

The Globalization of Personal Data Project:

An International Survey on Privacy and Surveillance

Summary of Findings
November 2008



The Surveillance Project



Queen's
UNIVERSITY



The Surveillance Project

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Introduction

This is the first cross-national study of its kind that surveys attitudes and experiences with the global flow of personal data, with special focus on privacy and surveillance. To achieve this, lead survey researcher, Elia Zureik, along with his colleagues at The Surveillance Project at Queen's University, initiated a nine-country international survey with 9,606 respondents using primarily telephone and some face-to-face and online interviews, in: Canada and the U.S. in North America, Brazil and Mexico in Latin America, China and Japan in East Asia, and France, Hungary, and Spain in Europe. This is part of a wider international, multi-disciplinary and collaborative project studying the Globalization of Personal Data (GPD) and the surveillance of ordinary people associated with those flows- by governments, corporations, employers, and via technologies like personal computers, biometrics and global-positioning systems.

Funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and fielded by Ipsos-Reid in seven countries, Millenriver Marketing Research in China and Macromil Inc. in Japan, the survey included nearly 50 questions dealing with participants' attitudes about issues like consumer surveillance, racial profiling at airports, terrorism and security, national ID cards, CCTV, media coverage of surveillance issues, workplace privacy, knowledge of privacy regulations, knowledge of various technologies, actions taken to protect information, control over personal data and public trust in government and private companies. The quantitative surveys were preceded by qualitative focus group interviews in the above countries, as well as background reports.

The answers reveal a variety of cultural commonalities and differences. Some highlights include:

For more information on the Surveillance Project and background information on the construction of the GPD international survey, go to: www.surveillanceproject.org/research/intl_survey

Across the globe a majority of respondents:

- Believe surveillance laws are intrusive (Japan 63 per cent, U.S. 57 per cent, Canada 48 per cent, Spain 53 per cent, Mexico 46 per cent, Brazil 41 per cent, France 40 per cent)
- Worry about providing personal information on websites (Japan 82 per cent, Brazil 70 per cent, Spain 62 per cent, U.S. 60 per cent, China 54 per cent, and Canada 66 per cent)
- Reject out-right the premise that airport authorities should give extra security checks to visible minority passengers. About 60 per cent of Chinese, Hungarians, Brazilians, and Canadians but only a third of Americans find such practices unacceptable.

Culturally distinctive survey findings include:

- The majority of respondents do not believe that they have much say in what happens to their personal information. Only roughly 30 per cent of Canadians, Americans, Spaniards and Hungarians believe they have complete or a lot of say. Chinese, Japanese and French respondents felt they had the most say at 67, 62 and 60 per cent, compared with Mexicans 40 per cent and Brazilians 34 per cent.
- 63 per cent of Chinese respondents and 72 per cent of Japanese respondents trust the government to protect the personal information it collects compared to just 48 per cent of Canadians and a mere 20 per cent of Brazilians say they trust their respective governments with their personal information.

Sample

**The total sample was composed of:
9,606 respondents from:**

- Canada: 1,001 (June 26-July 21, 2006)
- U.S.A.: 1,000 (June 27-July 28, 2006)
- France: 1,002 (June 27-July 8, 2006)
- Spain: 1,000 (June 30-July 11, 2006)
- Hungary: 1,005 (June 27-July 9, 2006)
- Mexico: 1,080 (July 25-Aug 5, 2006)
- Brazil: 1,000 (July 4-July 7, 2006)
- China: 2,002 (Aug 5-Oct 12, 2006)
- Japan: 516 (Dec 21-Dec 23, 2007)

Participants were asked to complete a 20-25 minute survey. Interviews in Canada, U.S.A., France, Spain, Hungary, and China were administered over the telephone using Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) technology. Respondents were screened to ensure nationally representative samples based on gender, age and regional distribution, except for China where respondents were selected from 7 major cities. In Mexico and Brazil, interviews were conducted in-person. Quasi-national sampling was employed in these countries, where urban samples were used instead of a nationally representative sample. In Japan, respondents were selected from a database to complete an online questionnaire. Respondents were screened to ensure an even distribution by gender and age.

Findings

Demographics

Demographic questions contained in within the survey include age, gender, education, employment, occupation, income, language, ethnicity, air travel, purchase over the internet, contact with government, and use of computer and internet. These questions provide a foundation for cross-cultural comparisons. For instance, North American, Chinese and Japanese participants were the most likely to travel by air in the past year, with Brazil, Hungary, and Mexico the least likely. With the exception of Japan and the United States, the majority of participants have not used the internet to purchase a product or service. The high response among Japanese respondents is explained by the fact that the Japanese survey was web-based. As respondents are savvy internet users, it can be assumed that they would be more willing and able to make online purchases. The differences between the United States, France, and Canada in terms of online purchases are not statistically meaningful.

Respondents in Canada, France, and the United States were the most likely to contact their government in the past year, with Brazil and Mexico the least likely. Among those who contacted their elected official, electronic communication overshadowed face-to-face contact.

