



China

Chicago Council on Global Affairs/GlobeScan

Globalization and Trade

The Chinese public is among those showing the widest support for globalization. They are also among those most positive about the effects of international trade.

- 87% of Chinese respondents—the largest majority in the 18 countries polled—believe that “the increasing connections of our economy with others around the world” is mostly good for China.
- Very large majorities say international trade is good for China’s economy (88%), for Chinese companies (78%), for the Chinese people’s standard of living (73%) and for Chinese consumers (69%).
- Seven in 10 say trade helps create jobs in China (73%) and protects the job security of Chinese workers (65%).
- A remarkably high 84% think that “minimum standards for working conditions” should be part of international trade agreements. Similarly, 85% support requiring trade agreements to include environmental protections.
- Unlike most other publics, 57% of Chinese respondents tend to believe that international trade is good for the environment.
- 58% believe that China should comply with adverse World Trade Organization decisions as a general rule, while 19% say it should not and 16% believe it depends.

Climate Change

The Chinese are among those most convinced that global warming needs to be addressed. They are divided, however, about whether the problem requires high- or low-cost remedies.

- 83% say steps should be taken to address global warming. This includes those who say it demands immediate action “even if this involves significant costs” (42%) and those who say the effects will be gradual and can be dealt with through “steps that are low in cost” (41%).
- Most Chinese (80%) think global warming could be an important threat to their country’s “vital interests” in the next 10 years.
- Four in five Chinese respondents (79%) say that if developed countries are willing to provide aid, “less-

developed countries should make a commitment to limit greenhouse gas emissions.”

- More than four out of five (85%) believe international trade agreements should include “minimum standards for the protection of the environment.
- A large majority says “improving the global environment” should be an important foreign policy goal (85%).

Genocide and Darfur

The Chinese public strongly backs the idea that the United Nations Security Council can and should authorize the use of military force to stop severe human rights violations such as genocide.

- Most Chinese (72%) believe the UN Security Council has the “right to authorize the use of military force” to stop such violations.
- More than three-quarters (76%)—the highest percentage among the 12 countries asked—say the United Nations has the responsibility to protect people from abuses such as genocide even “against the will of their own government.”
- 58% of Chinese respondents say the UN has either “the right” (38%) or the “responsibility” (20%) to authorize intervention in Darfur, where militias linked to the Sudanese government have massacred civilians. Only 12% say the Council does not have this right.

Future of the United Nations

The Chinese support steps that would grant the United Nations greater power, and believe the UN Security Council should have the right to authorize military force to address a range of problems. They show the largest support among those polled for abiding by UN decisions, even if this means compromising on preferred policies.

- 86% of Chinese believe that “strengthening the United Nations” should be a very (51%) or somewhat (35%) important foreign policy goal.
- Majorities favor giving the UN the power to have its own standing peacekeeping force (62%), regulate the international arms trade (59%), go into countries in order to investigate human rights violations (57%), and impose a small tax on things such as international sales of arms or oil (55%).
- Large majorities believe the Security Council should have the right to authorize the use of force in order to prevent severe violations of human rights such as genocide (72%), defend a country that has been attacked (70%) and stop a country from supporting terrorist groups (67%).
- Chinese respondents lean toward allowing the UN to use force to stop countries that do not have nuclear weapons from acquiring them (47% to 40%) or to stop them from producing the nuclear fuel that could be used to make weapons (47% to 34%).
- The Chinese tend to reject by 45% to 37% the idea that the Security Council should have the right to authorize force to restore a democratic government that has been overthrown.
- A remarkably high four out of five Chinese (78%) believe their country should “be more willing to make decisions within the United Nations,” even if this means China will have to go along with a policy that is not its first choice.
- The Chinese on average express warm feelings toward the United Nations (75°) and even warmer ones toward the World Health Organization (80°). Sentiments toward the World Court are also warm (70°).

US Leadership

The Chinese public rejects the idea that the United States should continue to be the preeminent world leader but few want the United States to disengage from world affairs. Most would like the United States to reduce its overseas military presence.

- Only 14% of Chinese want the US to withdraw from world affairs and only 9% think it should continue as preeminent world leader. Nearly seven in 10 (68%) believe the US “should do its share” with other countries in solving international problems.
- More than three-quarters (77%) agree that the United States acts as “world policeman” more than it should. Three-fifths (61%) reject the idea that the US has the responsibility to play such a role.
- A majority of Chinese respondents (59%) do not have confidence that the United States will act responsibly in the world.
- 58% say the United States does not take China’s interests into account when making foreign policy decisions.
- A considerable majority (63%) of Chinese respondents believe the US should reduce its overseas military presence.
- 64% say the US military presence in East Asia should be reduced and 56% say this presence decreases stability in the region.
- A majority (53%) says China’s relations with the United States are improving though 27% feel they are staying about the same, and just 15% say they are getting worse.
- Chinese feelings about the United States are lukewarm on average (51°).

Rise of China

There is greater uncertainty among the Chinese than among most publics polled that their economy will someday equal that of the United States. But they believe that China already has as much influence in Asia as the United States.

- Only half of the Chinese public (50%) is confident that their economy will reach the size of the US economy, while 38% say that it will not.
- Unlike other Asian publics, the Chinese see their country’s influence in Asia as equal to the United States’: each is given a rating of 8.0 on a 10-point scale. But they see the United States as having greater global influence (8.6) than China (7.8).
- Chinese respondents see Japan as having considerably less influence in Asia (6.8) and the world (6.7) than either China or the US.
- A large majority of Chinese respondents (79%)—higher than any public except South Korea—say they do not trust Japan to act responsibly in the world and two-thirds (67%) say Japan does not take China’s interests into account when making foreign policy.
- Nearly half (49%) say that relations between China and Japan are worsening (25% improving, 21% the same).
- A large majority of Chinese respondents favor entering into a free trade agreement with the United States (66%) and a smaller one supports such an agreement with Japan (53%).