What the World Thinks About The Sustainable Development Goals

Global Public Opinion Research on Awareness and Performance of the SDGs

November 2023

Globe Scan

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Executive Summary

> *The research suggest that there is an opportunity to more fully engage with young people – particularly those in the Global South – as they are the most engaged and will likely be the key drivers of advancing the SDGs. Putting pressure on governments and companies to improve their performance on the SDGs will also be important.*
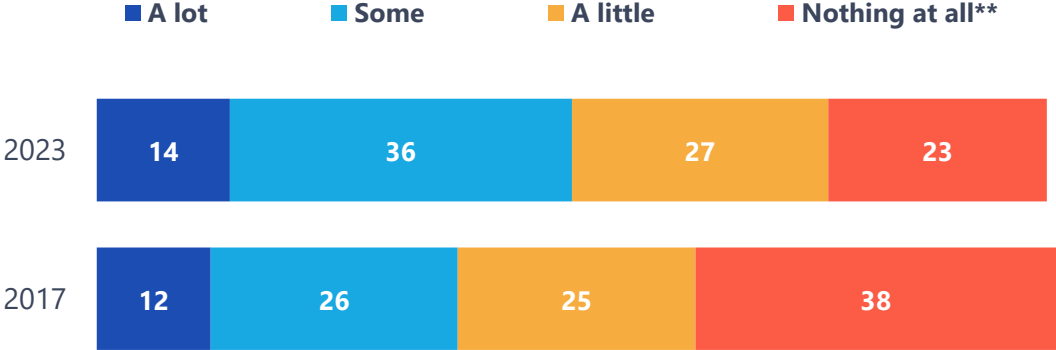
- **There is growing global awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

  - Awareness of the SDGs has grown among the global public over the past six years. Half of people (50%) around the world now say they have heard at least some about the SDGs compared to 38 percent in 2017.

  - People in the Global South tend to be much more aware of the SDGs than are those in the Global North. People in Vietnam, India, China, and Egypt claim the highest awareness of the SDGs, with more than seven in ten in each country saying they have heard at least some about the Goals.

  - In contrast, fewer than three in ten in the Netherlands and in Australia claim the same level of awareness, while only about one in three in Canada and the UK are aware of the Goals.

  - Demographically, younger people are more aware of the SDGs than older people. Those with high education and high incomes are also more likely to be familiar with the Goals than those with lower education and lower incomes, as are those living in urban areas compared to more rural areas.

- **NGOs and the UN are rated most positively on helping meet the SDGs; governments and companies are rated lowest**

  - Among those with at least "some" awareness of the SDGs, NGOs and the UN are ranked the highest on their perceived net performance (good performance minus poor performance) on helping meet the SDGs, while national governments are ranked the lowest. Large companies are ranked below NGOs and the UN but ahead of national governments.

  - However, perceptions of the four actors on their performance to help meet the SDGs vary widely across the countries and territories surveyed. People in Asia-Pacific and Africa / Middle East are generally more positive about the performance of all four actors while Europeans tend to be the most negative.

  - Young people are consistently more likely than older people to rate all actors more positively on SDG performance.

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Awareness of the SDGs has grown across the world over the past six years; half of people around the world now say they have heard at least some about the SDGs

