2026 Edelman Trust Barometer

Top 10 Findings
Trust Amid Insularity

01 Optimism for the future is low.

Only 1 in 10 people in the Netherlands believe the next generation will be better off than today, reflecting widespread pessimism about long-term progress.

02 Trust favors domestic companies.

In many major export markets, respondents show higher trust in companies headquartered in their own country than in foreign companies, reflecting a strong preference for domestic actors. 27% of those in the Netherlands would even support reducing the number of foreign companies operating in the Netherlands, even if it meant higher prices.

03 Economic anxiety continues to rise.

Concern among employees about international trade and tariffs harming the company they work for has increased by 12 points since 2019, while worry about losing a job due to recession has risen by 10 points since 2020, reflecting broader economic anxiety linked to recession, reade disruption and emerging technologies such as AI.

04 Trust divides persist across income groups.

Institutional trust differs significantly across income groups. Among lower-income respondents in the Netherlands, only business is seen as both competent and ethical.

05 Personal circles are gaining trust amid widespread disruption and uncertainty.

Major societal events over the past five years have strengthened trust in personal networks while weakening trust in shared institutions.

06 Insularity affects workplace dynamics.

In the Netherlands, 29% of employees say they would put less effort into helping a project leader with different political beliefs, and 36% say they would rather switch departments than report to a manager with different values.

07 Exposure to differing views is declining.

Less than one in three respondents report engaging weekly with news sources that have a different political leaning than their own.

08 Insularity is widespread.

In the Netherlands, 73% of people say, on average, they are hesitant or unwilling to trust someone who differs from them in values, information sources, approaches to societal problems, or cultural background.

09 Distrust across differences is seen as a major issue.

Nearly half of respondents in the Netherlands say people within their country distrust those with differences so much that they actively try to make things worse for one another, and this is a large or crisis-level problem.

10 Trusted voices on social media open closed doors.

People who trust influencers say they would trust or consider trusting a company they currently distrust if it were vouched for by an influencer they already trust, such as a food or lifestyle influencer (62%, among the 48% who trust one) or a financial influencer (57%, among the 44% who trust one).

To learn more about the Edelman Trust Barometer,
https://www.edelman.com/trust/2026/trust-barometer #TrustBarometer
All data is based on general population sample unless otherwise noted.

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