

Kosova again among most optimistic countries in the world

Gallup International Voice of the People Survey

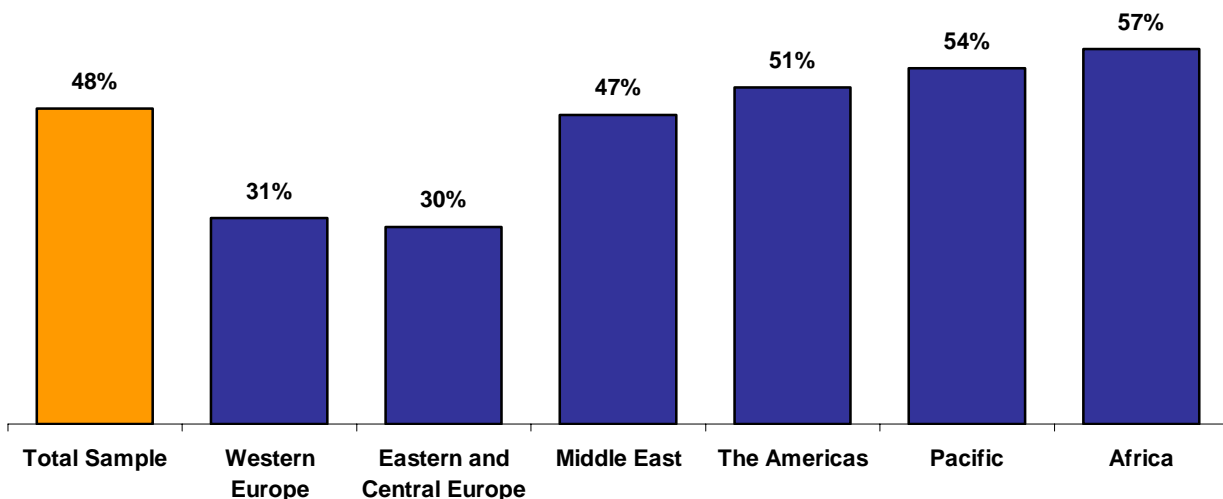
Almost half the 52,000 citizens (48%) representing more than 2.1 billion people who were interviewed in a **Gallup International Voice of the People Survey** in 62 countries across the world think that 2006 will be a better year than 2005. The survey was conducted in November and December and asked “**So far as you are concerned, do you think that 2006 will be better, or worse than 2005?**”

The survey in Kosova was conducted by Index Kosova, joint venture with BBSS Gallup International in November this year, with 1,020 respondents aged 15+ years, representing Kosovan Albanians and minorities (without Serbs).

Optimism is particularly high in countries which are upbeat about economic prospects and do not have major concerns about unemployment or industrial disputes increasing in 2006.

On the international front, a third of those interviewed globally (30%) felt 2006 would be a troubled year, with much international discord whilst only one in five felt it would be a peaceful year (20%), the remainder feeling that internationally, things will stay much as they were in 2005.

Do you think that 2006 will be *BETTER* than 2005?



Optimists and pessimists

Looking at regions across the world, Africa is the most optimistic region, whilst Europe – both Western and Central/Eastern – is the least optimistic about prospects for the coming year.

Turning to the results for individual countries, despite bird flu, Vietnam is the most optimistic place in the world, along with Beijing (China). **UN administered Kosovo follows as the 3rd most optimistic country in the survey.**

These results are remarkably consistent – Vietnam has been at the head of the optimists’ league for the last 3 years. Similarly, UN administered Kosovo has occupied one of the top places for the last 5 years, suggesting that the peacekeeping operation there brings both stability and continued optimism for the future. Beijing, where the economy is booming, was also one of last year’s most optimistic locations.

The survey was also conducted in Afghanistan and this year, for the first time in Iraq. In Afghanistan, two thirds of those interviewed (69%) felt 2006 would be a better year than 2005. In Iraq, half those interviewed (49%) felt 2006 would be a better year, whilst only one in ten (11%) thought the opposite.

Top Optimists	
2006 will be <i>better</i> than 2005	
Vietnam/Beijing	75%
UN Kosovo	73%
Afghanistan	69%
India/Venezuela/Nigeria	61%
Senegal/South Africa	60%
New Zealand	59%
Canada/Equatorial Guinea	57%
Hong Kong	56%

Opinions in USA are interesting – over half those interviewed (51%) are optimistic about prospects for 2006, although last year the figure was considerably higher at two thirds (65%) which put the States as one of the 10 most optimistic countries in the world in 2004.

Looking at the other end of the optimism/pessimism scale, apart from the Philippines, all the most pessimistic countries in world are to be found on the continent of Europe but again, this is very similar to last year, which also found European countries dominating the pessimists league.

Top Pessimists	
2006 will be <i>worse</i> than 2005	
Bosnia and Herzegovina/Greece	54%
Philippines	50%
Serbia	47%
Portugal	46%
France	43%

Economic Prospects

Turning to look in more detail at views of economic prospects, more than a third of those questioned globally (35%) think 2006 will be a year of economic prosperity, whilst a quarter (24%) feel it will be a year of economic difficulty. Again, Africa is the most upbeat region about economic prospects – over half (52%) say next year will be one of economic prosperity. **When looking at Kosovo and its neighbours, the optimism of Kosovan citizens with respect to economic prosperity in Kosovo is quite high (54%), compared to views in Macedonia (34%), Albania (33%), and particularly Serbia (8%), as one of the most pessimistic countries in the world with respect to economic prosperity.**

Fears that unemployment will increase in 2006 have a major effect on whether people feel optimistic about economic prospects or not. Globally, more than half of those interviewed (54%) expect the number of unemployed in their country to increase either a lot or a little, whilst only one in five (20%) feel unemployment will decrease. **In Kosovo, 36% of citizens believe that unemployment will increase next year, whereas concerns of its neighbouring countries for the increase of unemployment in their countries is higher – Albania (42%), Macedonia (46%) and Serbia (42%).**

Africa is the most optimistic region on this issue of industrial unrest – four out of every ten interviewed (38%) felt that strikes and industrial disputes would decrease in 2006. **Kosovo is also optimistic on the issue of industrial unrest – 36% of respondents in Kosova feel that strikes and industrial disputes will decrease in 2006, whereas this opinion is shared by 25% of respondents in Albania, 20% of respondents in Macedonia and only 6% of respondents in Serbia.**

A peaceful or a troubled year?

Finally, respondents were asked about prospects for international peace – whether they thought 2006 would be a peaceful year more or less free of international dispute, a troubled year with much international discord or remain the same.

The Americas (including North, Central and South) is the most pessimistic region regarding international prospects in the coming year. Overall in the region, more than four out of ten citizens (42%) think 2006 will be a troubled year, with much international discord. In the USA, citizens are even more pessimistic – here close to half (47%) feel 2006 will be as troubled year on the international front and only one in ten (11%) feel the year will be peaceful.

Western Europe is the next most pessimistic region on this question – four out of every ten citizens in the region (39%) think 2006 will be a troubled year and only one in ten (10%) think the opposite, i.e. that 2006 will be a peaceful year internationally. **In Kosova, only 19% of respondents believe that 2006 will be a problematic year, whereas these figures in neighbouring countries are: Albania 29%, Macedonia 37% and Serbia 44%.**

Elsewhere in the world, citizens are only marginally less gloomy about international prospects for the coming year. Globally, one in three (30%) thinks 2006 will be a troubled year with much international discord, 44% think it will be much the same as last year and only one in five (20%) think that 2006 will be a peaceful year, more or less free of international dispute.

Editors note:

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