Awareness of the SDGs

Average of 17 Countries,* 2017–2023

Legend: ■ A lot ■ Some ■ A little ■ Nothing at all**

Year	A lot	Some	A little	Nothing at all**
2023	14	36	27	23
2017	12	26	25	38

*Includes Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, UK, USA. **In 2017, "Nothing at all" includes DK/NA responses. In 2017 this question was asked using an in-person and telephone methodology where some respondents spontaneously mentioned DK/NA.
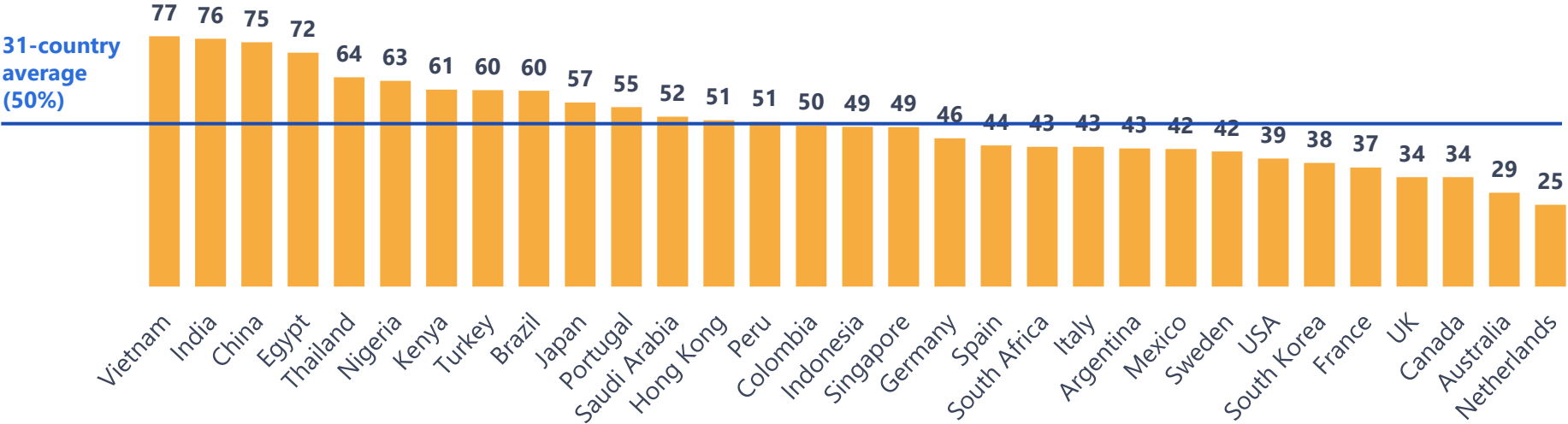
3   T46. Before today, how much have you seen, heard, or read about these Global Goals – a lot, some, a little, or nothing at all?

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Most people in the Global South say they are aware of the SDGs, contrasting with lower awareness in the Global North

Awareness of the SDGs

"A Lot" and "Some," by Country, 2023

31-country average (50%)

Country	Value
Vietnam	77
India	76
China	75
Egypt	72
Thailand	64
Nigeria	63
Kenya	61
Turkey	60
Brazil	60
Japan	57
Portugal	55
Saudi Arabia	52
Hong Kong	51
Peru	51
Colombia	50
Indonesia	49
Singapore	49
Germany	46
Spain	44
South Africa	43
Italy	43
Argentina	43
Mexico	42
Sweden	42
USA	39
South Korea	38
France	37
UK	34
Canada	34
Australia	29
Netherlands	25

T46. Before today, how much have you seen, heard, or read about these Global Goals – a lot, some, a little, or nothing at all?
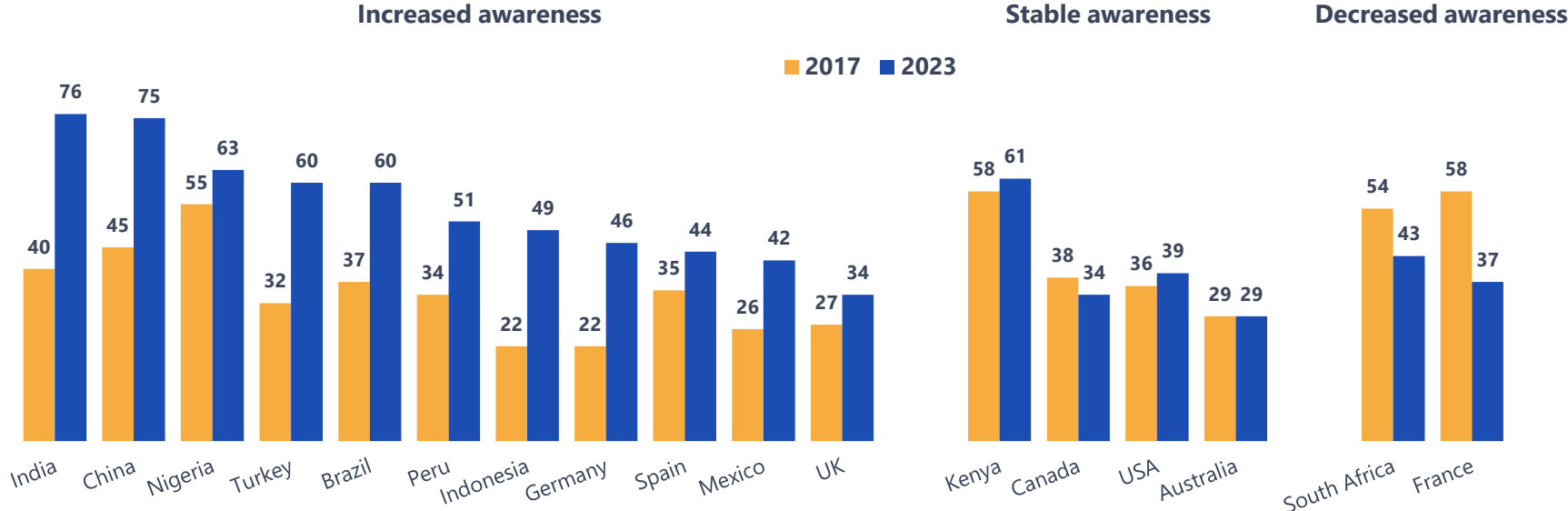
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Awareness of the SDGs has increased across several countries tracked over time, but has decreased in France and South Africa

