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From the CEO

The world is contending with an unsettling reality: Violence continues to permeate our societies, threatening lives and undermining the foundations of safety and security that are crucial to sustainable development. Globally, 5% of people report being victims of violent crime in the past two years — a figure that, while seemingly small, represents millions of disrupted lives, shattered families and communities gripped by fear.

Exacerbating the global crisis of violence is the growing threat posed by state conflicts. According to the Global Peace Index, there are currently 56 active conflicts worldwide — the highest number since World War II. Even the leaders tasked with ensuring our safety are not immune; since 2022, attempts and successful assassinations of current and former heads of state have occurred in countries ranging from the U.S., Pakistan and Slovenia to Argentina and Japan.

As the world grapples with these escalating threats, another peril looms: the rise of fear. Yet, measuring fear is complex. Traditional metrics, such as crime rates and conflict reports, provide essential data on physical security — but fail to capture how safe people feel, which profoundly impacts how they live.

Our research consistently shows that when people feel safe, they are free to thrive — experiencing greater economic stability, contributing positively to their communities and living longer, healthier lives. To build truly flourishing societies, we must address both physical safety and the critical need for people to feel safe.

Recognizing the importance of this two-pronged approach, world leaders have integrated “subjective safety” into their development agendas. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16 includes “feel[ing] safe walking alone at night” as an indicator (16.1.4). Gallup annually tracks this indicator worldwide, and we highlight its findings in our 2024 *Global Safety Report*.

This year’s report offers encouraging insights: Global perceptions of safety and confidence in police have risen compared with a decade ago, largely due to increasing confidence in local law enforcement. Regardless of a country’s wealth, confidence in local police is one of the strongest predictors of people feeling safe.

There are also remarkable examples of national progress. El Salvador, once notorious as the murder capital of the world, ranked second to last out of 134 countries for safety in 2016. Today, it has climbed to a tie for 8th out of 140 countries. Yet, challenges remain, particularly in addressing the safety-perception gap between men and women, as men are over 20% more likely than women to say they feel safe in their communities.

Ensuring everyone, regardless of where they live, can feel safe and secure in their daily lives is not just a moral imperative; it is the first step to sustainable growth and prosperous societies. The data in the following report show where the world stands on that vital first step — but it also reminds us that much work remains to be done.



Jon Clifton
CEO of Gallup



UNITED NATIONS' SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 16

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Safety Starts to Slip in 2023

Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and Caribbean rank as least safe.



Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the area where you live?

The majority of people worldwide have answered “yes” to this question every year since Gallup started asking it in 2006. This includes 2023, when Gallup posed the question to almost 146,000 adults in 140 countries and territories.

Notably, on a global level, people felt safer in 2023 than they did a decade ago. The 70% of adults who said they felt safe walking alone at night last year is considerably higher than the 64% who reported this in 2013. However, progress has stalled in the past few years, and in 2023, slightly fewer people felt safe than they did in 2020, when a record-high 72% felt safe.

