

2025 Edelman Trust Barometer

Global Report: Trust and the Crisis of Grievance

Top 10 Findings

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Majority hold grievances against government, business, and the rich

Sixty-one percent globally have a moderate or high sense of grievance, which is defined by a belief that government and business make their lives harder and serve narrow interests, and wealthy people benefit unfairly from the system while regular people struggle.
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Widespread grievance erodes trust

Those with a high sense of grievance do not trust any of the four institutions (business, government, media, and NGOs), CEOs, and artificial intelligence.
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Globalization, recession, and technology fears are heightened

The percentage of employees who worry about losing their jobs because of these forces has risen significantly since last year.
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Fear of discrimination surges

Nearly two thirds of respondents worry about experiencing prejudice, discrimination, or racism – up 10 points in the last year, and with significant increases across countries and demographics, including among white respondents in the U.S.
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Majority lack optimism for the next generation

Only 36 percent of respondents believe that things will be better for the next generation. In developed countries, just one in five see a better future.
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Low income mired in distrust

Those in the bottom income quartile have a Trust Index of 48 (average percent trust in business, government, media, and NGOs). Business is 16 points less trusted among low-income respondents than among high-income respondents.
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4 in 10 approve of hostile activism

To bring about change, this group would approve of one or more of the following actions: attacking people online, intentionally spreading disinformation, threatening or committing violence, damaging public or private property. This sentiment is most prevalent among respondents ages 18-34 (53 percent approve).
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High sense of grievance puts pressure on business

Among those with a high sense of grievance, business is seen as 81 points less ethical and 37 points less competent than among those with a low sense of grievance. Those with a high sense of grievance say business is not doing enough to address issues like affordability, climate change, job retraining, misinformation, and discrimination.
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CEOs: Take action where you can make a difference and improve performance

CEOs have permission to address a societal issue when their business contributed to the problem, it harms their stakeholders, they could have a major positive impact, or it would improve their business's performance.
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Business cannot do it alone: All institutions must help build trust to address grievance

All institutions must work together to deliver results that benefit everyone fairly, repair the social fabric, advocate for trustworthy information, and rebuild economic optimism.