Awareness of the SDGs

"A Lot" and "Some," by Country, 2017–2023

Increased awareness

Stable awareness

Decreased awareness

■ 2017   ■ 2023

| Country	2017	2023
India	40	76
China	45	75
Nigeria	55	63
Turkey	32	60
Brazil	37	60
Peru	34	51
Indonesia	22	49
Germany	22	46
Spain	35	44
Mexico	26	42
UK	27	34
Kenya	58	61
Canada	38	34
USA	36	39
Australia	29	29
South Africa	54	43
France	58	37

T46. Before today, how much have you seen, heard, or read about these Global Goals – a lot, some, a little, or nothing at all?

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Younger people, those with higher education and higher income, and people living in urban areas are more likely to be aware of the SDGs

Awareness of the SDGs
"A Lot" and "Some," by Demographic, 2023

Age	Under 30		58
	Over 30		48

Education	Low		45
	Average		49
	High		56

Income	Low		45
	Average		50
	High		58

Community Type	Urban		55
	Rural		43

T46. Before today, how much have you seen, heard, or read about these Global Goals – a lot, some, a little, or nothing at all?
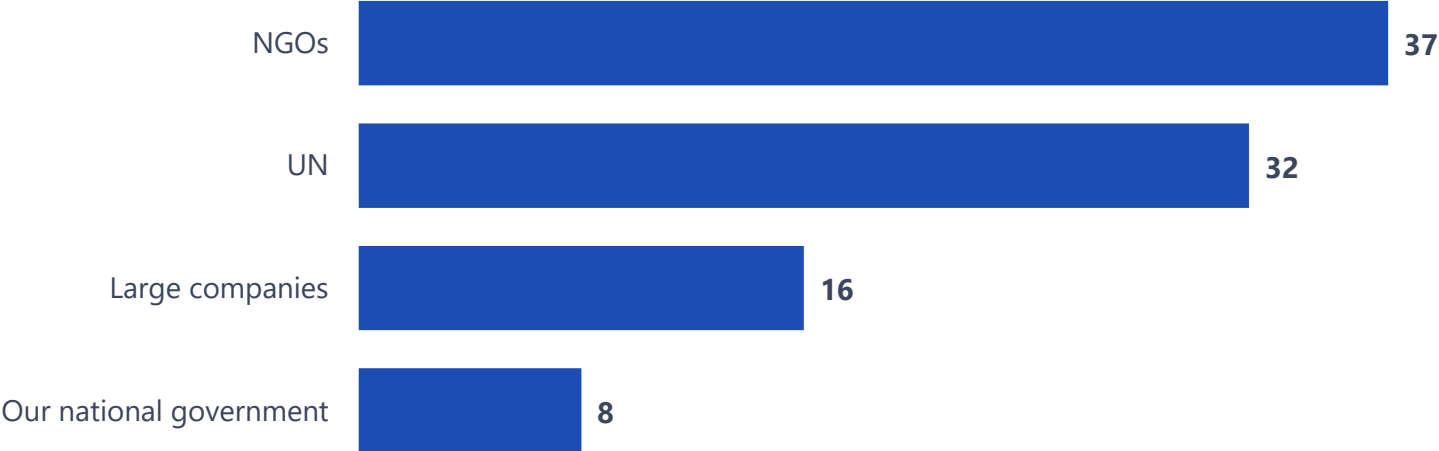
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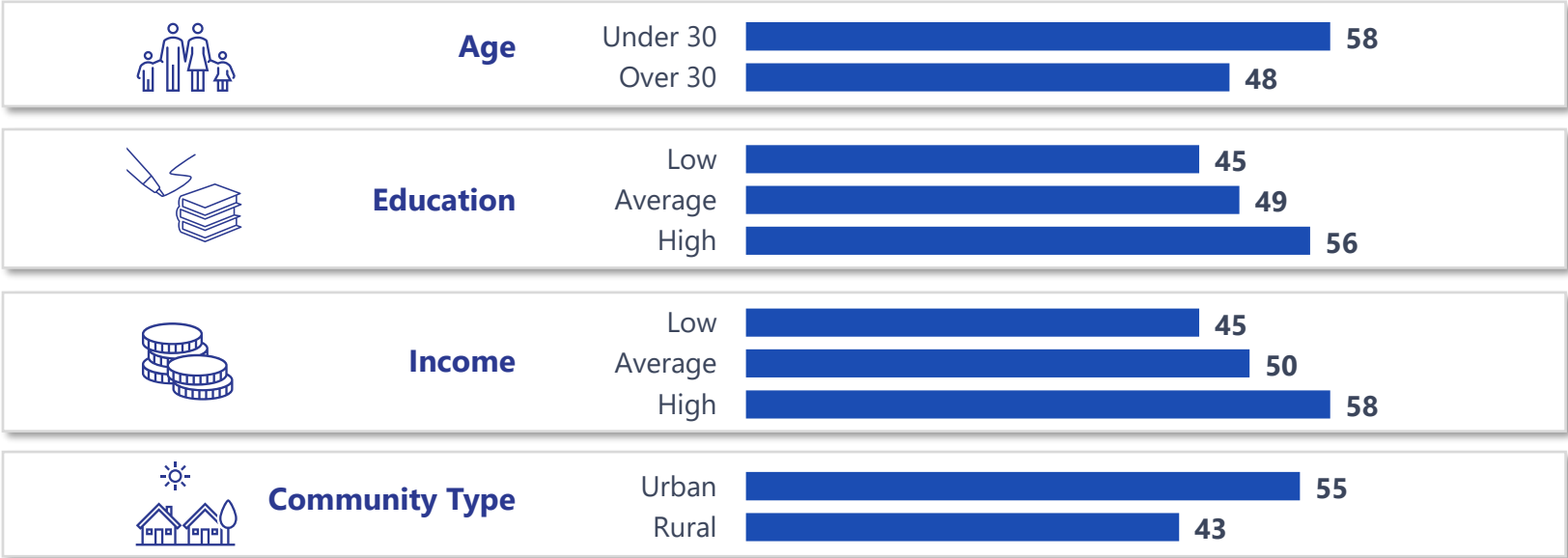
NGOs and the UN are ranked the highest on their perceived net performance on helping meet the SDGs; national governments are rated the lowest

Perceived Performance of Institutions on the SDGs

Subsample: Asked to Those Who Know "A Lot" or "Some" about the SDGs,
Net Performance,* Average of 31 Countries, 2023

NGOs	37
UN	32
Large companies	16
Our national government	8

*"Very good" and "Good" minus "Poor" and "Very poor"
T47. How would you rate the performance of each of the following in making sure that the Sustainable Development Goals will be met?

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People in all countries surveyed rate NGOs positively on helping meet the SDGs, with the highest ratings recorded Africa, Asia, and Latin America

Perceived Performance of **NGOs** on the SDGs

Subsample: Asked to Those Who Know "A Lot" or "Some" about the SDGs, Net Performance,* by Country, 2023

