

How China Currently Views the World

Professor Reza Hasmath
University of Alberta

2025 Fulbright Research Chair in Public Diplomacy,
University of Southern California

Email: rhasmath@gmail.com

Website: www.rezahasmath.com

CCGPS Website



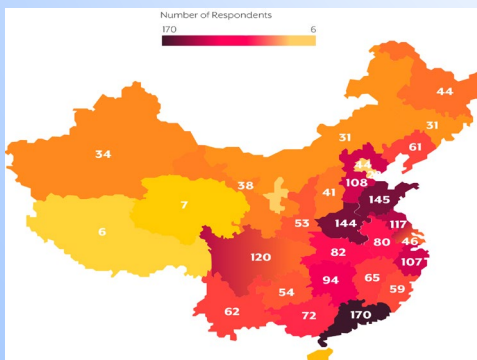
www.howchineseestheworld.com

Introduction

- China's relationship with Western jurisdictions have suffered from greater bi-directional tensions in the 2020s
- As China's rise as a major world power marks a defining feature of the contemporary global political, economic and security landscapes, it remains crucial to focus on Chinese citizens' perceptions of foreign jurisdictions and issues of global concern
- The Chinese state's capacity to pursue its interests, both domestically and abroad, is intimately tied to the popular legitimacy it is granted amongst the citizenry
- This ultimately means that the general public's support or dissatisfaction with China's foreign policy and activities can translate to future support or dissatisfaction with the CPC and the state itself

Chinese Citizens' Global Perception Survey

	Freq.	Percent		Freq.	Percent
Gender			Education Level		
Male	1031	51	Junior High or below	205	10
Female	978	49	Senior High	506	25
Age			College 3-year	533	27
18-22	245	12	Bachelor	654	33
23-29	346	17	Postgraduate or above	108	5
30-39	473	24	Marital Status		
40-49	451	23	Single	390	20
50-59	284	14	Married	1392	69
>=60	204	10	In Relationship	158	8
Residential Location			Divorced	67	3
Rural Level	141	7	Number of Children		
Town Level	262	13	0	620	31
County Level	442	22	1	844	42
Medium-Sized City	414	21	2	497	25
Large-Sized City	748	37	3 or more	46	2
Communist Party of China Member			Studied in Foreign Nation		
Yes	395	20	Yes	94	5
No	1612	80	No	1913	95
Employment Status			Employment Type		
Full-Time	1332	66	State-Owned Company	301	15
Part-Time	157	8	Government	113	6
Unemployed	148	7	Private Company	654	33
Student	181	9	Foreign Company	81	4
Retired	189	10	Social Organization	69	3
Monthly Personal Income (in RMB)			Self-Employed	242	16.5
0-4999	994	50	Monthly Family Income (in RMB)		
5000-9999	485	24	0-4999	126	6
10000-14999	312	16	5000-9999	417	21
15000-19999	113	5	10000-14999	546	27
Above 20000	103	5	15000-19999	388	20
			Above 20000	530	26



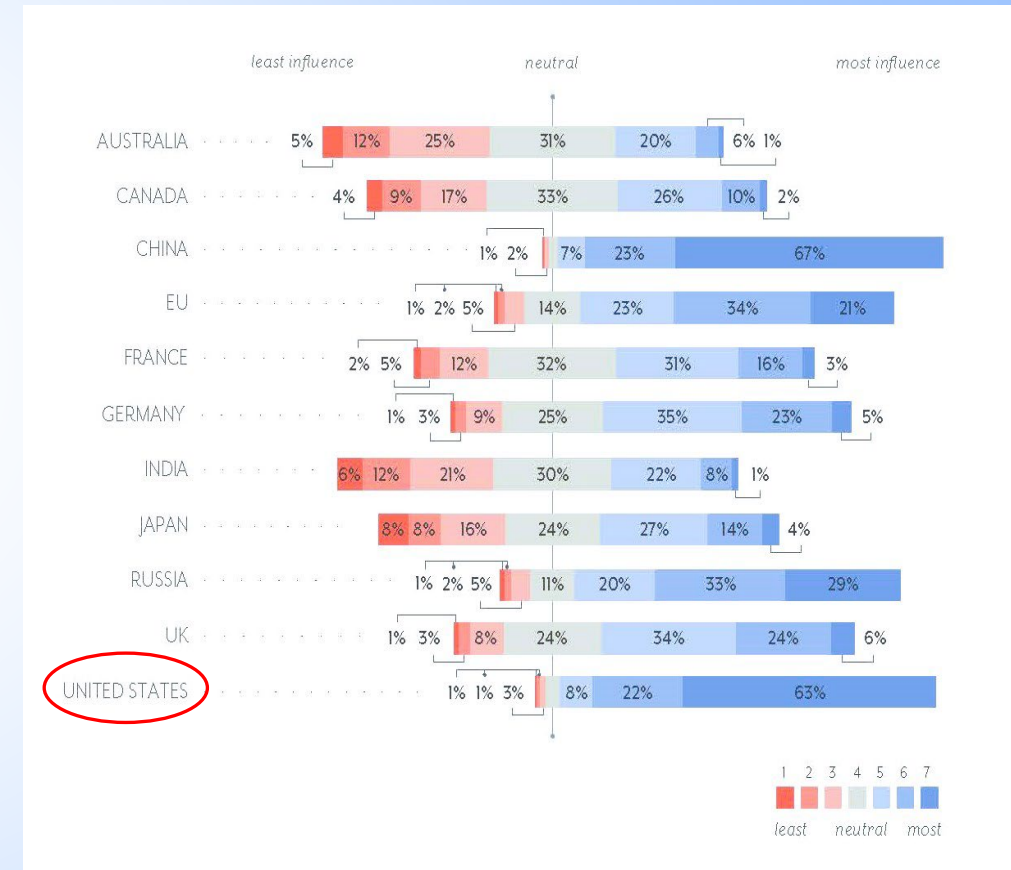
- The Chinese Citizens' Global Perception Survey (CCGPS) is an online and telephone national survey conducted in mainland China in 2023, 2024 and 2025
- CCGPS provides a demographically representative and statistically valid, candid account of how the Chinese general public view other jurisdictions and their relationships with China
- Citizens' perceptions of jurisdictions include: Australia, Canada, the EU, France, Germany, India, Japan, Russia, the UK, and the US
- The survey included 33 questions and involved 7-point Likert scale questions

