

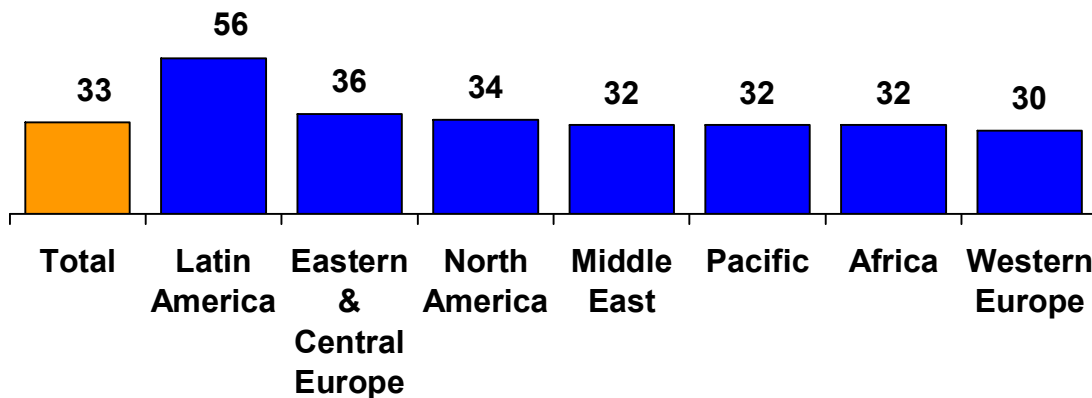
**Press Release of Survey findings**

**VOICE OF THE PEOPLE™**

- **Gallup International's Voice of the People™ End of the Year Survey** found a third of the more than 50,000 people interviewed across the world are optimistic about the year to come (33%), while a quarter (26%) are pessimistic and 32% forecast no major changes. The survey was conducted between October and December and asked people in 54 countries of different continents **“So far as you are concerned, do you think that 2008 will be better, or worse than 2007?”**
- Analysis of trend data shows world citizens are expecting 2008 with less hope than in 2007, when 43% looked forward positively to the year about to commence.
- Looking at the economic front, the number of those forecasting economic difficulties and an increase in unemployment (35% and 43% respectively) outnumber those with views of economic prosperity (20%) and an improvement in unemployment levels (21%).

On the international front, almost four out of ten of those interviewed globally (38%) feel 2008 will be a troubled year, with much international discord; whilst only just one in ten mention it will be a peaceful year (11%), the remaining 42% considering things will stay much as they were in 2007.

**2008 will be better than 2007 (in %)**



Source: Gallup International Voice of the People™ 2007

**Optimists and Pessimists**

Looking at regions across the world, Latin America™ is the most optimistic region, while the most negative views were found, as in last year's study, in Western Europe.

Turning to the results for individual countries, the list of top ten countries looks familiar, as almost all countries were pretty close to the most optimistic places in the world last year. Hong Kong is number 1, with 71% of the people saying 2008 will be better than 2007, followed closely by UN administered Kosovo (68% this year and in the top place for the last seven waves of Voice of the People™ End of the Year Poll). Also optimistic are Colombia (66%), New Zealand (57%), Australia and Venezuela (53% both). Half of the population has high expectations for 2008 in countries as diverse as Sweden and India (both with 51%), Canada (50%) and Argentina (49%).

<b>Top Optimists</b>	
2008 will be <i>better</i> than 2007	
<b>Hong Kong</b>	<b>71%</b>
<b>Kosovo (UN Administered)</b>	<b>68%</b>
<b>Colombia</b>	<b>66%</b>
<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>Venezuela</b>	<b>53%</b>
<b>Australia</b>	<b>53%</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>India</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>Canada</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Argentina</b>	<b>49%</b>

Looking at the other end of the optimism/pessimism scale, Senegal stands out with more than half of those interviewed (53%) saying 2008 will be worse than 2007. Greece is once again one of the most pessimistic countries in the world and several other Mediterranean countries are on the list as well. It is interesting to mention that the inclusion of Switzerland and Ireland in the pessimist league has another side to it: in both these countries opinions are strongly polarised (Ireland 39% pessimist vs 47% optimistic, Switzerland 43% vs 37%).

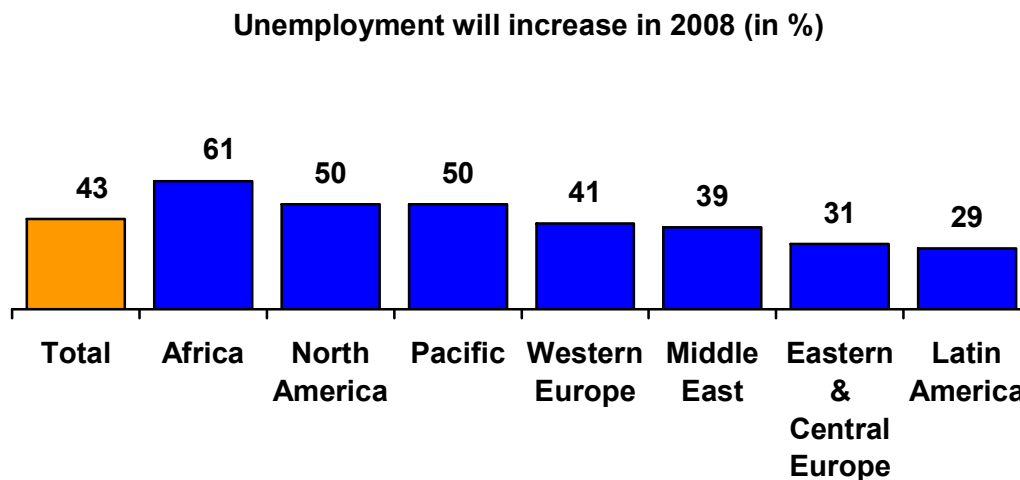
<b>Top Pessimists</b>	
2008 will be <i>worse</i> than 2007	
<b>Senegal</b>	<b>53%</b>
<b>Greece</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Italy</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Czech Republic</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Switzerland</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Jordan</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Portugal</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Egypt</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Ireland</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>Panama</b>	<b>37%</b>