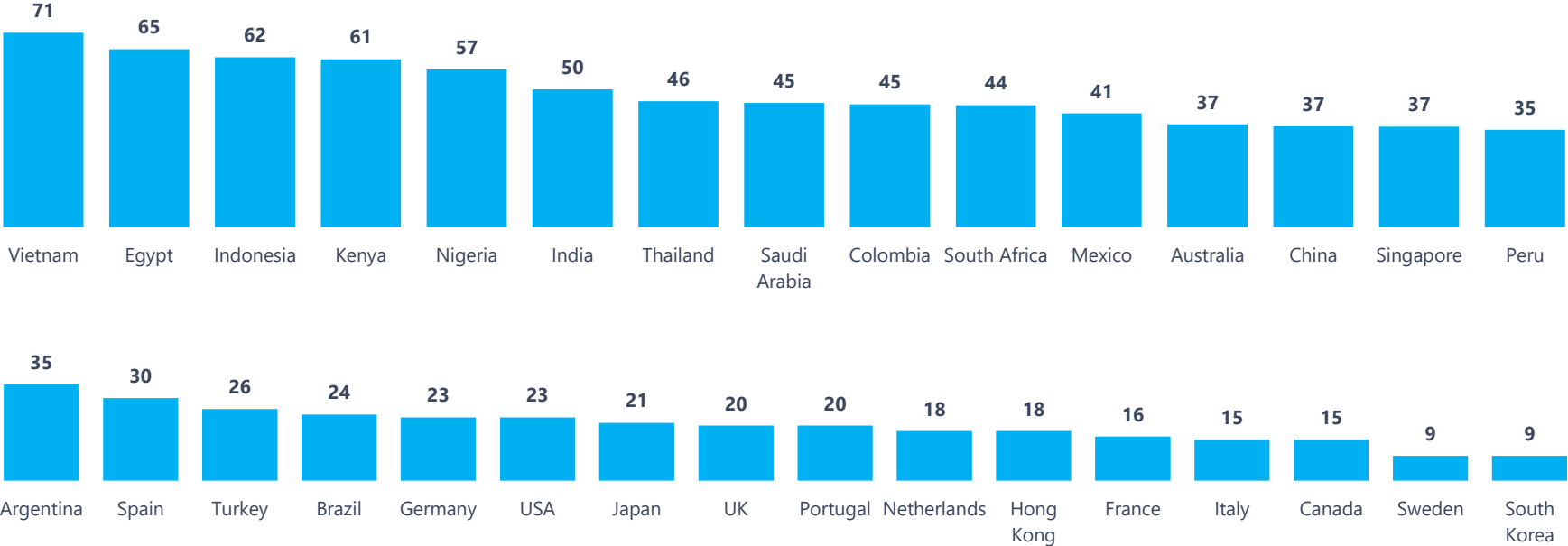| Country	Value
Vietnam	71
Egypt	65
Indonesia	62
Kenya	61
Nigeria	57
India	50
Thailand	46
Saudi Arabia	45
Colombia	45
South Africa	44
Mexico	41
Australia	37
China	37
Singapore	37
Peru	35

Country	Value
Argentina	35
Spain	30
Turkey	26
Brazil	24
Germany	23
USA	23
Japan	21
UK	20
Portugal	20
Netherlands	18
Hong Kong	18
France	16
Italy	15
Canada	15
Sweden	9
South Korea	9

*"Very good" and "Good" minus "Poor" and "Very poor"