GENERAL GLOBAL PERCEPTION

The background features a grid of thin white lines over a colorful, bokeh-filled scene. The colors transition from warm oranges and reds on the left to cooler blues and purples on the right. Numerous out-of-focus light circles in various colors are scattered across the image, creating a sense of depth and movement.

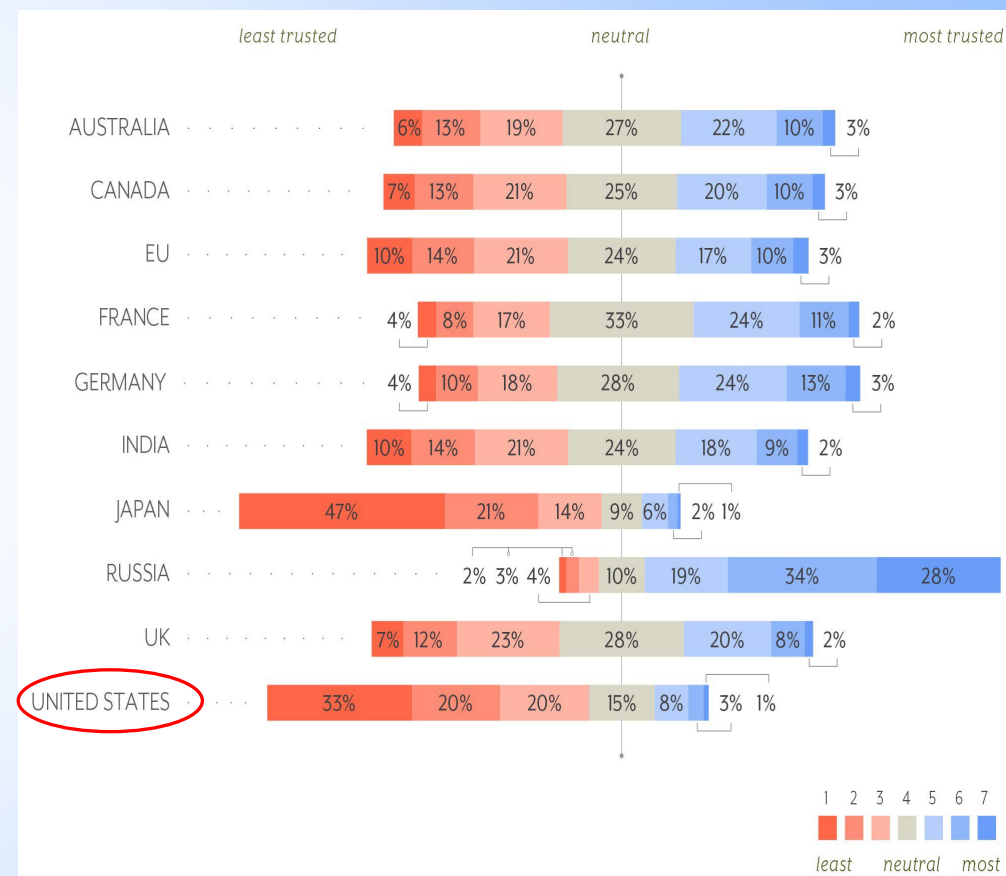
Global Influence Perception

- Chinese citizens strongly indicated that China was the world's most powerful nation, with 67 percent of respondents rating it as the nation with the most influence on the world stage
- The second most influential jurisdiction was the United States (63 percent), followed by Russia (29 percent) and the EU (21 percent)
- 1 percent of respondents believe that Australia is an influential jurisdiction, a notable trend given Canberra's role within the Five Eyes intelligence alliance and the AUKUS security alliance