Demographics

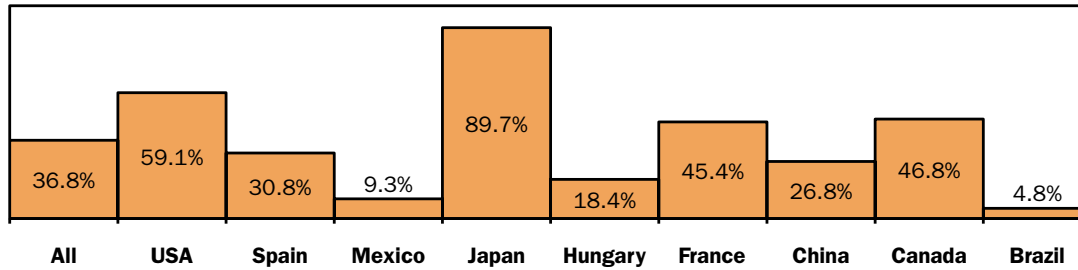
Amount of times travelled by air in last year

	Brazil	Canada	France	Hungary	Mexico	Spain	USA	China	Japan	ALL
0	94.7%	53.4%	68.1%	85.5%	80.7%	57.5%	49.8%	54.5%	52.7%	66.3%
1-2	4.1%	30.0%	21.9%	12.0%	15.8%	26.0%	26.5%	24.5%	27.5%	20.9%
3-5	0.7%	9.6%	6.1%	1.8%	2.3%	9.5%	12.7%	11.2%	11.4%	7.3%
6-10	0.4%	5.2%	2.6%	0.4%	0.7%	4.8%	6.6%	5.4%	4.5%	3.4%
11+	0.0%	1.8%	1.3%	0.4%	0.5%	2.2%	4.4%	2.9%	1.9%	1.7%

Q37:

How many times in the last year have you travelled by air? Please include all flights both within and outside your country

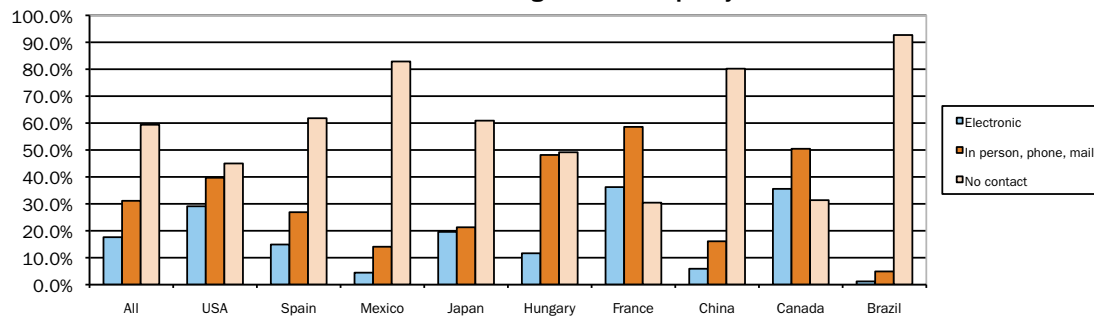
Purchase over the internet in the past year



Q38:

Have you purchased a product or service over the internet in the past year?

Contact with the government in past year



Q39:

In the past year have you contacted the local, state or national government for any reason?

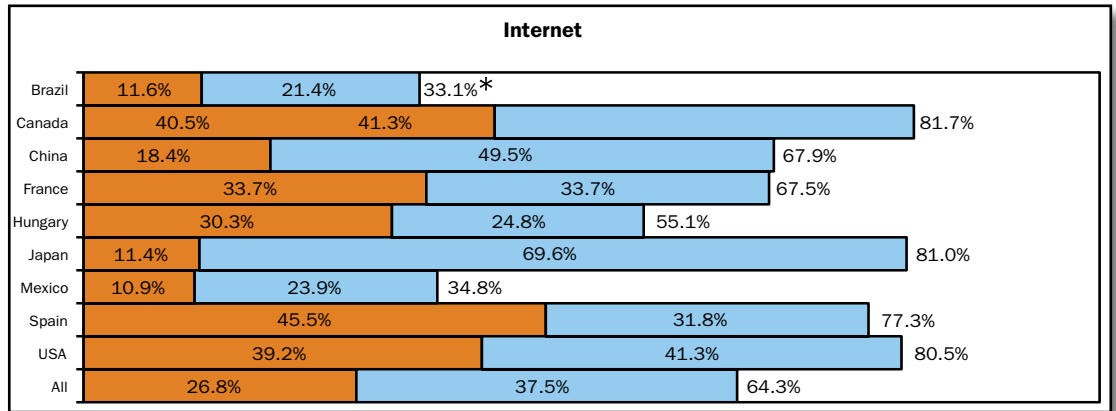
1: Knowledge of Surveillance Technology

Canada, US, France and Spain claim to be more knowledgeable of the internet and other personal location technologies than the rest of the countries surveyed. Mexico and Brazil are the least knowledgeable of these surveillance technologies.

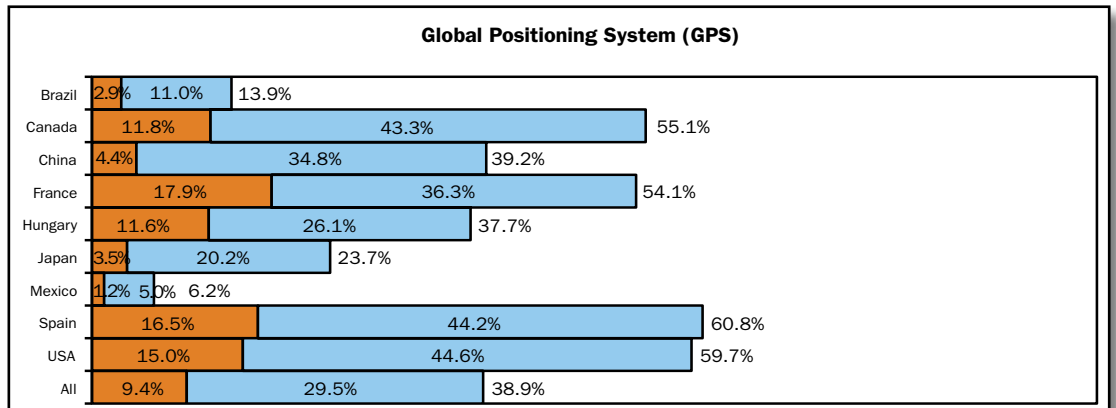
- Very knowledgeable
- Somewhat knowledgeable