T47. How would you rate the performance of each of the following in making sure that the Sustainable Development Goals will be met?
– Non-governmental organizations such as environmental and social advocacy groups
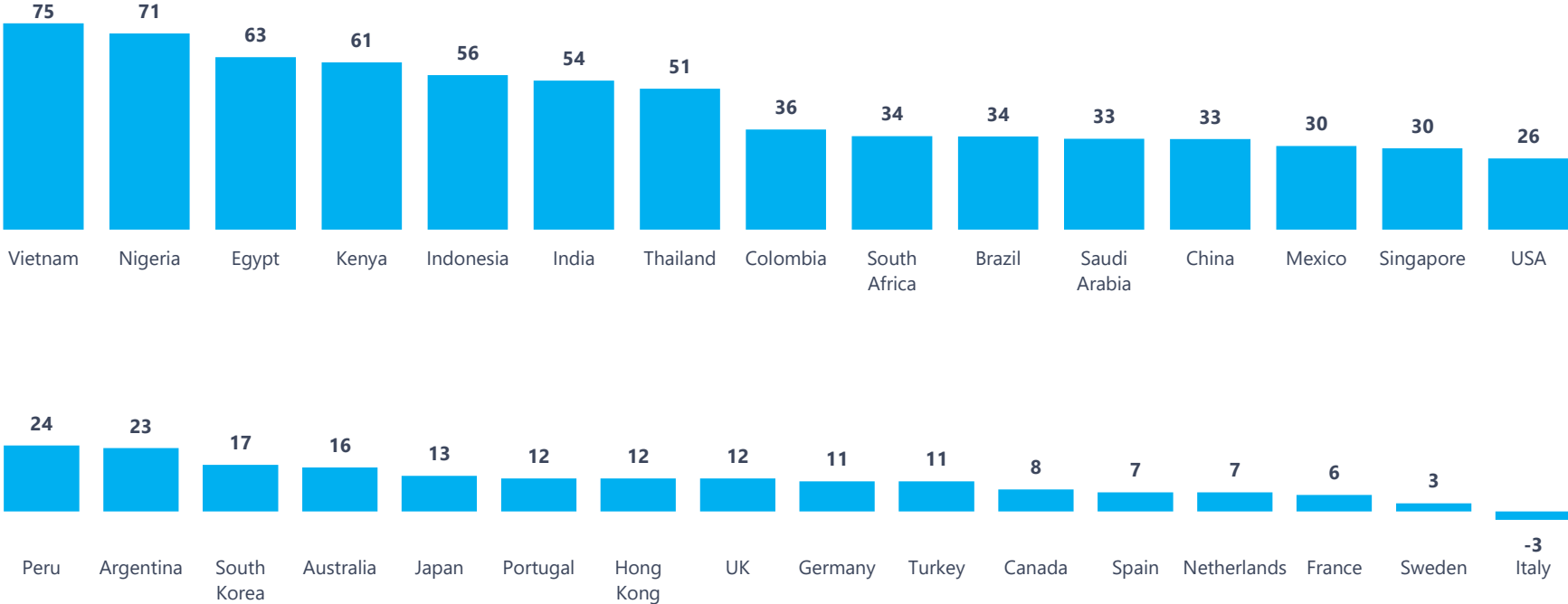
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People in all countries except Italy have a net positive perception of the UN's performance on helping meet the SDGs

Perceived Performance of the UN on the SDGs