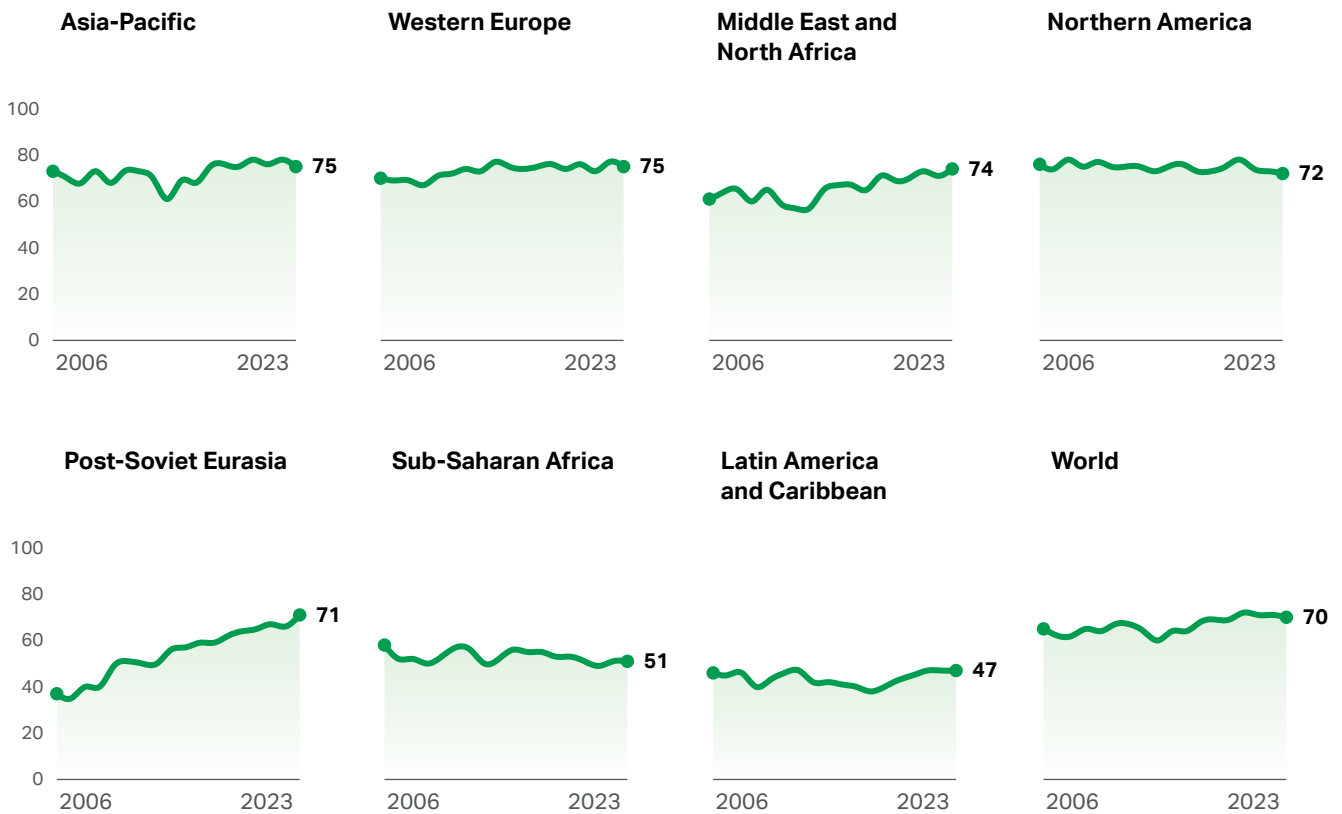
Regionally, at least seven in 10 people felt safe in Asia-Pacific, Western Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, Northern America (U.S. and Canada) and in post-Soviet Eurasia. Of all the regions, post-Soviet Eurasia has gained the most ground in the past two decades; almost twice as many felt safe in 2023 (71%) as in 2006 (37%).

People continue to feel the least safe in sub-Saharan Africa (51%) and Latin America and the Caribbean (47%). Further, feelings of safety have declined more in sub-Saharan Africa than in any other region over the past two decades. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the percentage who said they felt safe has never topped 50% at any point.

How Safe Does the World Feel?

Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where you live?

% Yes



Ecuadorians Least Likely in the World to Feel Safe

Excluding active war zones, feelings of safety in Guayas, Ecuador, are the lowest in the world.



For years, the small Andean nation of Ecuador was known as a relatively peaceful country, located between the world's two largest cocaine producers, Colombia and Peru. But since COVID-19, the country has spiraled into a deep security crisis. Ecuador is an increasingly important node in global cocaine trafficking.

Gang violence and homicides have spiked as a result, with Ecuador's murder rate reaching nearly 50 per 100,000 residents in 2023, one of the highest rates in the world.

In 2023, just 27% of Ecuadorians said they felt safe walking alone at night where they live, which is a new record-low for the country, the lowest in Latin America, and numerically the lowest in the entire world (South Africa and Liberia are statistically on par at 30%).

Feelings of Public Safety Collapse in Guayas Faster Than Ecuador as a Whole

Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where you live?

% Yes

● Ecuador ● Guayas



The port city of Guayaquil acts as a critical export hub for transporting cocaine to Europe. In 2023, no other region anywhere in the world — excluding active war zones — felt less secure than Guayas, Ecuador, where Guayaquil is located.

Just 11% of residents in the country’s most populous province said they felt safe walking alone in their area at night.

The countries in which residents are least likely to say they feel safe walking alone at night are exclusively a mix of countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean — which tends to be the case each year. Only Namibia and Malawi were not on the list in 2022.

In most economically developed countries and territories with strong rule of law, high majorities of residents say they feel safe walking alone in their areas at night. The same is true in countries where populations are under tighter state control. For example, these feelings were nearly universal in 2023 in countries such as Kuwait (99%), Singapore (94%), Tajikistan (92%), Saudi Arabia (92%) and the United Arab Emirates (90%).