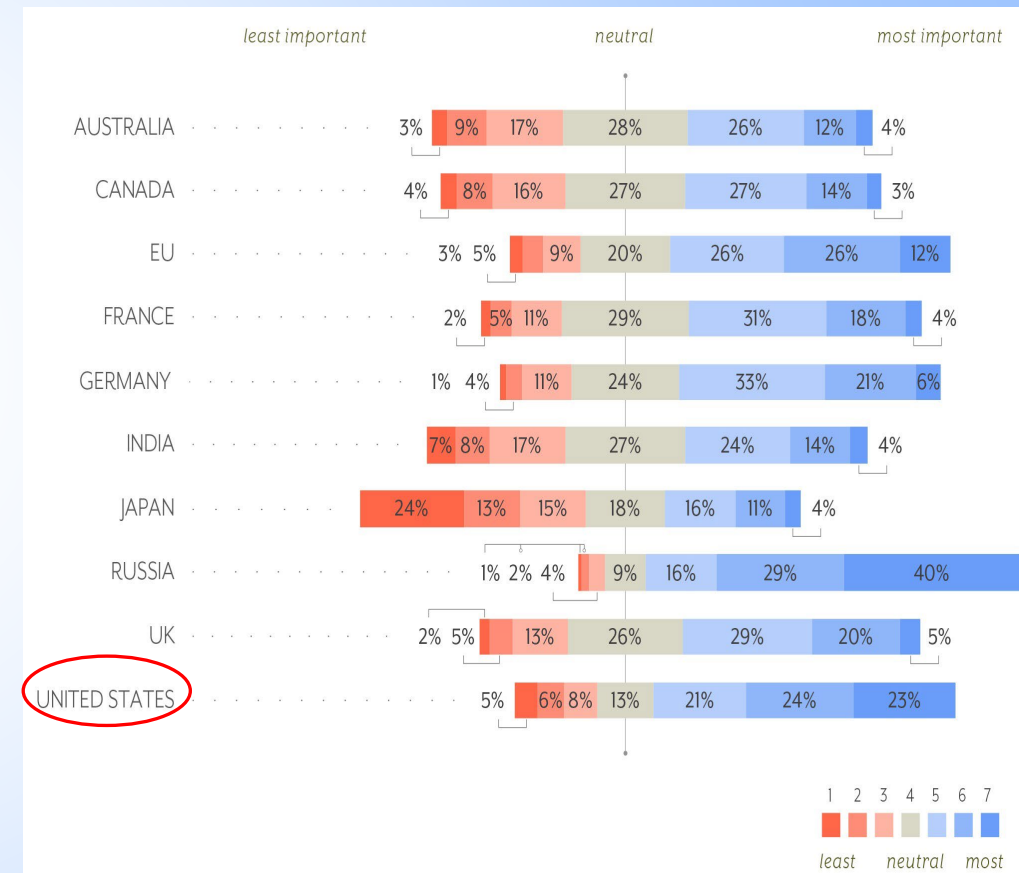
Trust in Global Partners

- Despite the continuation of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Chinese citizens continue to perceive Russia as its most trusted global partner; a status it has held since 2023
- Both Japan and the United States have the lowest levels of trustworthiness, in line with last year's findings
- CPC members (mean: 2.74), high-income earners (mean: 3.14), and highly educated respondents (mean: 3.05) were more likely to express higher trust in the US, indicating a potential division within the Chinese public along socio-economic lines and political affinities



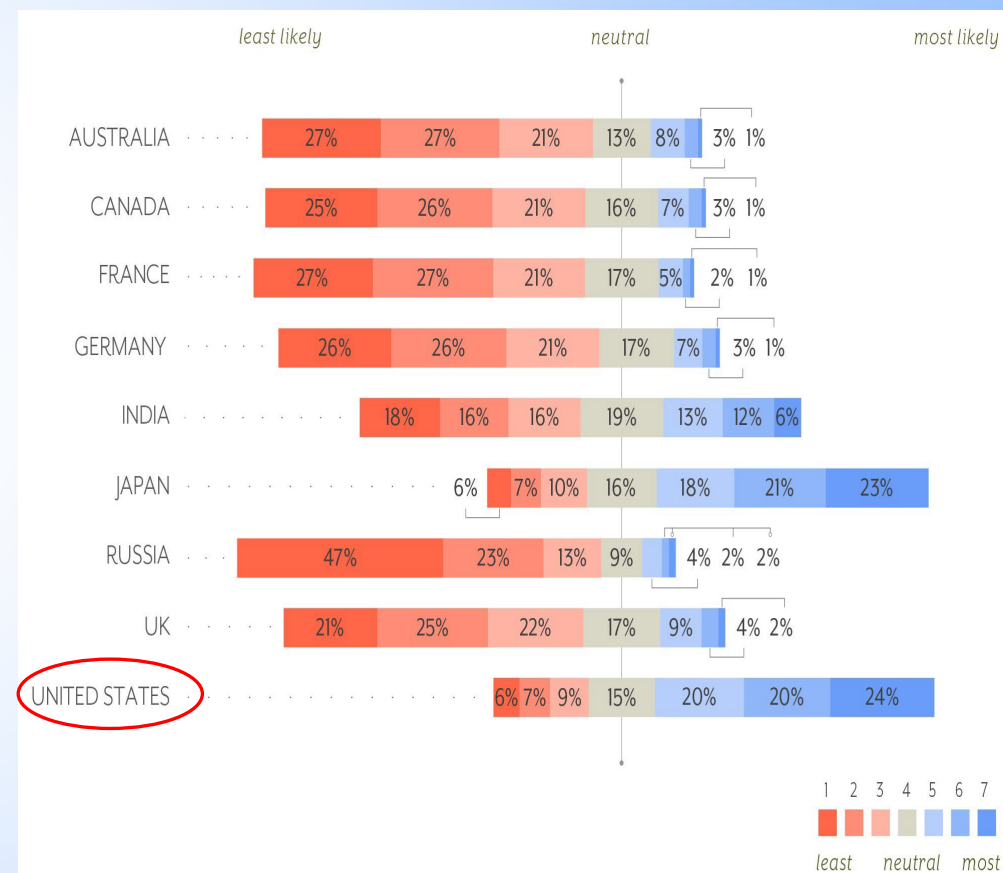
Long Term Importance to China

- Russia is viewed as the most important jurisdiction to China's long-term future, which is in line with the general positive view of Russia throughout various responses
- There is a perception that Japan is relatively insignificant to China's long-term future
- Perceptions towards Canada's relationship with China appear slightly more balanced, with only 44 percent of respondents viewing the relationship as somewhat or highly important (score above 4)