Subsample: Asked to Those Who Know "A Lot" or "Some" about the SDGs, Net Performance,* by Country, 2023

Vietnam	Nigeria	Egypt	Kenya	Indonesia	India	Thailand	Colombia	South Africa	Brazil	Saudi Arabia	China	Mexico	Singapore	USA
75	71	63	61	56	54	51	36	34	34	33	33	30	30	26

Peru	Argentina	South Korea	Australia	Japan	Portugal	Hong Kong	UK	Germany	Turkey	Canada	Spain	Netherlands	France	Sweden	Italy
24	23	17	16	13	12	12	12	11	11	8	7	7	6	3	-3

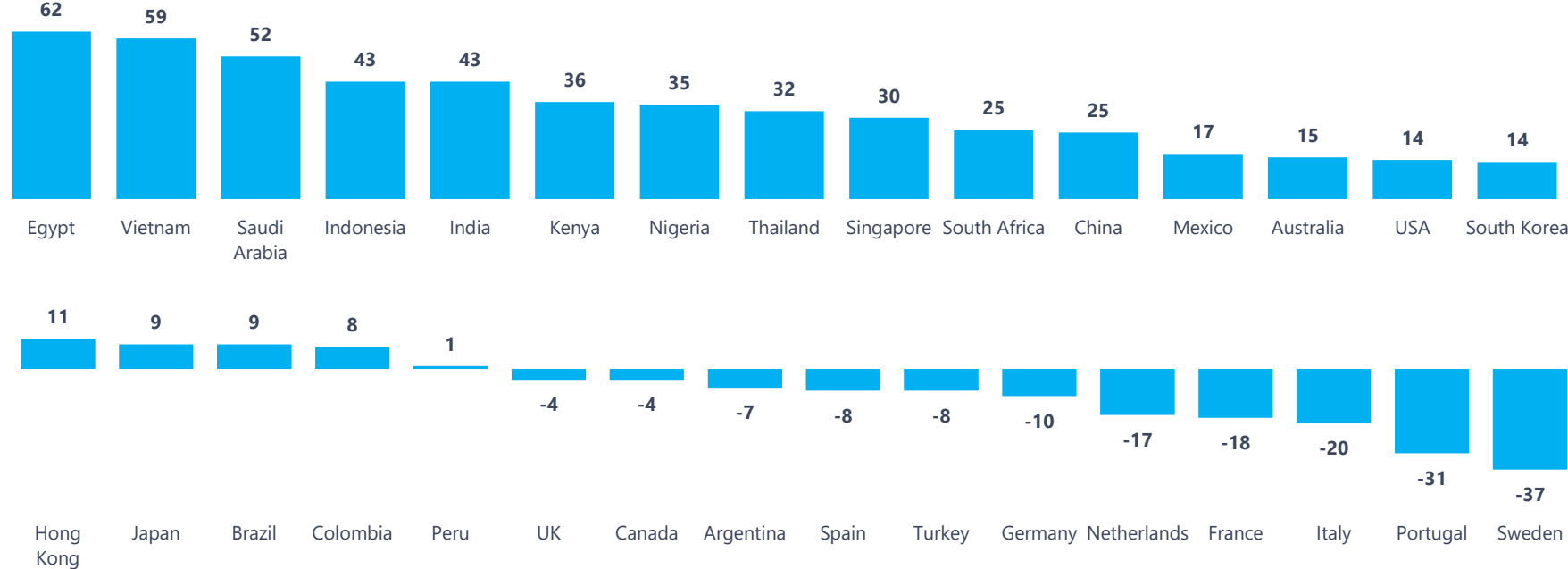*"Very good" and "Good" minus "Poor" and "Very poor"