Countries/Areas Where People Feel Safest Walking Alone

Country	% Yes
Kuwait	99
Singapore	94
Norway	92
Saudi Arabia	92
Tajikistan	92
Slovenia	91
United Arab Emirates	90
El Salvador	88
Montenegro	88
Bahrain	87
Iceland	87
Kosovo	87
Luxembourg	87
Switzerland	87

Countries/Areas Where People Feel Least Safe Walking Alone

Country	% Yes
Malawi	40
The Gambia	38
Zimbabwe	38
Eswatini	37
Namibia	37
Chile	36
Botswana	32
Liberia	30
South Africa	30
Ecuador	27

SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

El Salvador Ranks Among “Most Safe” for First Time

El Salvador, once known as the murder capital of the world, made the top of the “most safe” list for the first time in 2023, with a record-high 88% of residents saying they felt safe.

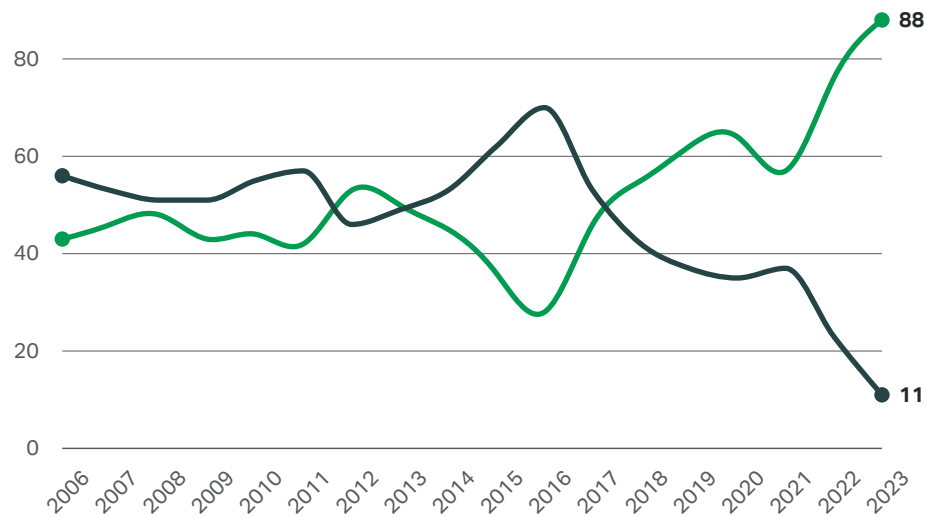


Although the country has drifted toward becoming a police state, the government’s crackdown on gangs — which have incarcerated approximately 2% of the country’s population — has made the country safer, for now. El Salvador currently boasts one of the lowest homicide rates in the Western Hemisphere.

Record-High 88% in El Salvador Feel Safe

Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where you live?

● % Yes ● % No



SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

Fewer Israelis Feel Safe in Wake of Oct. 7 Attacks

At 82% in 2022, Israelis' perceived safety was higher than levels in other OECD member states, such as Japan (78%), Germany (78%) and the U.S. (73%). In the immediate aftermath of the Hamas attacks on Israel in October 2023, this was no longer the case.

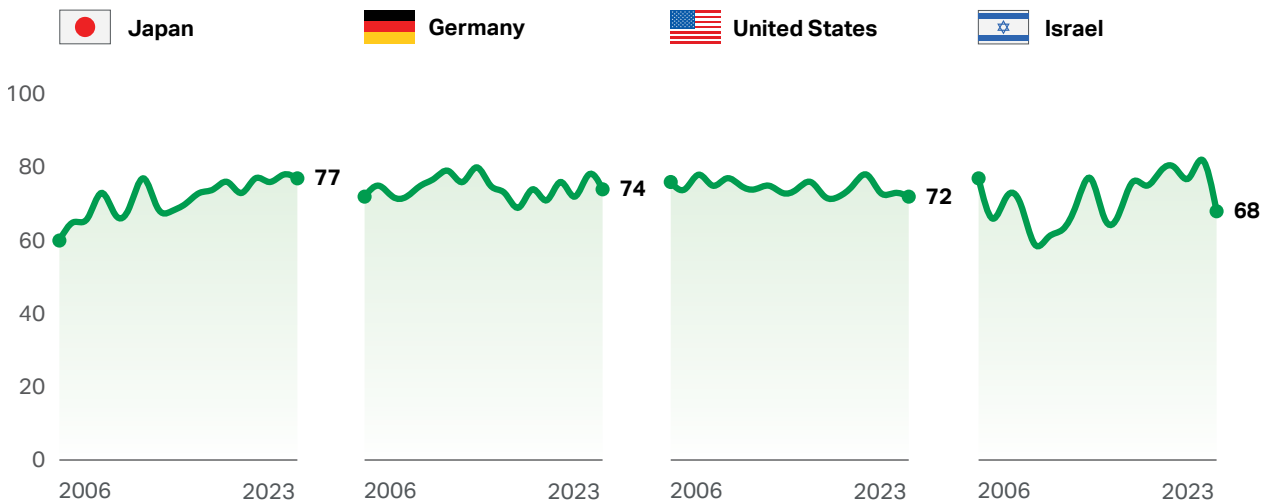


A much lower 68% of Israelis said they felt safe walking alone at night where they live.