Likelihood of Military Conflict in the Next Decade

- Despite growing political tensions and ongoing border disputes, 50 percent of respondents (score below 4) believe a conflict between China and India is unlikely
- Given US-China tensions in the 2020s, it is not surprising to see 64 percent of respondents (score above 4) view a conflict between China and the United States as inevitable
- In contrast, the possibility of conflict with other major Western jurisdictions is seen as unlikely

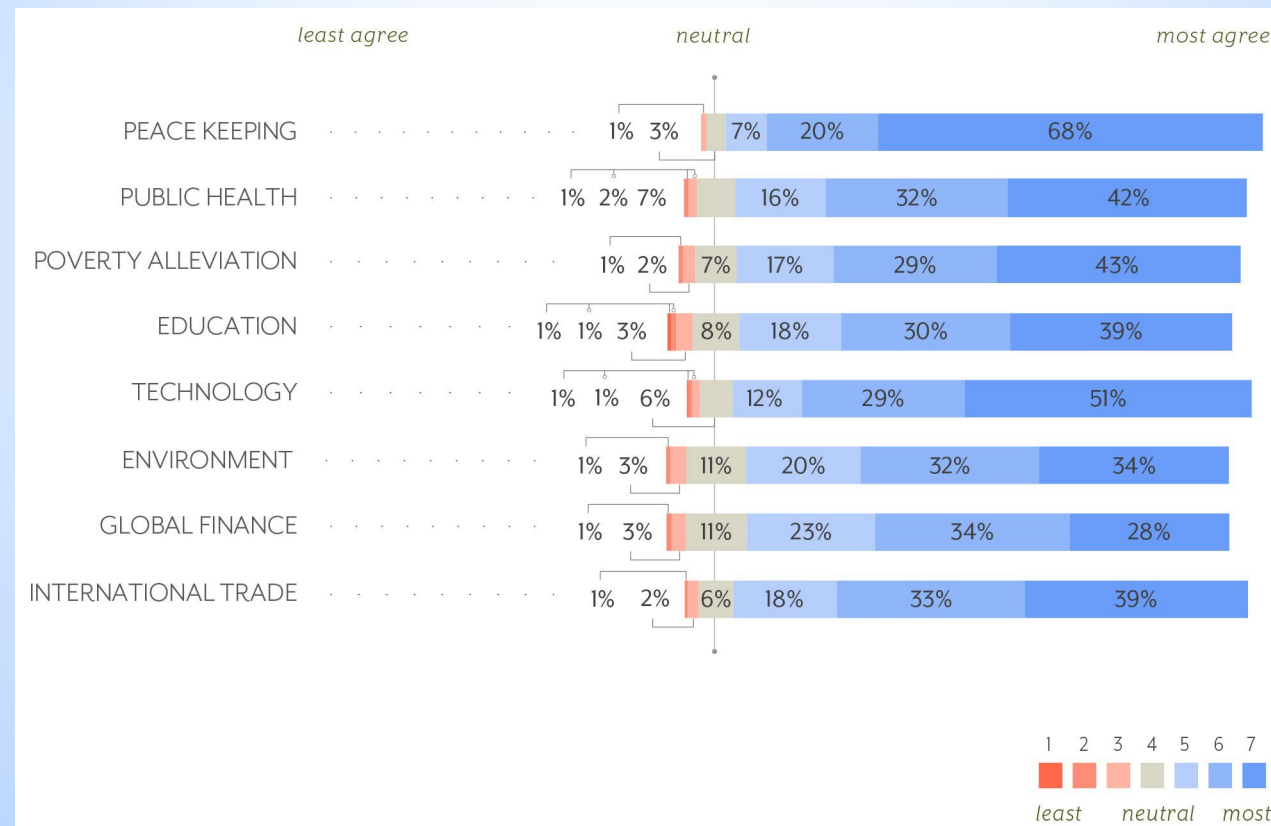




CHINA'S GLOBAL ROLES

Which Issue Areas Should China Take an Active Global Leadership Role?

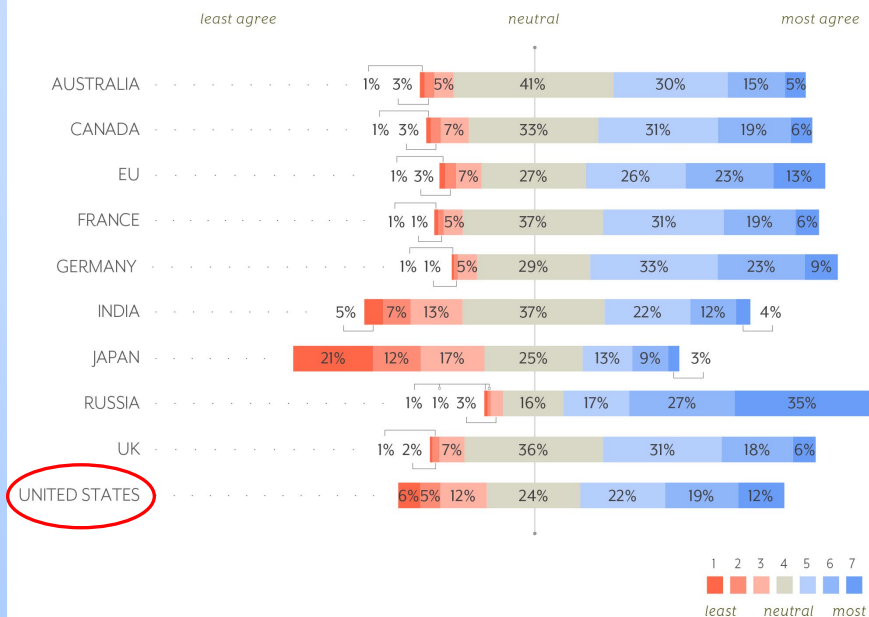
- Peacekeeping is the most important issue area for Chinese global leadership, followed by technology (a key priority for the CPC)