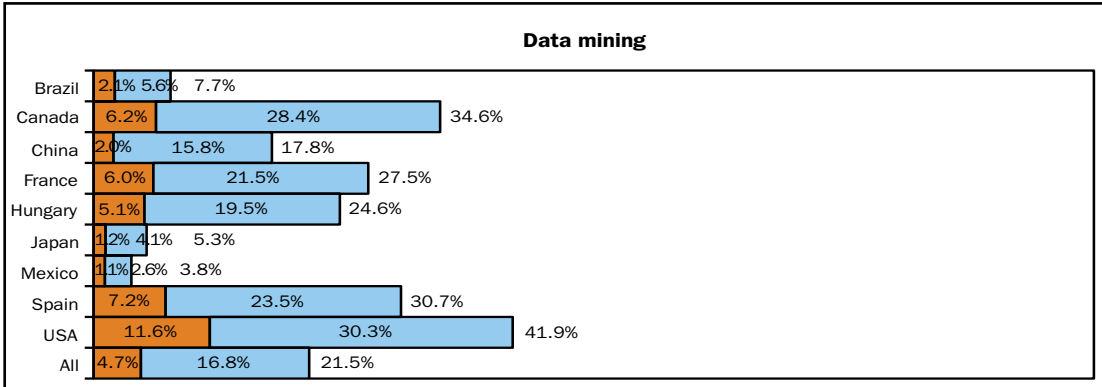
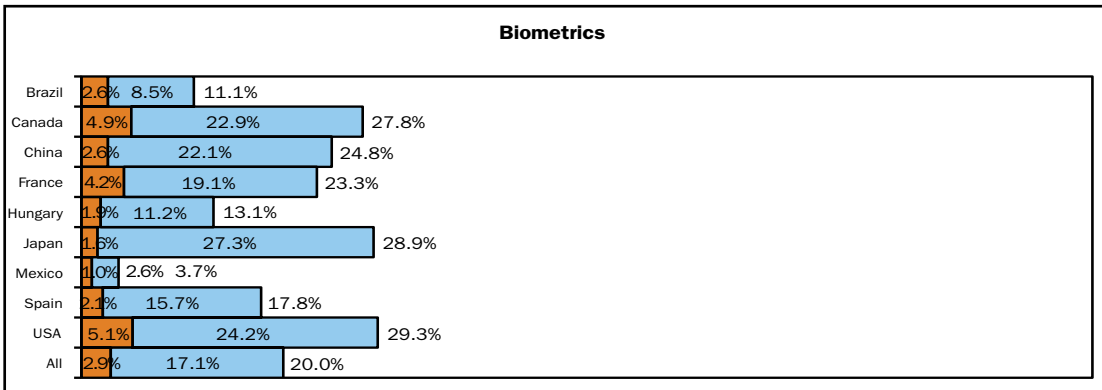
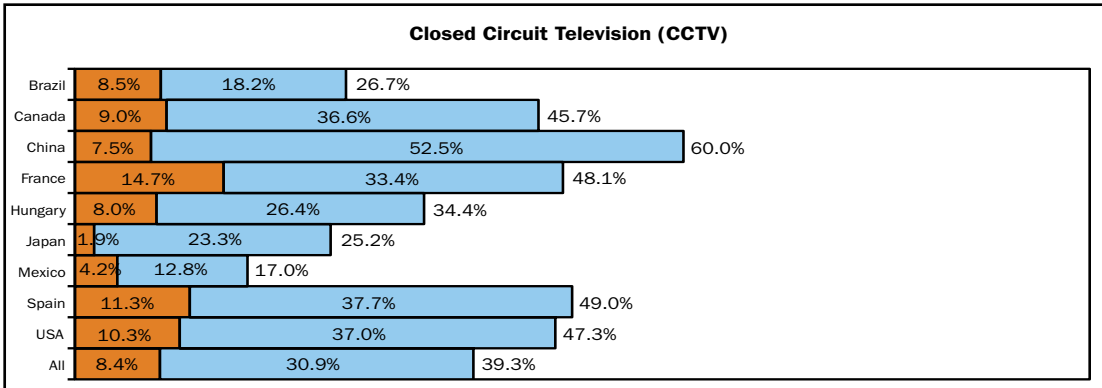
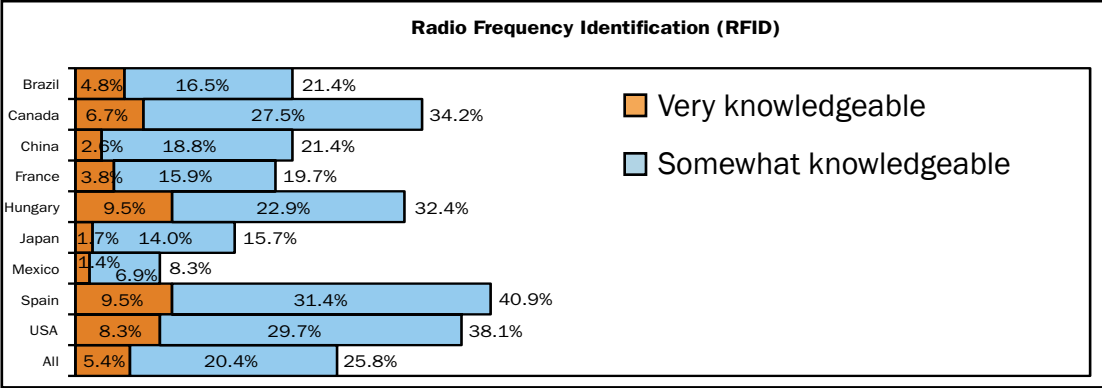
Q1:

In general, how knowledgeable are you about each of the following?