Israelis' Safety Shaken After Hamas Attacks

Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where you live?

● % Yes



Helping People Feel Safe Takes a Community, Rather Than a National, Approach

Confidence in local police, satisfaction with communities boosts safety.



A Gallup analysis of people's feelings of safety by country-income group suggests that strategies to help people feel safer may find more success if they start at the local level.

In addition to asking people about their safety, Gallup also asks people about their confidence in institutions, trust in police, and satisfaction with different aspects of their communities.

Confidence in these national institutions, such as national government, the military, judiciary, and the honesty of elections is only weakly related to perceived safety, but the odds that people feel safe increase if they are confident in more of these institutions.

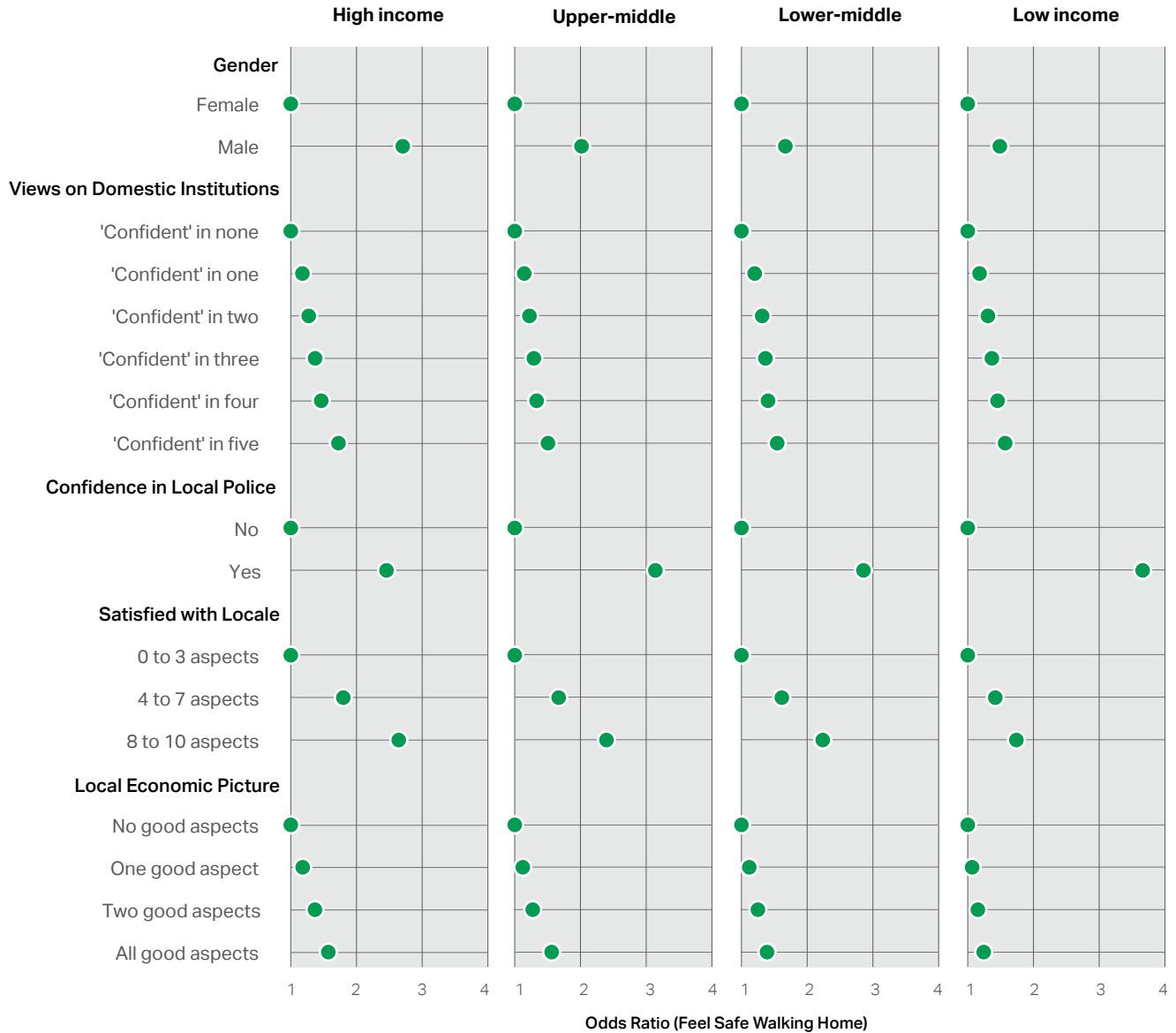
However, across all countries, regardless of country-income group, two things matter most to people's perceptions of safety:

- 1 people's trust in their local police
- 2 people's satisfaction with their communities as places to live

Feelings of safety increase if people trust their local police and if they are satisfied with more aspects of their communities such as availability of quality healthcare, the quality of schools, water and air quality. But in low-income countries, confidence in local police matters far more than community satisfaction.

Feelings of Safety Related to Confidence in Police, Community Satisfaction

Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where you live?



World Remains Confident in Local Police

Confidence is lowest in Latin America and Caribbean.



In the city or area where you live, do you have confidence in the local police force, or not?

Worldwide, people's confidence in their local police — whose chief responsibility should be maintaining public order and safety — is closely tied to how safe they feel in their communities.

In 2023, just over seven in 10 adults worldwide (71%) said they had confidence in their local police.

As might be expected given the trends on perceived safety, on a global level, people are more confident in their police today than they were a decade ago. The 71% of adults who said they were confident in their local police is considerably higher than the 62% who reported this in 2013. But like people's perceptions of safety, progress has largely stalled in the past few years.

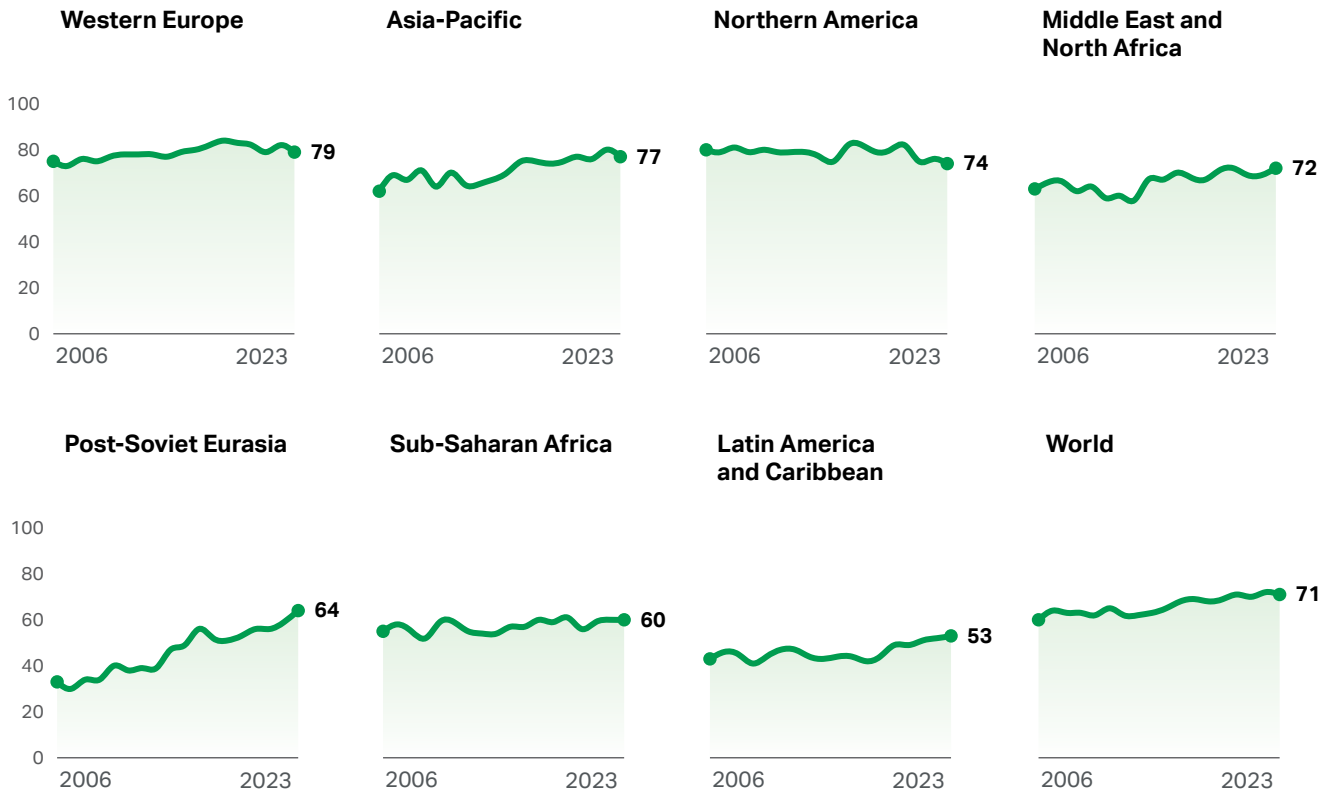
Regionally, confidence in the police is on par with or higher than the global average in Western Europe, Asia-Pacific and Northern America (U.S. and Canada), and the Middle East and North Africa. Although people's confidence in the police in post-Soviet Eurasia still trails the global average, it has almost doubled from 33% in 2006 to 64% in 2023.