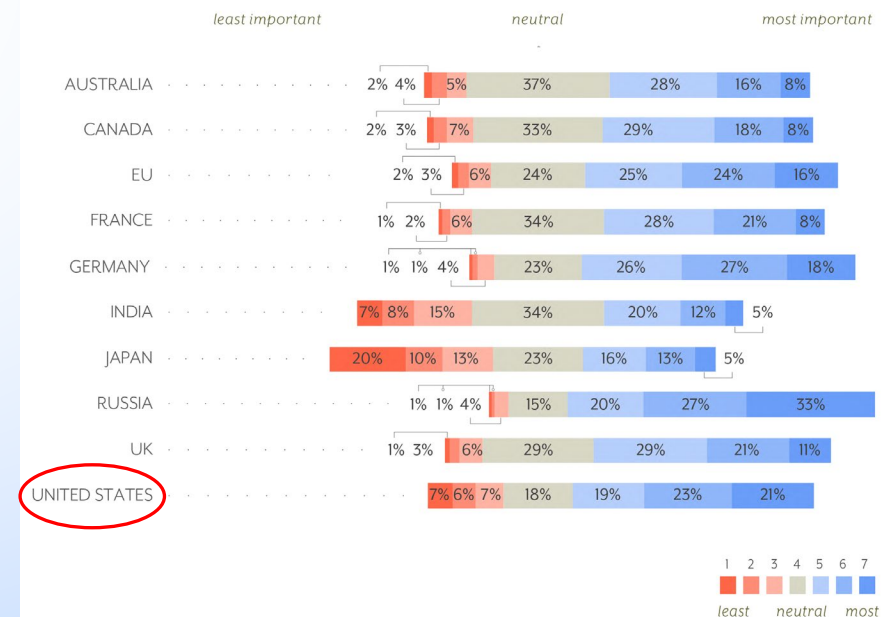
Should China Limit or Expand Cooperation?

- Rather than being especially pro- or anti- decoupling, the Chinese public express a preference for expanding global economic cooperation and technology/research collaboration
- Russia consistently received the highest scores; Japan and India the lowest

To What Extent Should China Limit or Expand Economic Cooperation (e.g. Trade, Investment and Business Activities) with the Following

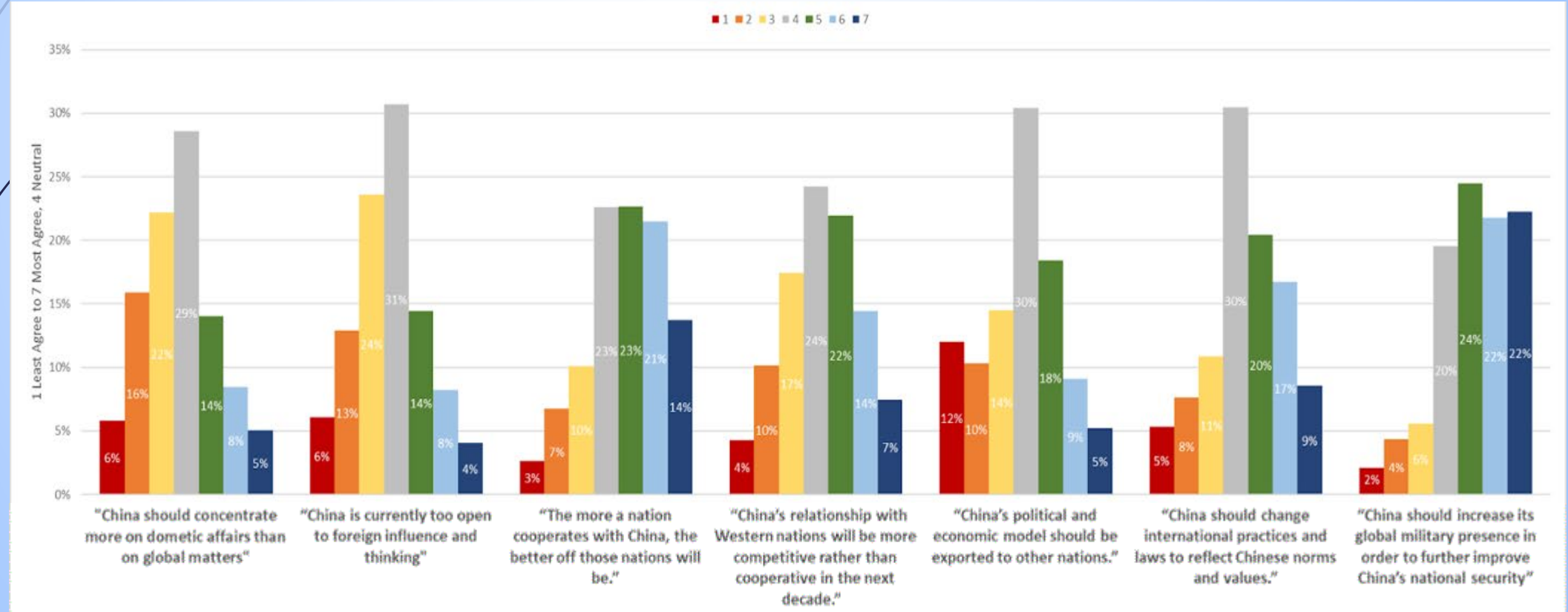



To What Extent Should China Limit or Encourage Cooperation in High-Technology and Research Sectors with the Following