*Refers to the summation of 'very knowledgeable' and 'somewhat knowledgeable'



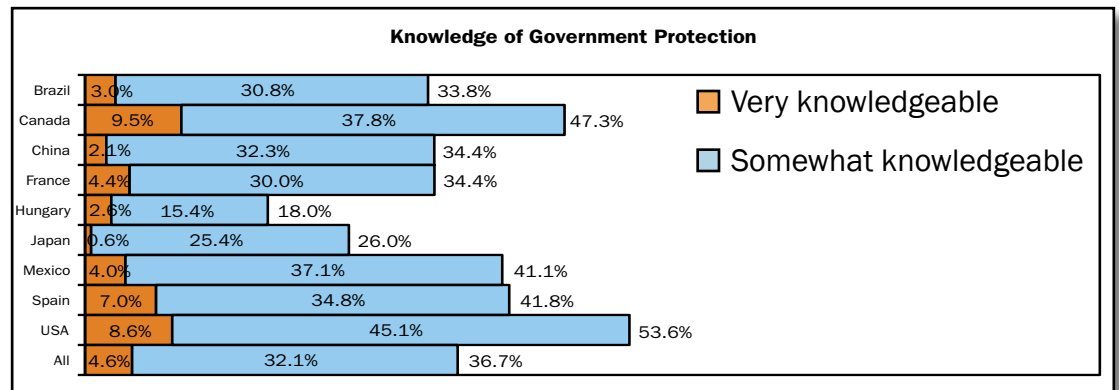


2: Knowledge of Laws Protecting Personal Information

Most citizens (especially in Hungary) do not consider themselves knowledgeable about laws protecting information in government departments. Among the knowledgeable, there is skepticism about the effectiveness of those laws, with about half assuming they are not effective and only a handful considering them “very effective”.

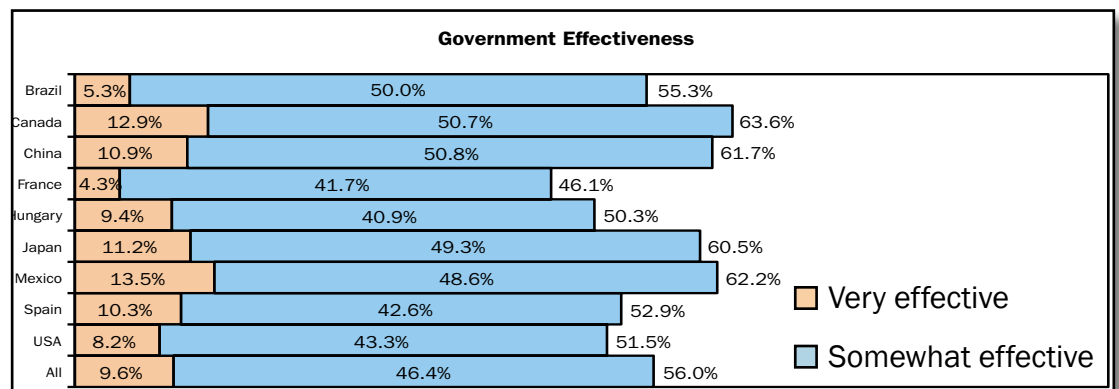
Q3:

How knowledgeable are you about the laws in your country that deal with the protection of personal information in **government departments**?

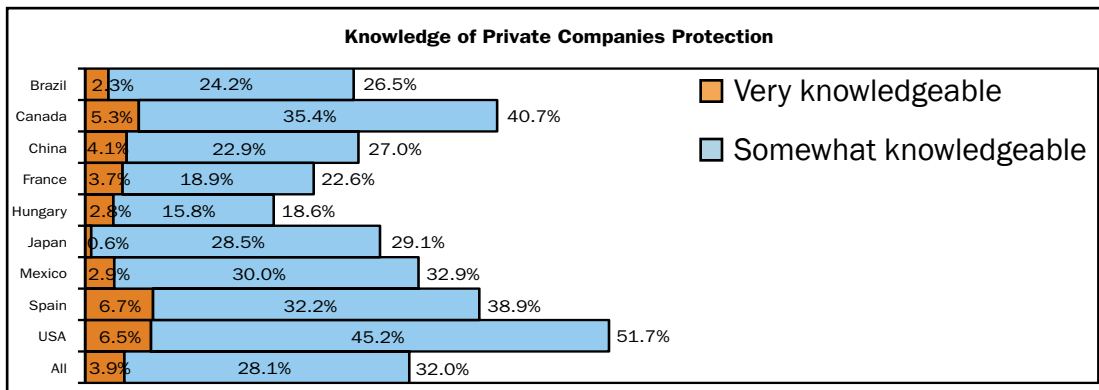


Q4:

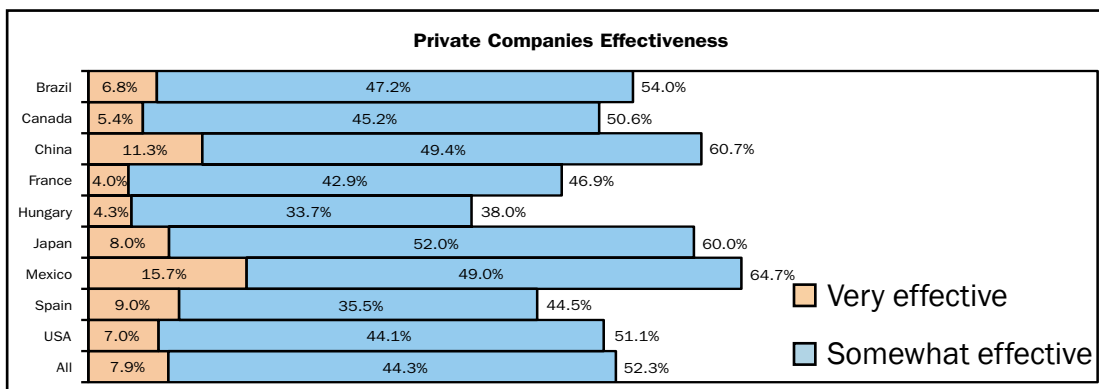
To what extent do you believe laws are effective at protecting your personal information that is held by **government departments**?