Pessimism seems to have diminished in Iraq: the 43% that feared 2007 would be worse than 2006 is 24% this year and optimism (thinking the coming year will be better) is 38%. A significant change can also be found in India, which was in the top pessimists' list last year and is now in the top optimists. US has significantly changed views as well. In the previous study optimism was clear (41% vs 13% of negative view) whilst in the current study opinions are almost equally divided (32% expects 2008 to be better, 31% the same and 28% worse).

## Economic Prospects

Repeatedly surveys have shown that the public's economic expectations have a major impact on general expectations for the coming year. So, this year, Gallup International finds citizens expect 2008 with significantly more economic concerns than the previous year (23% expected economic difficulties for 2007 against 35% for 2008). A fifth of those questioned globally (20%) think 2008 will be a year of economic prosperity, whilst more (35%) feel it will be a year of economic difficulty. Again, Latin America is the most upbeat region about economic prospects – 43% say next year will be one of economic prosperity. At the opposite end of the continuum, more than half are pessimistic in Africa (46%) and in developed regions of North America (43%) and Western Europe (40%). Interestingly, 45% in the US fear economic difficulties (far more than the 26% found in last year's survey).

Fears that unemployment will increase have a major effect on whether people feel optimistic about economic prospects or not. Globally, more than four out of ten of those interviewed (43%) expect the number of unemployed in their country to increase either a lot or a little, whilst only a quarter (21%) feel unemployment will decrease.



Source: Gallup International Voice of the People™ 2007

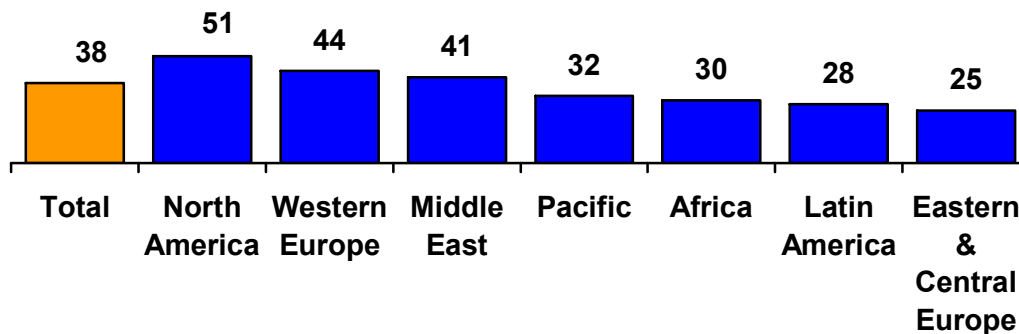
These fears are at their highest in the surveyed economies of Africa, with more than half the population expecting increases in the three countries participating in the study. North America (score influenced mainly by the 52% expecting a worsening in the US) and the Pacific come next. With this last region, the pattern is not consistent, with Hong Kong where a vast majority see unemployment decreasing in 2008 (56%) but with significant proportions in the rest of the region predicting increases in unemployment (skyrocket figures in Indonesia-81%- and Phillipines-75%).

Hong Kong's optimism can only be matched in Sweden, where slightly more than half the population expecting a decrease (54%) in already relatively low unemployment. As for the rest of Western Europe, significant majorities expect unemployment increases in several countries. Consequently, more than half (52%: the same proportion as in the troubled African countries) believe in this region that strikes and industrial disputes will increase in 2008. This opinion is held by more than 60% in France, Germany, Greece and Denmark.

## A peaceful or troubled year internationally?

Finally, respondents were asked about prospects for international peace – whether they thought 2008 would be a peaceful year more or less free of international dispute, a troubled year with much international discord or remain the same as the outgoing year.

### % who think 2008 will be a troubled year internationally



Source: Gallup International Voice of the People™ 2007

North America is the most pessimistic region regarding international prospects in the coming year, in both Canada and the US half expect international disputes.

Western Europe and the Middle East are the next most pessimistic regions on this question – four out of every ten citizens in these regions (44% and 41% respectively) think 2008 will be a troubled year.

In Pakistan almost half (46%) fear international tensions will worsen, significantly more than results collected at the end of 2006 (33%). Conversely in Iraq (28%), the view has become more optimistic compared to the 43% pessimistic about international prospects found last year, though this time 29% don't answer.

### Further information on Gallup International:

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