Attitude Towards China's Global Engagement

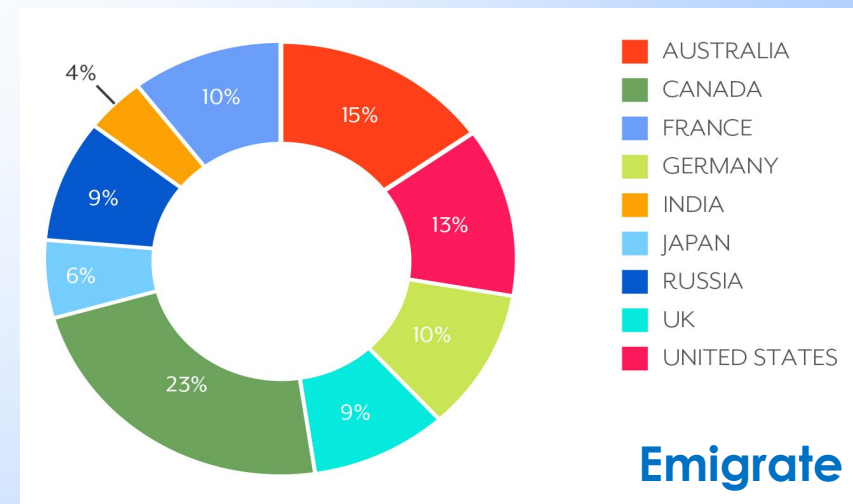
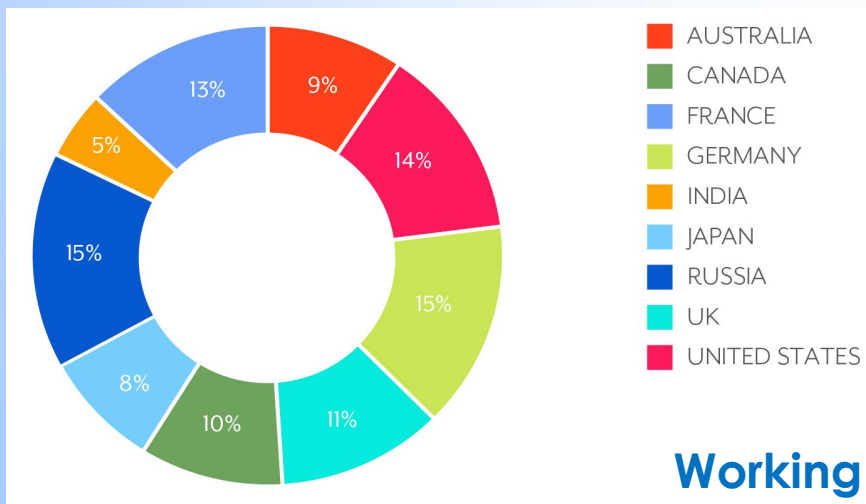
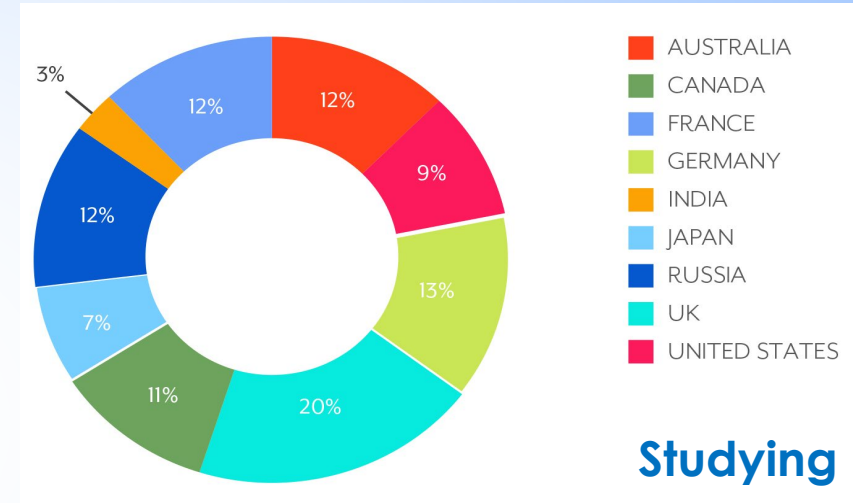
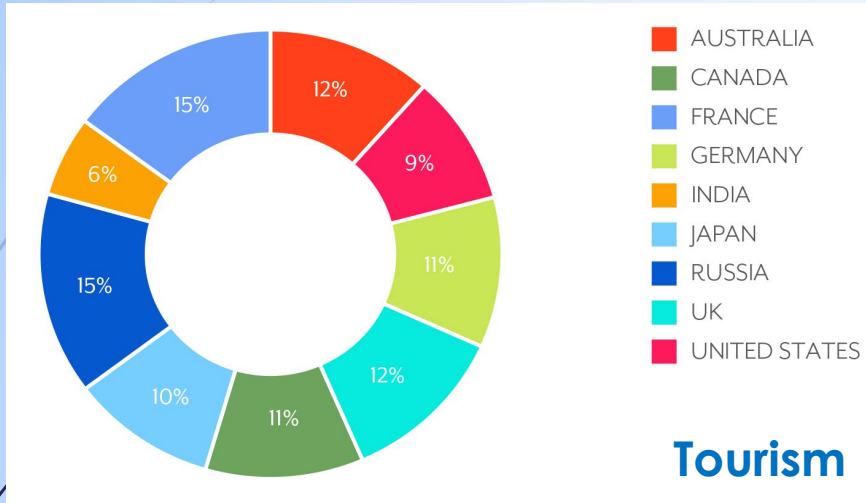
- Respondents rated their agreeableness between 1 (strongly disagree) and 7 (strongly agree) with a series of seven statements on Chinese foreign affairs and global relationships