T47. How would you rate the performance of each of the following in making sure that the Sustainable Development Goals will be met?
— The United Nations (UN)

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Europeans are most critical of large companies when it comes to their performance in achieving the SDGs

Perceived Performance of Large Companies on the SDGs

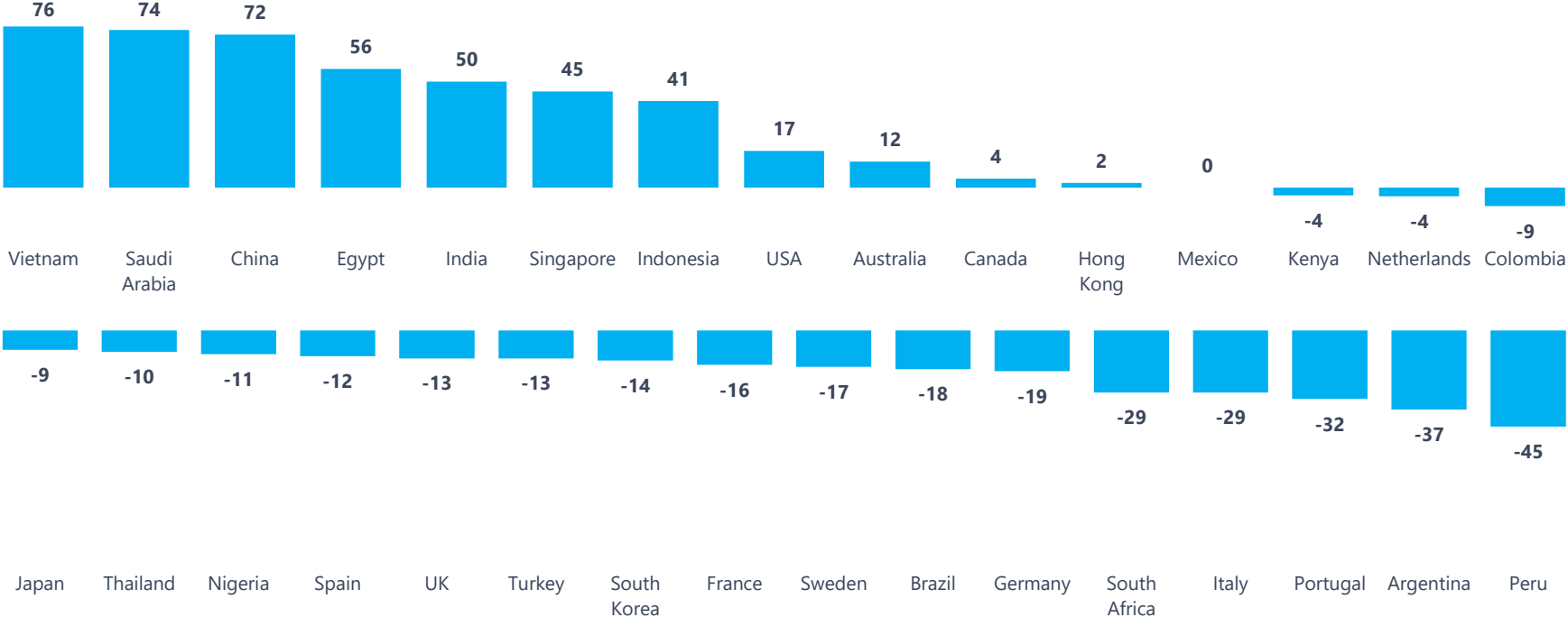Subsample: Asked to Those Who Know "A Lot" or "Some" about the SDGs, Net Performance,* by Country, 2023