People in Latin America and the Caribbean continue feeling the least confident (and the least safe) of any region, but the 53% who expressed confidence in 2023 was among the highest measures since 2006.

How Confident Is the World in Police?

In the city or area where you live, do you have confidence in the local police force, or not?

● % Yes



Safety First: Sustainable Growth Starts With Ensuring People Feel Secure

People’s perceptions are highly related to hard data.

In addition to asking people about their feelings of safety and their confidence in police, Gallup asks two additional questions about their personal experiences with assault and theft in the past year. In 2023, almost one in eight (13%) said they had property stolen from them or another household member in the past year, and 7% said they were assaulted or mugged. Both of these numbers have remained stable for almost two decades.

Gallup compiles the “positive” responses to these four questions into a Law and Order Index score for each country. The higher the score, the higher the proportion of the population that reports feeling safe.

Scores on the Law and Order Index are highly related to traditional development indicators, including global income, health, food security and homicide metrics.

External Measures	Pearson’s r
Maternal mortality ratio (modeled estimate, per 100,000 live births)*	-.715
Adolescent fertility rate	-.686
People using safely managed sanitation services	.678
Depth of the food deficit (kilocalories per person, per day)*	-.646
Life expectancy (total years)	.639
GDP per capita, PPP*	.614
Mortality rate, infant	-.602
Mortality rate, under-5	-.597
Internet users	.575
Health expenditure per capita*	.557
Intentional homicides	-.535

**Log transformation*

The index score for the world in 2023 was 81 out of a possible 100, which is in line with scores since 2017. Scores at the country level in 2023 ranged from a high of 98 in Kuwait to a low of 50 in Liberia.

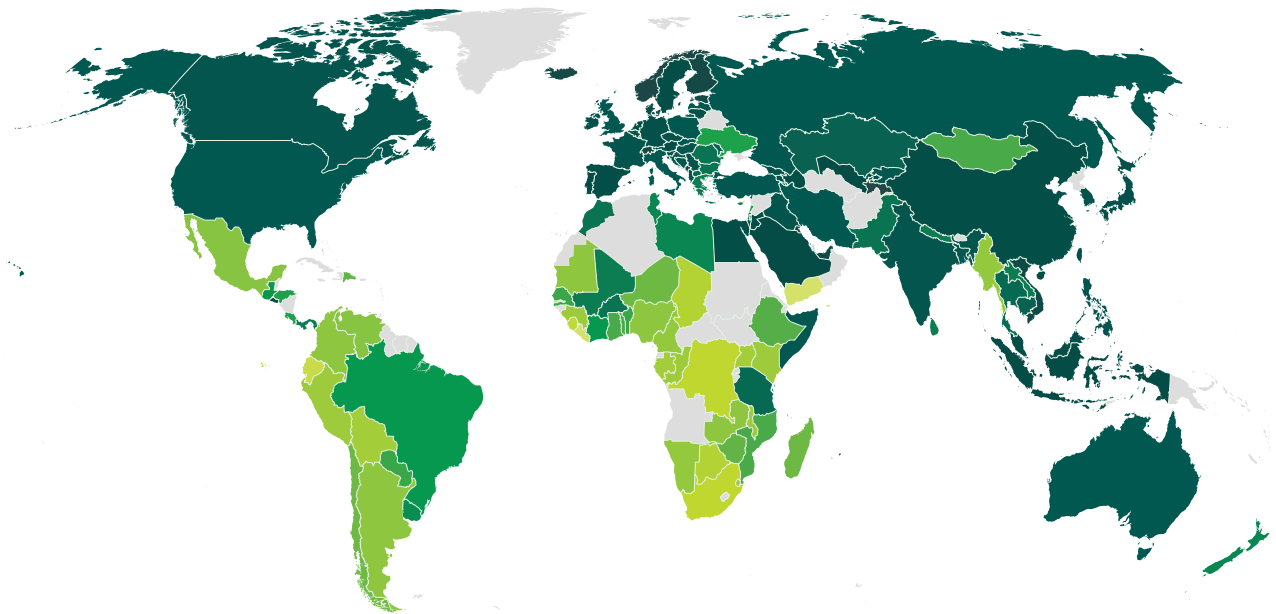
Liberia posted the lowest score on the index for the second straight year, mostly attributable to the high percentage of residents who have been victims of crime and their low sense of security.