The image shows the silhouettes of a family—a man, a woman, and a child—walking through an airport terminal. They are carrying luggage, and their reflections are visible on the polished floor. The background is a large window with a sunset or sunrise sky. The text "TOURISM, STUDY, WORK AND EMIGRATION PREFERENCES" is overlaid in the center in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

TOURISM, STUDY, WORK AND EMIGRATION PREFERENCES

Global Interactions in the Next Decade

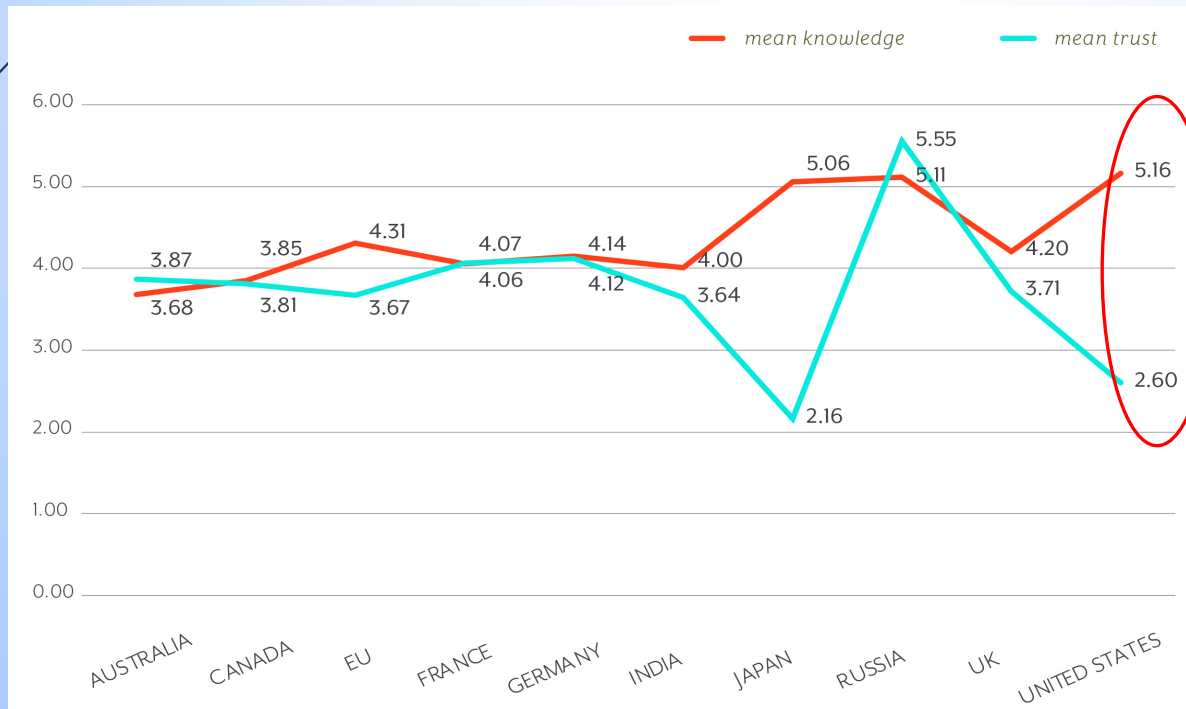




SOURCES AND KNOWLEDGE OF GLOBAL JURISDCITIONS

Knowledge and Trust of Global Jurisdictions

- ▶ The jurisdictions most respondents felt they were knowledgeable were as follows (score above 4): the United States (74 percent), Japan (71 percent) and Russia (70 percent)
- ▶ Respondents were least likely to be knowledgeable of Australia (28 percent) and Canada (33 percent)



	Jurisdictional Familiarity	Pseudo R ²
Trust Australia OLogit	.513*** (.042)	0.065
Trust USA OLogit	.199*** (.040)	0.040
Trust Germany OLogit	.402*** (.40)	0.057
Trust UK OLogit	.366*** (.039)	0.049
Trust Canada OLogit	.370*** (.039)	0.051
Trust Japan OLogit	.131*** (.037)	0.053
Trust EU OLogit	.410*** (.038)	0.051
Trust Russia OLogit	.618*** (.040)	0.092
Trust India OLogit	.276*** (.038)	0.044
Trust France OLogit	.535*** (.041)	0.074

Standard errors are in parentheses. ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05

