Americans Rate Other Countries

How Do Americans Feel About Other Countries?  
A Sampling of Various Polls


Note: These are the mean “temperature” readings for the various countries given by the US public. Respondents were asked to assign a temperature of 50° if their feelings were neutral, over 50° if warm or positive, under 50° if cold or negative.
Allies: Countries Americans Give High Positive Marks

Question: ...[T]he 10 boxes on this card go from the highest position of plus 5 for something [a country] ... you like very much ...down to the lowest position of minus 5 for something [a country] ...you dislike very much....[H]ow far up the scale or ...down the scale would you rate the following countries...?

The percentages shown here are the proportions of the public saying they like each country "very much"—defined here as responses of +3, +4, and +5.

*Question wording varies slightly from 1953-1960, and for 1996.

Note: For all four of these countries the proportion of the public offering a negative judgement was very small. For Canada over this span, only 1-2% of Americans offered strongly negative views (-3 to -5). For England, the range was 13%-3%. For France, the range was 23%-3%. For Germany (West Germany for every year except 1996 asking), the range was 12%-6%.

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Despite Some Tensions, Much Larger Proportions of the US Public Feel Very Positive About Israel and Japan Than Very Negative

Note: The questions are the same shown on page 27. "Very positive" responses are +3 to +5; "very negative" -3 to -5.

Former Foes in Transition: Assessing Russia and China

Note: The questions are the same shown on page 27. "Very positive" responses are +3 to +5; "very negative" -3 to -5.

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Friends and Enemies

Not surprisingly, the one big shift from 1983 to 1996 that Louis Harris and Associates found in the public's ranking other countries as friends or enemies involves Russia. Fifty-two percent called the Soviet Union an enemy of the US in 1983, whereas only 12 percent said that of Russia last year.

**Question:** ...For each [country] tell me if you feel that country or group is a close ally of the US, is friendly but not a close ally, is not friendly but not an enemy, or is unfriendly and an enemy of the US?

### 1983

**Canada**
- Close ally: 61%
- Friendly but not a close ally: 35%
- Not friendly but not an enemy: 1%
- Unfriendly and an enemy: *%

**Great Britain**
- Close ally: 57%
- Friendly but not a close ally: 34%
- Not friendly but not an enemy: 3%
- Unfriendly and an enemy: 17%

**Israel**
- Close ally: 35%
- Friendly but not a close ally: 43%
- Not friendly but not an enemy: 12%
- Unfriendly and an enemy: 3%

**W. Germany**
- Close ally: 33%
- Friendly but not a close ally: 25%
- Not friendly but not an enemy: 17%
- Unfriendly and an enemy: 11% (Don't know-15%)

**Mexico**
- Close ally: 31%
- Friendly but not a close ally: 56%
- Not friendly but not an enemy: 7%
- Unfriendly and an enemy: 1%

**France**
- Close ally: 23%
- Friendly but not a close ally: 57%
- Not friendly but not an enemy: 13%
- Unfriendly and an enemy: 2%

**Japan**
- Close ally: 28%
- Friendly but not a close ally: 54%
- Not friendly but not an enemy: 9%
- Unfriendly and an enemy: 3%

**China**
- Close ally: 5%
- Friendly but not a close ally: 24%
- Not friendly but not an enemy: 29%
- Unfriendly and an enemy: 38%

**Russia**
- Close ally: 1%
- Friendly but not a close ally: 8%
- Not friendly but not an enemy: 36%
- Unfriendly and an enemy: 52%

**Note:** * = less than 1%.

**Source:** Surveys by Louis Harris & Associates, April 29-May 1, 1983 and November 8-11, 1996.