Most citizens are not knowledgeable about laws to protect their information held by private companies. Among those who have some knowledge, many do not expect those laws to be effective.



Q3:
How knowledgeable are you about the laws in your country that deal with the protection of personal information in **private companies**?



Q4:
To what extent do you believe laws are effective at protecting your personal information that is held by **private companies**?

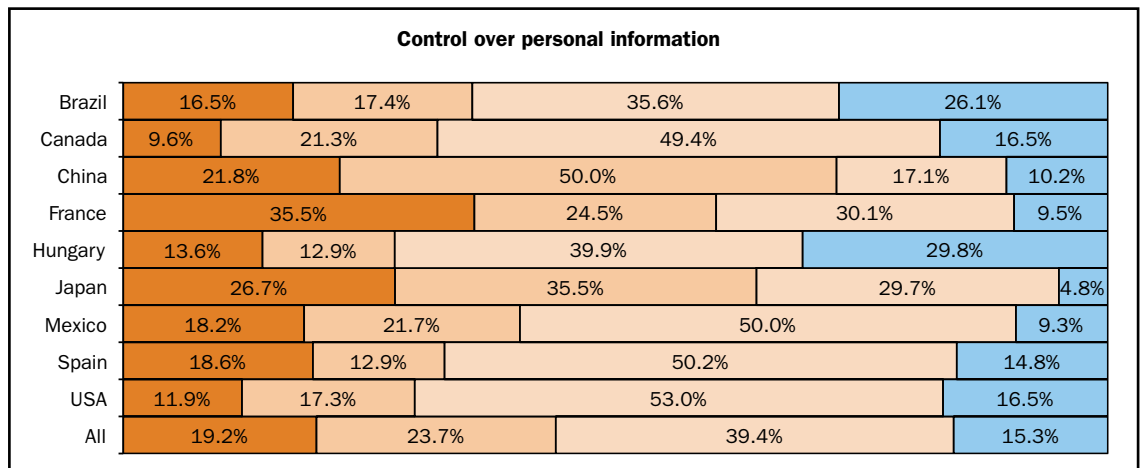
3:

Control Over Personal Information

The majority of respondents feel they do not have much say in what happens to their personal information. Only in France, China and Japan does a large proportion feel empowered.

Q2:

To what extent do you have a say in what happens to your personal information?

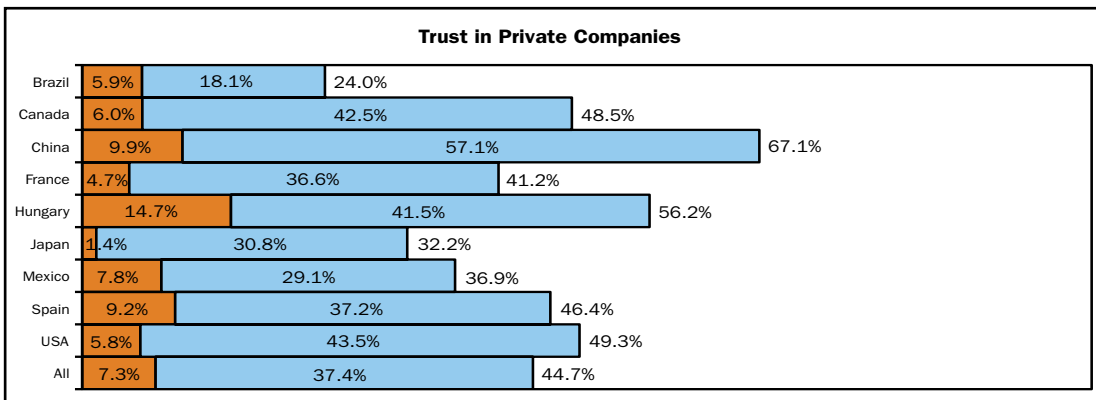
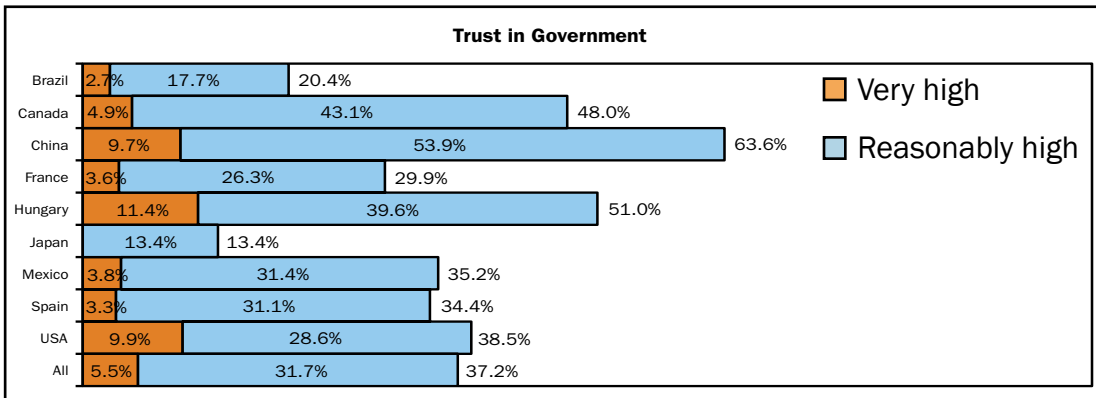


- Complete say
- A lot of say
- Some say
- No say

4:

Trust: Government and Private Companies

A minority of people trust that their government or private companies will do an appropriate job of protecting their personal information. Only a handful have “very high” levels of trust. People in Brazil are especially skeptical. In most countries there is more trust in corporations than in the government.