Country	Value
Egypt	62
Vietnam	59
Saudi Arabia	52
Indonesia	43
India	43
Kenya	36
Nigeria	35
Thailand	32
Singapore	30
South Africa	25
China	25
Mexico	17
Australia	15
USA	14
South Korea	14
Hong Kong	11
Japan	9
Brazil	9
Colombia	8
Peru	1
UK	-4
Canada	-4
Argentina	-7
Spain	-8
Turkey	-8
Germany	-10
Netherlands	-17
France	-18
Italy	-20
Portugal	-31
Sweden	-37

*"Very good" and "Good" minus "Poor" and "Very poor"

10   T47. How would you rate the performance of each of the following in making sure that the Sustainable Development Goals will be met?
– Large companies

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Performance of national governments on making sure that the SDGs are met is rated most positively by people in Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, and China, and most negatively by people in Peru, Argentina, and Portugal

Perceived Performance of National Governments on the SDGs

Subsample: Asked to Those Who Know "A Lot" or "Some" about the SDGs, Net Performance,* by Country, 2023

Country	Value
Vietnam	76
Saudi Arabia	74
China	72
Egypt	56
India	50
Singapore	45
Indonesia	41
USA	17
Australia	12
Canada	4
Hong Kong	2
Mexico	0
Kenya	-4
Netherlands	-4
Colombia	-9
Japan	-9
Thailand	-10
Nigeria	-11
Spain	-12
UK	-13
Turkey	-13
South Korea	-14
France	-16
Sweden	-17
Brazil	-18
Germany	-19
South Africa	-29
Italy	-29
Portugal	-32
Argentina	-37
Peru	-45

*"Very good" and "Good" minus "Poor" and "Very poor"

11   T47. How would you rate the performance of each of the following in making sure that the Sustainable Development Goals will be met?
– Our national government

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Methodology and Research Design

Methodology Summary

R23_particip_map

- Representative online samples of approximately 1,000 adults in each of 31 countries and territories (500 each in Hong Kong, Kenya, Nigeria, and Singapore), and 1,500 in USA (n=29,565)

- Samples representative of online population, weighted to reflect general population census data

- Online surveying between July 3rd and August 17th, 2023

- Where historical data are shown, questions were asked using an in-person and telephone methodology before 2019.

GlobeScan X Client name

Research Design

The design of this online, 31-country study (*n*=29,565 unweighted) was led by GlobeScan's senior team. The survey design supports year-over-year tracking of trends.

The survey was translated into native languages (fielded in English in India, Kenya, Nigeria, Singapore, and South Africa). All translations were proofread to ensure that the content was properly and completely translated with terminology suitable to the target audience and ensuring that the text flows smoothly and natural sounding in the target language.

GlobeScan administered the 20-minute online survey to approximately 1,000 adults per country (500 each in Hong Kong, Kenya, Nigeria, and Singapore, and 1,500 in USA) in each of 31 countries and territories. Using stratified sampling from a non-probability online panel, samples are representative of the online population and weighted to the latest census data to be nationally representative. In some developing countries, the ability to weight to be nationally representative is limited by the extent of internet penetration.

Data collection took place in July and August 2023.

Once the survey was closed, the data were downloaded, cleaned, and checked before final validation and dataset integration. This verified dataset was then used to generate statistical tables comparing results across different demographic, psychographic, and regional groupings. Multivariate analyses were conducted using SPSS software.

Where historical data are shown, before 2019 questions were asked as part of GlobeScan's *Radar* research program using in-person and telephone modes. As the research methodology was different, comparisons between current and previous results are indicative.

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