



EMBARGO 12:30pm ET Thursday 23 October 2008

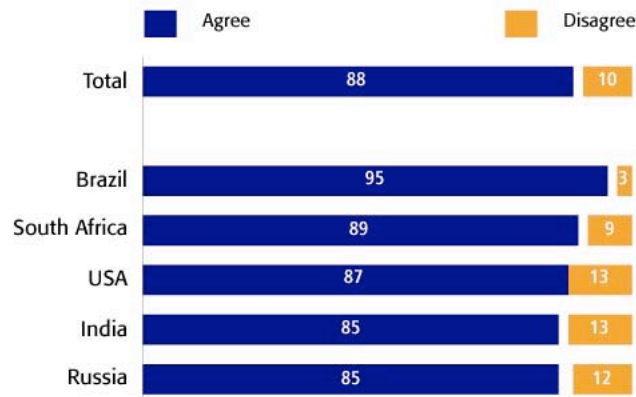
Young People Urge World Leaders to Combat Climate Change

New York, 23 October 2008 – Nearly 90 per cent of young people across the globe think world leaders should do "whatever it takes" to tackle climate change. This is among the top findings of a new poll conducted on behalf of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The survey of 12 to 18 year-olds in five countries (Brazil, India, Russia, South Africa and the United States) found that nine in ten young people (88% overall and 85% or more in each country) agree that "World leaders should do whatever it takes to tackle climate change".

World Leaders Should Do Whatever it Takes to Tackle Climate Change

By Country, October 2008



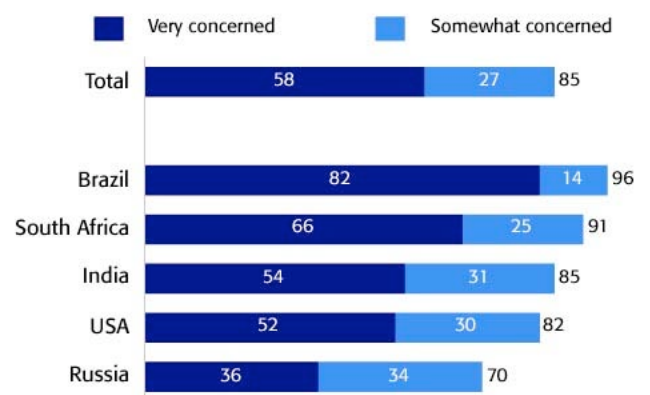
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Climate Change a Top Concern among Young People

Young people are clearly concerned about climate change. Concern is highest in Brazil (96%) and South Africa (91%), followed by India (85%) and the United States (82%), while significantly lower levels of concern are expressed in Russia (70%).

Concern About Climate Change

"Very" and "Somewhat Concerned," by Country, October 2008



World Leaders Not Doing Enough

Young people in South Africa, the United States and Brazil are particularly critical of world leaders' efforts to address climate change; seven in ten or more across these three countries say world leaders are not doing enough (South Africa, 82%; the United States, 79%; Brazil, 73%). Only in India are young people more likely to say world leaders are doing "too much" or "enough;" just 19 percent say they are not doing enough.

Necessary to Take Major Steps Very Soon

There is a great sense of urgency among youth in most countries, with a majority of young people in each country except India saying, "It is necessary to take major steps starting very soon" (Brazil, 88%; South Africa, 81%; Russia, 75%; the United States, 61%). When thinking about the human impact on climate change in India, most young people believe that modest steps should be taken over the coming years (53%). This reinforces their world view that enough is being done on climate change.

Young People Feel Empowered to Act

Four in five youths surveyed believe they can make a difference on climate for our future (89%); however, a majority also say they need more information about what they can do to tackle climate change (84%).

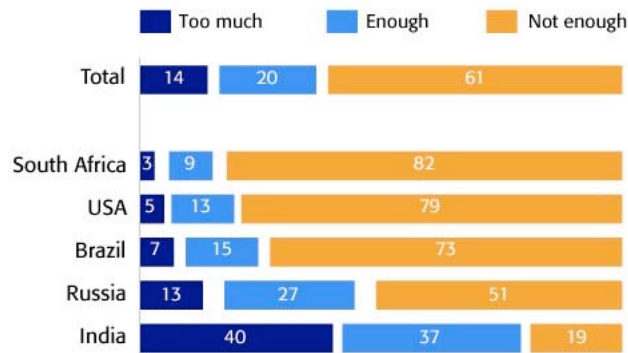
Those in Brazil, India, South Africa, and the United States are most enthusiastic about making a difference and wanting more information in order to do so, while those in Russia are less likely to agree (with 77% saying they can make a difference).

Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UNEP comments, "I am very pleased to note the high level of awareness on climate change among 12 to 18-year olds. These are the voices of the generation that will inherit the impacts of climate change if world leaders fail to act. It is clear from the survey that young people around the world are seriously worried about what climate change will mean in terms of their future on this planet. Through them, we can reach out to the approximately 3 billion people around the planet who are under 25. There are some 400 days to go before the crucial UN climate convention meeting in Copenhagen--world leaders have now heard the concerns of young people. This generation must now take responsibility for the next".

Chris Coulter, Vice-President of GlobeScan, comments, "This is a strong and important statement from the world's youth to world leaders. It is strong because the message to political leaders and policymakers appears to be: 'Do what it takes to tackle climate change, even if major steps are needed, and act urgently because we are affected and concerned by climate change.' It is important because young people are not always well represented by world leaders, although their future is to be decided in upcoming climate agreements."

