health will launch a global physician poll that provides insights on the perspectives and experiences of physicians in the U.S., U.K., France, Germany, Italy and Spain. Look for results in upcoming issues of the Harris Interactive *Health Care News*.

Perceived Changes in the “Affordability of Health Care”

In the great majority of countries, most people thought affordability of health care was getting worse.

However, the differences were huge between countries on this question. At one end, there were large majorities in France, Vietnam and the Philippines who believed that health care was becoming more affordable.

At the other end, even larger majorities – 91% in Kenya, 90% in Argentina and Germany, and 87% in Lebanon believed health care was becoming less affordable.

AFFORDABILITY OF HEALTH CARE: Countries Among 44 Which Were Most Positive/Negative

Countries which were most positive:		Better	Worse	Difference
Vietnam	%	76	19	+57
France	%	73	19	+54
Philippines	%	64	29	+35
Czech Republic	%	54	34	+20
Countries which were most negative:		Better	Worse	Difference
Argentina	%	4	90	-86
Kenya	%	7	91	-84
Germany	%	8	90	-82
Lebanon	%	7	87	-80
South Korea	%	10	80	-70
Brazil	%	13	81	-68
Ukraine	%	16	80	-64

Perceived Changes in the “Availability of Modern Medicines and Treatments”

Of the three questions, the topic of availability of modern medicines and treatments derived the most optimistic, or least pessimistic, responses. Majorities in most countries and pluralities in most of the others believed that modern medicines and treatments were becoming more widely available.

The largest majorities who were optimistic were found in Vietnam, Lebanon, France, Germany, the Ukraine, China, Indonesia and the Philippines. Only three countries had majorities who were pessimistic – Argentina, the Slovak Republic and Kenya.

AVAILABILITY OF MODERN MEDICINES AND TREATMENTS: Countries Among 44 Which Were Most Positive/Negative

Countries which were most positive:		Better	Worse	Difference
Vietnam	%	95	5	+90
China	%	79	11	+68
France	%	82	15	+67
Ukraine	%	81	16	+65
Indonesia	%	79	15	+64
Lebanon	%	79	16	+63
Philippines	%	79	16	+63
Germany	%	79	19	+60
Countries which were most negative:		Better	Worse	Difference
Argentina	%	22	71	-49
Slovak Republic	%	30	64	-34
Kenya	%	36	60	-24
Russia	%	47	48	-1

Perceived Changes in “The Spread of Diseases”

Majorities in most countries, and large majorities in some of them, believed that the spread of diseases had become a worse problem over the previous five years.

Some of the most negative findings on this issue were found in Latin America – in Guatemala, Honduras, Argentina and Peru. Other countries where very large majorities also saw the spread of diseases as having become worse were Nigeria, South Africa, the Philippines, India and Bulgaria.

In no country was there a majority who felt that the spread of diseases had become better. The least negative replies were found in countries where 50 percent or fewer adults felt that this had grown worse – China, Pakistan, Egypt and the Ukraine.

THE SPREAD OF DISEASES: Countries Which Were Most Positive/Negative

Countries which were most positive:		Better	Worse	Difference
Pakistan	%	39	31	+8
China	%	44	41	+3
Ukraine	%	44	50	-6
Egypt (Cairo)	%	40	47	-7
France	%	39	58	-19
Countries which were most negative:		Better	Worse	Difference
Honduras	%	6	89	-83
Guatemala	%	8	87	-79
Argentina	%	7	84	-77
Bulgaria	%	2	77	-75
Peru	%	10	82	-72
South Africa	%	13	85	-72
Philippines	%	14	83	-69
Nigeria	%	14	82	-68
India	%	13	81	-68

U.S. Perceptions

The views of most U.S. adults on these three topics were broadly similar to the majorities of people in most of the other countries. Most Americans believed that modern medicines and new treatments had become more available, that health care had become less affordable and that the spread of diseases had gotten worse.

PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGES OVER LAST FIVE YEARS IN THE UNITED STATES

	Got Better	Got Worse	Difference
	%	%	%
The affordability of health care	18	75	-57
The availability of modern medicines and treatments	75	18	+57
The spread of diseases	22	68	-46

(Not) Explaining the Differences Between Countries

There are, as we have seen, huge differences between countries, from the 73% of the French who believed that health care was becoming more affordable to the 90% of Germans who believed it was becoming less affordable, from the 95% of Vietnamese who believed that modern treatments were becoming more available to the 71% of Argentinians who believe they were becoming less available, or from the 83% of Filipinos to the 31% of Pakistanis who believed that the spread of disease was getting worse.

These data are an extreme example of one important truth about survey research: *It is much easier to measure attitudes than to explain them.* Even when we think we can explain them, we can never be sure that our explanations are accurate or complete. In this instance, we make no claim to understanding the differences. Harris Interactive has little knowledge of the health care systems or recent events that may have influenced public opinion within most of the 44 countries surveyed by The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press.

TABLE 1

Has Affordability of Health Care Gotten Better or Worse in Last Five Years

“Has each of the following gotten better or worse over the last five years in our country – the affordability of health care?”

North America		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
United States	%	18	75	4	2
Canada	%	17	71	8	4
Latin America		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Argentina	%	4	90	3	3
Bolivia	%	38	50	8	4
Brazil	%	13	81	4	2
Guatemala	%	27	68	3	2
Honduras	%	34	53	11	2
Mexico	%	29	60	9	2
Peru	%	15	72	10	3
Venezuela	%	27	57	15	1
West Europe		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Great Britain	%	31	56	7	6
France	%	73	19	7	1
Italy	%	29	52	17	2
Germany	%	8	90	1	1
East Europe		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Bulgaria	%	9	78	8	5
Czech Republic	%	54	34	11	1
Poland	%	26	57	14	3
Russia	%	25	69	4	2
Slovak Republic	%	13	79	6	1
Ukraine	%	16	80	3	1
Africa		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Angola	%	19	53	18	10
Ghana	%	20	47	31	2
Ivory Coast	%	22	72	6	0
Kenya	%	7	91	2	0
Mali	%	16	83	0	1
Nigeria	%	42	51	6	1
Senegal	%	27	69	3	1
South Africa	%	45	51	2	2
Tanzania	%	16	75	4	5
Uganda	%	39	53	8	0
Asia		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Bangladesh	%	23	44	22	11
China	%	26	62	7	5
India	%	43	39	2	15
Indonesia	%	22	64	12	2
Japan	%	12	75	11	2
Philippines	%	64	29	6	1
South Korea	%	10	80	8	2
Vietnam	%	76	19	3	2
Middle East and Conflict Area		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Egypt (Cairo)	%	50	32	8	9
Jordan	%	29	51	19	1
Lebanon	%	7	87	5	1
Pakistan	%	26	33	16	25
Turkey	%	29	61	6	4
Uzbekistan	%	32	63	3	1

NOTE: Percentages may not add up exactly due to rounding.

TABLE 2
Has the Availability of Modern Medicines and Treatments Gotten Better or Worse Over Last Five Years

“Has each of the following gotten better or worse over the last five years in our country – the availability of modern medicines and treatments?”

North America		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
United States	%	75	18	5	3
Canada	%	67	27	4	2
Latin America		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Argentina	%	22	71	3	3
Bolivia	%	48	38	7	6
Brazil	%	59	35	5	2
Guatemala	%	55	39	3	2
Honduras	%	50	42	7	1
Mexico	%	68	24	6	1
Peru	%	50	35	12	4
Venezuela	%	43	41	15	1
West Europe		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Great Britain	%	76	17	3	4
France	%	82	15	2	1
Italy	%	69	18	11	2
Germany	%	79	19	2	1
East Europe		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Bulgaria	%	57	13	19	11
Czech Republic	%	69	23	6	3
Poland	%	54	32	10	4
Russia	%	47	48	4	2
Slovak Republic	%	30	64	4	3
Ukraine	%	81	16	3	1
Africa		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Angola	%	43	33	17	8
Ghana	%	62	15	20	3
Ivory Coast	%	63	30	7	0
Kenya	%	36	60	4	*
Mali	%	68	31	*	1
Nigeria	%	58	34	6	1
Senegal	%	76	19	4	1
South Africa	%	50	43	5	2
Tanzania	%	50	40	4	5
Uganda	%	56	36	8	1
Asia		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Bangladesh	%	65	18	10	7
China	%	79	11	5	4
India	%	73	19	1	7
Indonesia	%	79	15	5	1
Japan	%	72	13	12	2
Philippines	%	79	16	3	2
South Korea	%	61	24	13	2
Vietnam	%	95	5	*	*
Middle East and Conflict Area		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Egypt (Cairo)	%	66	21	7	6
Jordan	%	29	46	24	1
Lebanon	%	79	16	5	1
Pakistan	%	41	29	13	17
Turkey	%	52	35	6	6
Uzbekistan	%	67	30	3	1

