

The Trust 10

01 Distrust is now society's default emotion

Nearly 6 in 10 say their default tendency is to distrust something until they see evidence it is trustworthy. Another 64% say it's now to a point where people are incapable of having constructive and civil debates about issues they disagree on. When distrust is the default – we lack the ability to debate or collaborate.

02 Of the studied institutions, business is once again the most trusted

At 61%, business is the most trusted institution, ahead of NGOs at 59%, government at 52% and media at only 50%. Seventy-seven percent of respondents, however, trust "My Employer," making the relationship between employer and employee incredibly important.

03 Government and media fuel a cycle of distrust

Nearly one out of every two respondents view government and media as divisive forces in society – 48% and 46%, respectively. Furthermore, government leaders and journalists are seen as the least trusted societal leaders today, with less than half of respondents trusting either (government leaders at 42% and journalists at 46%).

04 News sources fail to fix their Trust problem

None of the major information sources are trusted as a source of general news and information, with trust in search engines at 59%, followed by traditional media at 57%, owned media at 43% and social media at only 37%.

05 Fake news concerns are at an all-time high

Concerns over fake news or false information being used as a weapon is now at an all-time high of 76%.

06 There is a collapse of Trust in democracies

In many of the democracies studied, institutions are trusted by less than half of their people, including only 46 pts in Germany, 45 pts in Spain, 44 pts in the UK and 43 pts in the U.S. Moreover, no developed countries believe their families and self will be better off in 5 years time.

07 Societal fears on the rise

Without faith that our institutions will provide solutions or societal leadership, societal fears are becoming more acute. Most notably, 85% are worried about job loss and 75% worry about climate change.

08 Business needs to step up on societal issues

While business outscores government by 53 points on competency and 26 points on ethics, respondents believe business is not doing enough to address societal problems, including climate change (52%), economic inequality (49%), workforce reskilling (46%) and trustworthy information (42%).

09 Societal leadership is now a core function of business

When considering a job, 60% of employees want their CEO to speak out on controversial issues they care about and 80% of the general population want CEOs to be personally visible when discussing public policy with external stakeholders or work their company has done to benefit society. In particular, CEOs are expected to shape conversation and policy on jobs and the economy (76%), wage inequity (73%), technology and automation (74%) and global warming and climate change (68%).

10 Business must lead in breaking the cycle of distrust

Across every single issue, by a huge margin, people want more business engagement, not less. For example, on climate change, 52% say business is not doing enough, while only 9% say it is overstepping. The role and expectation for business has never been clearer, and business must recognize that its societal role is here to stay.

All data is based on general population sample unless otherwise noted.

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