World Leaders Doing Enough to Address Climate Change?

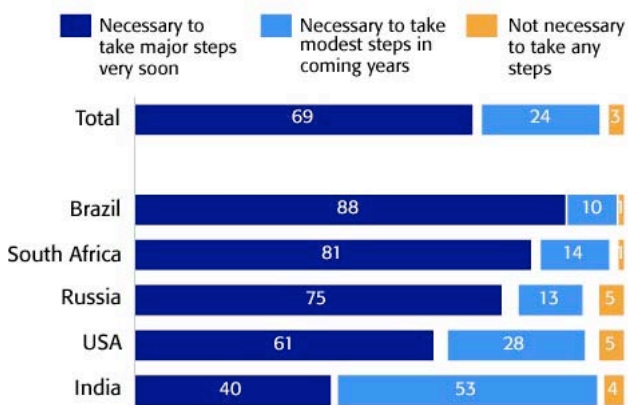
By Country, October 2008



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Views of Action Needed to Reduce Human Impact on Climate Change

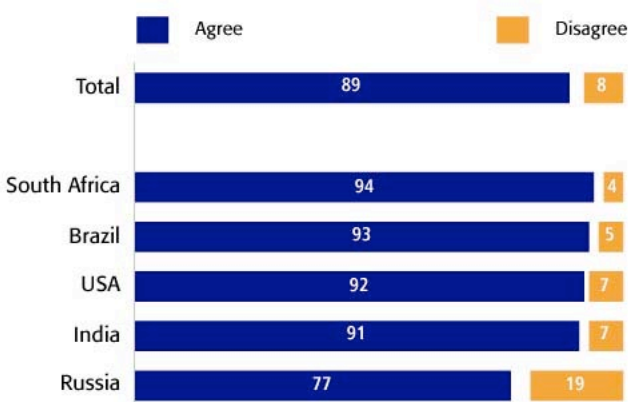
By Country, October 2008



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Young People Like Me Can Make a Difference on Climate Change

By Country, October 2008



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Notes to editors:

The online survey of 12-18 year olds across Brazil, India, Russia, South Africa and the United States was conducted for UNEP and carried out by the international polling firm GlobeScan during the month of October 2008. The results are drawn from a survey of 1999 young adults, ranging in age from 12 to 18 years. In each of the five countries, 400 young people were polled. The margin of error is impossible to assess in online polling, but the results can be interpreted to be representative of the online community of youth with good accuracy.

This is the first of several press releases from the comprehensive survey on the hopes and fears of youth as they relate to climate change.

For more information or interviews, please contact:

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UNEP's mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. **UNite to combat climate change** is the United Nations campaign to support the call for a definitive agreement on a comprehensive global climate regime for the period after 2012, when the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol expires.

GlobeScan Incorporated is a global public opinion and stakeholder research consultancy with offices in Toronto, London and Washington. GlobeScan conducts custom research and annual tracking studies on global issues. With a research network spanning 60+ countries, GlobeScan works with global companies, multilateral agencies, national governments and non-government organizations to deliver research-based insights for successful strategies.

Methodology

The results are drawn from a survey of 1999 young adults, ranging in age from 12 to 18 years olds, across five countries for UNEP by the international polling firm GlobeScan. The survey was conducted online between October 13 and October 23, 2008.

While Internet panels cannot be thoroughly representative of a country's young adult population (the poorest of the poor and those living in remote areas without Web access are not included), it is felt that the objective of measuring young adult's attitudes could be well met by the use of Internet research given the relatively high access and usage rates of the Internet of this age group in each country.

The demographic groups surveyed in each country reflect the demographic profile of each country and are a representative cross-section of young adults who have access to the Internet in their homes, workplaces, or in libraries, cafes or schools. Data from the online respondents were weighted according to the latest census data to reflect the overall demographic profile of each country in terms of age and gender.

Country	Sample size (unweighted)	Field dates	Sample frame	Survey methodology	Type of sample
Brazil	400	October 18-23 , 2008	12-18	Online	National
India	400	October 13–16, 2008	12-18	Online	Major metropolitan areas ¹
Russia	400	October 16-21, 2008	12-18	Online	National
South Africa	400	October 13–22, 2008	12-18	Online	National
United States	399	October 13–16, 2008	12-18	Online	National

¹In India the survey was conducted in major metropolitan areas of the following states: Delhi, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.

Questionnaire

2. Please indicate how concerned you are about each of the following challenges facing the world today.

Not at all concerned
Not very concerned
Somewhat concerned
Very concerned
VOLUNTEERED
DK/NA

- a) Terrorism
- b) Poverty
- c) Climate change or global warming
- d) Economic problems
- e) Human diseases
- f) War
- g) Education
- h) Human rights
- i) Crime
- j) Air and water pollution

5. You may have heard discussion about whether it is necessary to take steps to reduce the impact that humans are said to have on climate change. Which of the following do you believe?

It is not necessary to take any steps
It is necessary to take modest steps over the coming years
It is necessary to take major steps starting very soon
VOLUNTEERED
DK/NA

6. How much do you agree or disagree with the following? Do you strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree or strongly agree...

- e) World Leaders should do whatever it takes to tackle climate change
- h) I need more information to be able to do more to prevent climate change
- l) Young people like me can make a difference on climate change for our future

9. How much are each of the following doing to address climate change?

Not enough
Enough
Too much
VOLUNTEERED
Don't know

- g) World Leaders