Q5: When it comes to the privacy of personal information, what level of trust do you have that your **government** is striking the right balance between national security and individual rights?

Q6: What level of trust do you have that **private companies**, such as banks, credit card companies and places where you shop, will protect your personal information?

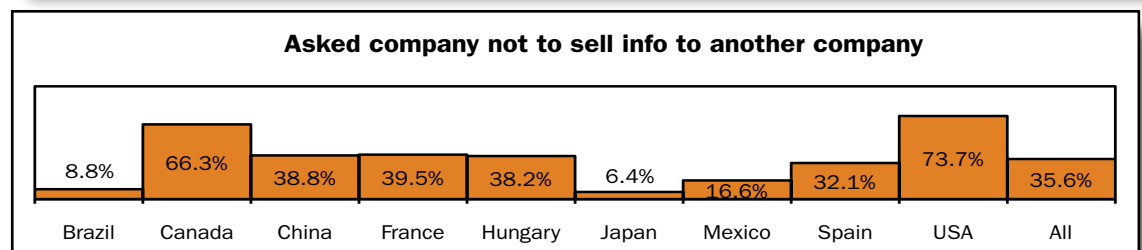
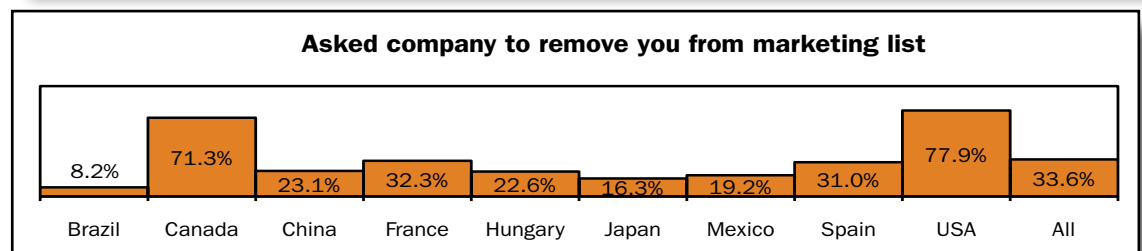
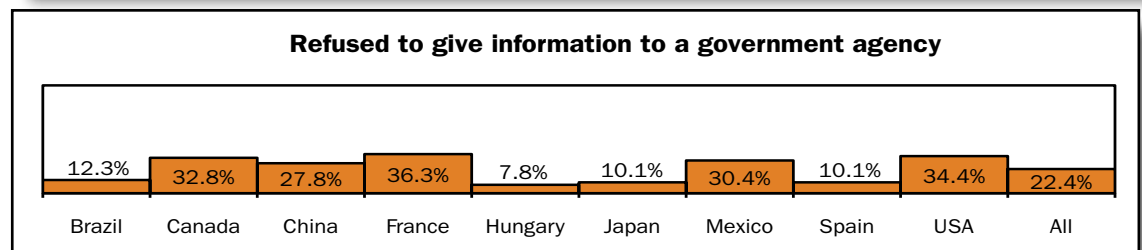
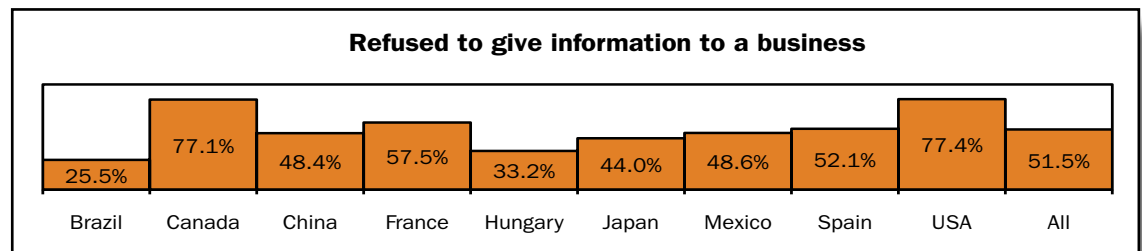
5: Actions Taken to Protect Personal Information

Canadians and Americans tend to be more protective of their personal information compared to citizens of other countries. Refusing to give unnecessary information to business is something a majority of

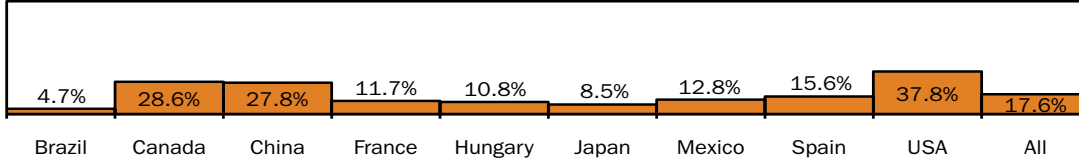
participants have done. Purposefully giving incorrect information to a government or private agency to protect private information is not something that most citizens would do to protect their personal information.

Q7:

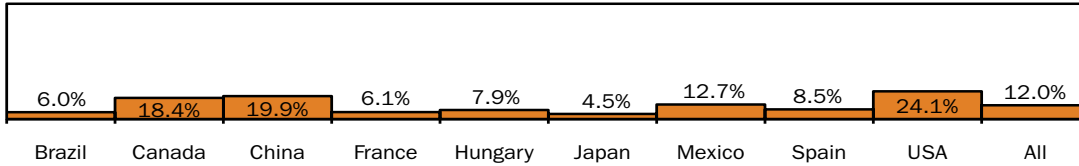
Have you ever done the following for the purpose of protecting your personal information?