Almost half of Liberians (45%) said they had money or property stolen in the past year and more than one in four (28%) had been the victim of assault, which was the highest rate in the world. Thirty percent said they felt safe walking alone at night where they live, one of the lowest rates in the world.

Kuwait, the current country leader, posted scores in the 90s on the index in 2022 and in 2019. The country's 2023 score is its highest to date, bolstered by the 99% of residents who said they felt safe and the low experiences with assault (4%) and theft (1%). Kuwaiti residents are not asked about their confidence in the police.

Law and Order Index

Worldwide, 2023



Countries/Areas With Highest Law and Order Index Scores

Country	Index Score
Kuwait	98
Singapore	95
Tajikistan	95
Norway	93
Estonia	91
Finland	91
Iceland	91
Kosovo	91
Luxembourg	91
Switzerland	91

Countries/Areas With Lowest Law and Order Index Scores

Country	Index Score
Bolivia	62
Eswatini	62
Gabon	62
Uganda	62
Botswana	60
Chad	60
The Gambia	59
Democratic Republic of the Congo	58
South Africa	58
Sierra Leone	57
Ecuador	55
Liberia	50

Methodology

The results in this report are based on nationally representative, probability-based samples among the adult population aged 15 and older in 140 countries and areas in 2023.

With the exception of China and a subset of 26 countries, the 2023 results are based on telephone or face-to-face surveys of approximately 1,000 or more respondents.

2023 data for China were collected using a web self-administered mode (computer-aided web interviewing or CAWI). Gallup adopted a hybrid approach to data collection in 26 countries that are typically surveyed by telephone. The countries Gallup identified for this hybrid approach all have high levels of access to the internet among the adult population.

Gallup used high-quality third-party panels that are commercially available as the sample source for the portion of World Poll data collected via web in 2023. Many of these panels are put together using opt-in methods, although where there was access to high-quality probability-based panels, we incorporated it into our design.

To ensure adequate representation of the adult 15 and older population among panel members, Gallup set interview quotas on age, gender, region and education. There is no such quota requirement for the telephone random-digital-dial part because it is expected to fall out naturally according to population proportions.

From a questionnaire design perspective, the web survey instrument closely matched the telephone survey instrument with the item format adapted slightly for self-administered mode and to capture of high-quality data via web. Gallup implemented best practices on web-survey design to minimize item non-response, illogical responses, and incomplete responses.

For results based on the total sample of national adults in 2023, the margin of sampling error ranges between ± 2.2 and ± 5.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. The margin of error reflects the influence of data weighting. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

Law and Order Index Scores for 2023

Country / Area	Law and Order Index Score	Country / Area	Law and Order Index Score
Kuwait	98	Montenegro	88
Singapore	95	Netherlands	88
Tajikistan	95	Sweden	88
Norway	93	Taiwan, Province of China	88
Estonia	91	Austria	87
Finland	91	Azerbaijan	87
Iceland	91	Jordan	87
Kosovo	91	Malaysia	87
Luxembourg	91	Spain	87
Switzerland	91	Georgia	86
Denmark	90	Germany	86
United Arab Emirates	90	Hong Kong, S.A.R. of China	86
Vietnam	90	Ireland	86
Bahrain	89	Japan	86
El Salvador	89	Lithuania	86
Indonesia	89	Armenia	85
Portugal	89	Czech Republic	85
Saudi Arabia	89	South Korea	85
Slovenia	89	Albania	84
Uzbekistan	89	France	84
China	88	Iraq	84
Egypt	88	Israel	84

Country / Area	Law and Order Index Score
Malta	84
Philippines	84
Serbia	84
Belgium	83
Canada	83
Hungary	83
India	83
Bosnia and Herzegovina	82
Kyrgyzstan	82
Latvia	82
Northern Cyprus	82
Slovakia	82
Somalia	82
Türkiye	82
United Kingdom	82
Australia	81
Bangladesh	81
Croatia	81
Iran	81
Italy	81
Poland	81
Russian Federation	81
United States	81
Cambodia	80
Kazakhstan	80