NOTE: Percentages may not add up exactly due to rounding.
* = Less than 0.5%

TABLE 3
Has the Spread of Diseases Gotten Better or Worse Over Last Five Years

“Has each of the following gotten better or worse over the last five years in our country – the spread of diseases?”

North America		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
United States	%	22	68	6	4
Canada	%	32	55	9	4
Latin America		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Argentina	%	7	84	4	5
Bolivia	%	18	74	5	2
Brazil	%	22	71	3	4
Guatemala	%	8	87	4	1
Honduras	%	6	89	4	1
Mexico	%	17	74	7	1
Peru	%	10	82	7	1
Venezuela	%	13	78	9	0
West Europe		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Great Britain	%	29	59	8	4
France	%	39	58	2	1
Italy	%	29	54	14	3
Germany	%	38	50	7	5
East Europe		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Bulgaria	%	2	77	15	7
Czech Republic	%	22	62	10	6
Poland	%	18	58	18	6
Russia	%	4	90	4	2
Slovak Republic	%	15	75	6	4
Ukraine	%	44	50	3	3
Africa		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Angola	%	8	79	9	4
Ghana	%	23	59	16	2
Ivory Coast	%	18	79	3	0
Kenya	%	5	95	0	0
Mali	%	22	76	0	2
Nigeria	%	14	82	3	1
Senegal	%	30	67	2	1
South Africa	%	13	85	2	0
Tanzania	%	23	70	2	5
Uganda	%	15	80	4	1
Asia		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Bangladesh	%	14	56	16	14
China	%	44	41	8	6
India	%	13	81	2	4
Indonesia	%	24	66	7	2
Japan	%	23	57	17	3
Philippines	%	14	83	2	1
South Korea	%	29	51	16	4
Vietnam	%	34	64	1	1
Middle East and Conflict Area		Better	Worse	Has Not Changed	Don't Know/Refused
Egypt (Cairo)	%	40	47	7	6
Jordan	%	29	54	16	1
Lebanon	%	24	65	9	2
Pakistan	%	39	31	14	16
Turkey	%	16	75	6	3
Uzbekistan	%	26	67	5	2

NOTE: Percentages may not add up exactly due to rounding.

Health Care News

4 Volume

6 Issue

2004
April 1

Downloadable PDFs of the Harris Interactive *Health Care News* are available at http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/newsletters_healthcare.asp

About Harris Interactive®

Harris Interactive (www.harrisinteractive.com) is a worldwide market research and consulting firm best known for *The Harris Poll*®, and for pioneering the Internet method to conduct scientifically accurate market research. Headquartered in Rochester, New York, Harris Interactive combines proprietary methodologies and technology with expertise in predictive, custom and strategic research. The Company conducts international research from its U.S. offices and through wholly owned subsidiaries—London-based **HI Europe** (www.hieurope.com), Paris-based **Novatris** and Tokyo-based **Harris Interactive Japan**—as well as through the Harris Interactive Global Network of independent market- and opinion-research firms. EOE M/F/D/V

To become a member of the Harris Poll OnlineSM and be invited to participate in future online surveys, visit www.harrispollonline.com

For more information, contact us at:

877.919.4765

or visit our website at

www.harrisinteractive.com

Media inquiries, contact:

Bonnie Hughes 585.214.7541
bhughes@harrisinteractive.com

Nancy Wong 585.214.7316
nwong@harrisinteractive.com

©2004, Harris Interactive Inc. All rights reserved.
Other product and/or company names are trademarks of their respective owners.