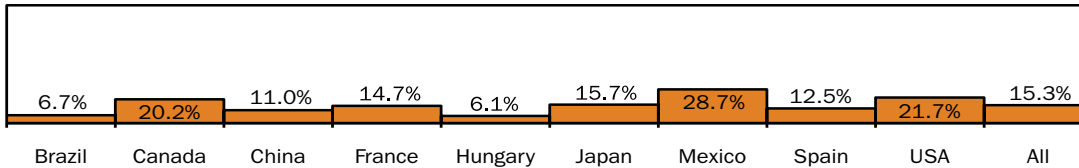
Asked business about policies on collection of consumer information



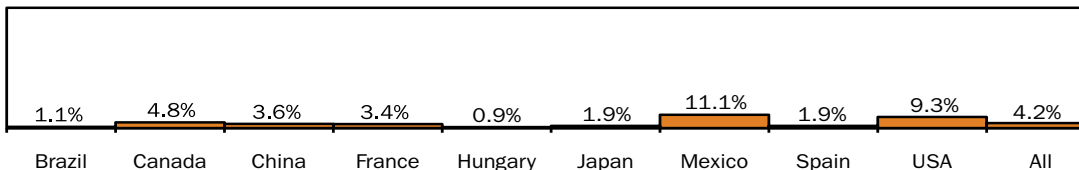
Asked company to see what personal info they had in records



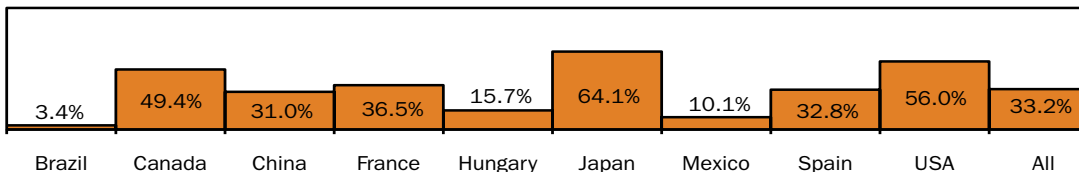
Purposefully gave incorrect information to marketer



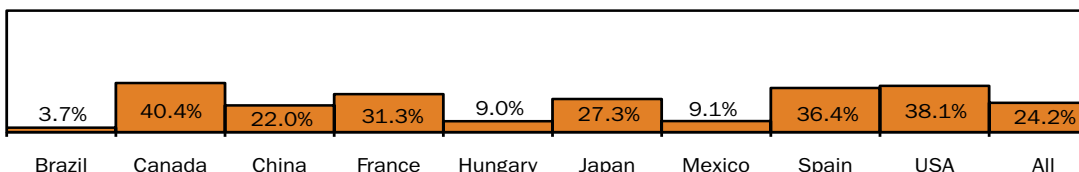
Purposefully gave incorrect information to gov't agency



Read on-line privacy policies on website when making purchase



Read on-line privacy policies on government website

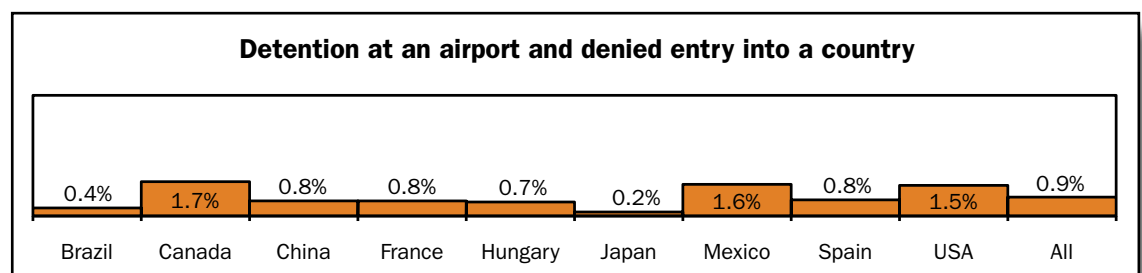
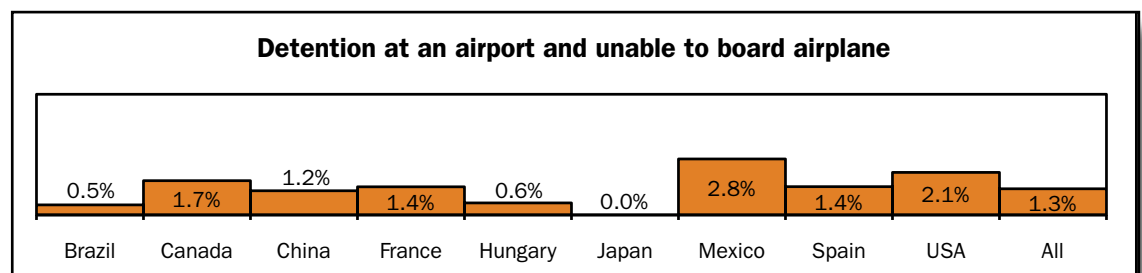
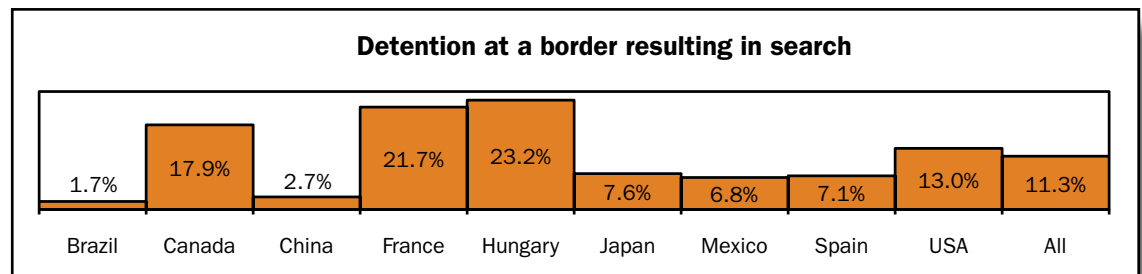