Sources of Information on Global Affairs

- Irrespective of demographics, social media was the most common way to obtain information on global affairs
- The decline of traditional media for information on global affairs raises analytical questions about the ability of the Chinese state to directly influence and shape perceptions on foreign actors and behaviour

	Television	Radio	Newspaper	Social Media	Personal Discussion
Age					
18-22	4.67	2.06	2.49	6.15	4.86
23-29	4.66	2.13	2.56	6.32	5.04
30-39	4.90	2.49	2.86	6.38	4.84
40-49	5.04	2.39	3.03	6.25	4.79
50-59	5.24	2.49	3.19	6.14	5.02
60+	5.32	3.00	3.40	5.84	5.09
Education Level					
Junior High and Under	5.2	2.5	2.9	5.8	4.8
High School Diploma	4.8	2.3	2.8	6.2	4.8
Associate's Degree	5.1	2.4	3.0	6.2	5.0
Bachelor's Degree	4.9	2.3	2.8	6.5	5.1
Master's and Doctoral Degrees	4.9	2.3	2.8	6.5	5.1
Residential Location					
Rural	5.04	2.44	2.87	5.91	4.89
Town	4.97	2.50	2.98	5.94	4.71
County	4.89	2.26	2.91	6.22	4.80
Medium-Sized City	5.03	2.48	2.96	6.27	5.02
Large City	4.92	2.41	2.85	6.35	5.00
Employment Status					
Full-Time	4.96	2.44	2.94	6.32	4.92
Part-Time	4.49	2.18	2.76	6.13	4.84
Unemployed	5.05	2.20	2.74	6.00	4.85
Student	4.86	1.90	2.44	6.31	4.91
Retired	5.30	2.95	3.34	5.71	4.97



Other Notable Findings

Explaining the 'Russia Effect'

- It is plausible that Chinese citizens' perceptions of Russia are potentially influenced by a preference orientation that is elastic and malleable
- Chinese citizens' self-reported knowledge of Russia has a significant impact on their trust in Russia (effect size: 0.56)
- Citizens who receive more of their information on global events from television (effect size: 0.08) and social media (effect size: 0.13) are more likely to trust Russia, while those that primarily rely on radio (effect size: 0.99) are less likely to trust Russia
- Gender seemingly plays a significant role in determining respondents' trust of Russia, with females displaying less trust than males (effect size: -0.24)
- Other factors such as location (urban vs rural), CPC membership or education, does not appear to have a statistically significant impact on respondents' propensity to trust Russia

Citizens' Perspective on Sino-Taiwan Reunification

- Chinese citizens broadly want a diplomatic reunification with Taiwan, with 68 percent of respondents indicating a favorable stance towards a diplomatic solution directly with Taiwan (score above 4)
- However, respondents suggested that if the US is involved in a diplomatic reunification with Taiwan, they would be substantially less supportive (32 percent, score above 4), which ranks below support for a military solution to reunification with Taiwan (40 percent, score above 4)
- Respondents' interest in pursuing a diplomatic solution with Taiwan depended on their educational level (p-value of .042) and monthly household income (p-value of .017)
- The 2024 Taiwanese election did not influence these findings

China's Role in Global Conflict Hotspots

Russia-Ukraine Conflict

- Chinese citizens are relatively ambivalent about the conflict even as they readily identify Russia as having lost strength during the course of the conflict
- Support for China playing an active role in resolving the conflict appears highest amongst middle-income (effect size: 0.38) and less educated respondents (effect size: 0.42)
- Respondents who believe that China's interests have been affected by the conflict are more likely to support China playing an active role in resolving the conflict (effect size: 0.31)
- Support for China's involvement appears weakest amongst women (effect size: -0.33), suggesting a gendered view on the conflict
- Those living in rural areas were less likely to support any potential Chinese involvement in resolving the conflict (effect size: -0.44)

China's Role in Global Conflict Hotspots (cont'd)

Israel-Palestine Conflict

- ▶ ~47 percent of respondents agree with China having an active role in resolving the conflict (score above 4), ~12 percent disagree (score below 4), and ~40 percent expressed a neutral stance (score 4)
- ▶ Citizens who indicated a greater willingness for China to be global leader in peace and security expressed a greater interest in China playing an active role in resolving the conflict (effect size: 0.18)
- ▶ Women (effect size: -0.44) and those residing in rural areas (effect size: 0.39) were less likely to support any potential Chinese involvement in resolving the conflict
- ▶ Respondents' primary source of information on global affairs did not appear to have a significant impact on their perspective on the issue
- ▶ Although, those that relied on social media for information on global affairs were more likely to support China having a role in a potential resolution (effect size: 0.082) than those that rely on traditional media

Final Words

- CCGPS highlights respondents' hopes and ambitions for China to play a leading and active role in international affairs
- The Chinese public's desire for China to be an active global leader is influenced by the nation's increasing military strength
- Despite the ongoing tensions between China and many Western jurisdictions, the Chinese public did not express interest in pursuing comprehensive economic and technological decoupling
- At the same time, respondents remained steadfast in their belief in the need to deepen economic and technological ties with Russia, suggesting a high level of resilience in the Sino-Russian bilateral relationship driven by shared strategic interests
- Cultural connections and people-to-people ties can serve as the conduit through which enlightened engagement can be achieved

How China Currently Views the World

Professor Reza Hasmath
University of Alberta

2025 Fulbright Research Chair in Public Diplomacy,
University of Southern California

Email: rhasmath@gmail.com

Website: www.rezahasmath.com

CCGPS Website



www.howchineseestheworld.com