Country / Area	Law and Order Index Score
Mauritius	80
Moldova	80
North Macedonia	79
Tanzania	79
Thailand	79
Bulgaria	78
Burkina Faso	78
Morocco	78
Pakistan	78
Romania	78
Cyprus	77
Greece	77
Lao People's Democratic Republic	77
Mali	77
Nepal	77
Panama	77
Sri Lanka	77
Libya	76
New Zealand	76
Tunisia	76
State of Palestine	75
Uruguay	75
Brazil	74
Cote d'Ivoire	74
Guatemala	74

Country / Area	Law and Order Index Score
Costa Rica	73
Honduras	73
Lebanon	73
Ukraine	73
Benin	72
Paraguay	72
Senegal	72
Ghana	71
Mongolia	71
Mozambique	71
Togo	71
Yemen	71
Ethiopia	70
Comoros	69
Dominican Republic	69
Zimbabwe	69
Chile	68
Madagascar	68
Niger	68
Mexico	66
Venezuela	66
Argentina	65
Colombia	65

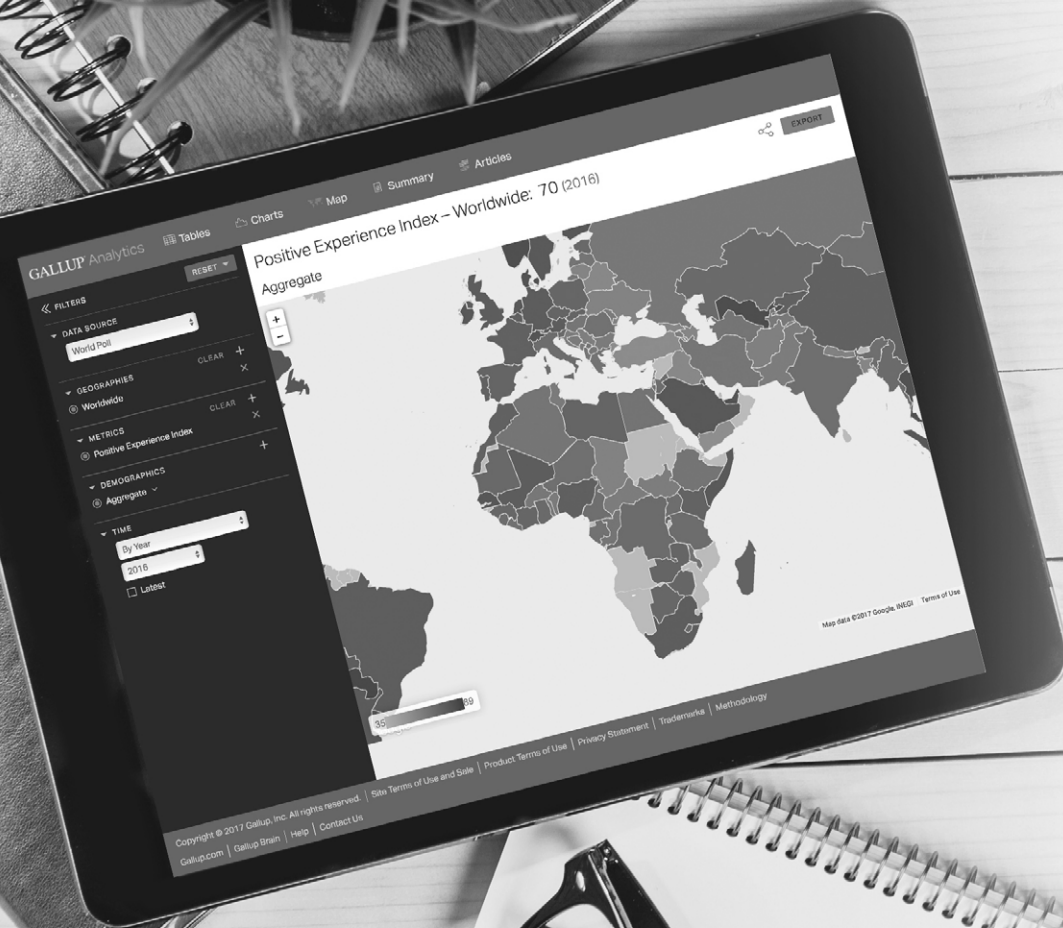
Country / Area	Law and Order Index Score
Mauritania	65
Nigeria	65
Zambia	65
Cameroon	64
Myanmar	64
Namibia	64
Republic of the Congo	63
Guinea	63
Kenya	63
Malawi	63
Peru	63
Bolivia	62
Eswatini	62
Gabon	62
Uganda	62
Botswana	60
Chad	60
The Gambia	59
Democratic Republic of the Congo	58
South Africa	58
Sierra Leone	57
Ecuador	55
Liberia	50

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