6: Experiences with Surveillance Measures

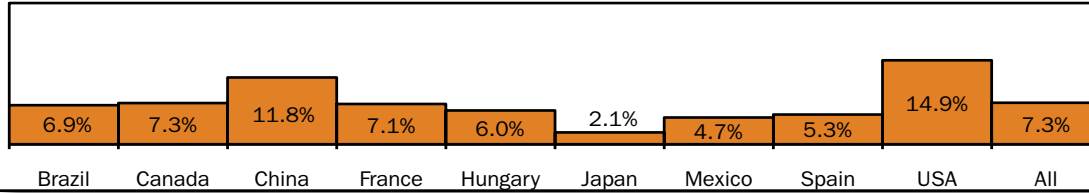
Personal experiences of privacy invasion are not very common in any of the countries surveyed. But Americans and Canadians tend to report having the most experience when it comes to breaches of privacy. Brazilians and Japanese participants report almost no such experiences.

Q8:

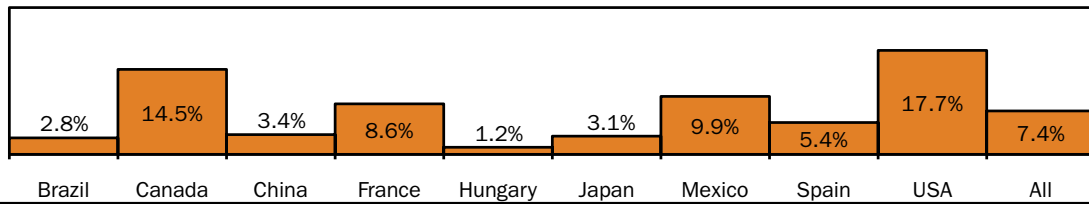
Have you personally, to the best of your knowledge, ever experienced any of the following?



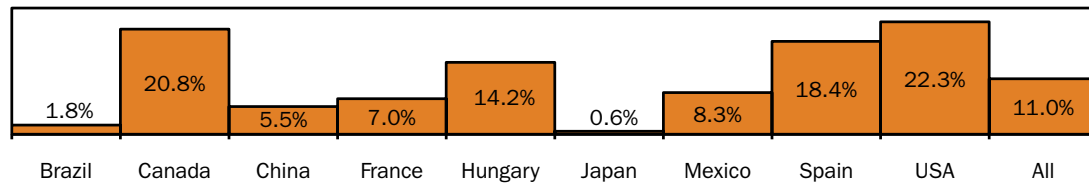
Victim of identity theft



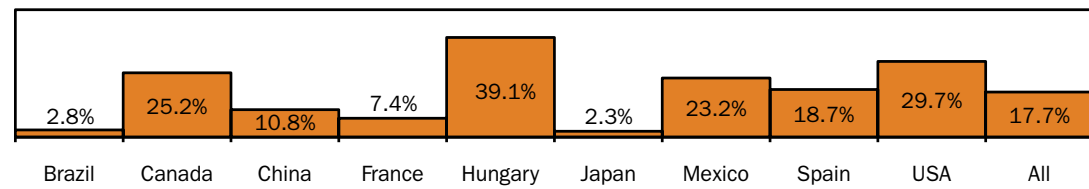
Victim of credit card fraud



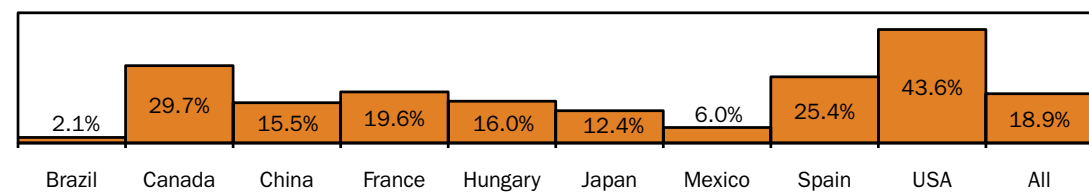
Personal information monitored by government agency



Personal information monitored by employer



Personal information sold by a commercial business



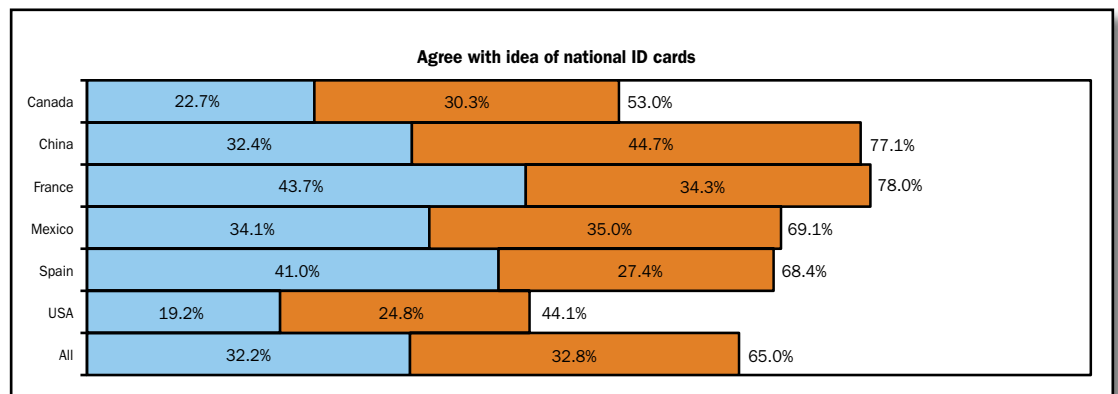
7: National ID Cards

Canadians and Americans are most reticent of the idea of national ID cards. They are also the least convinced of the effectiveness of efforts to protect from disclosure the personal information in the national database created to put these ID cards into use.

Strongly agree
Somewhat agree

Q9:

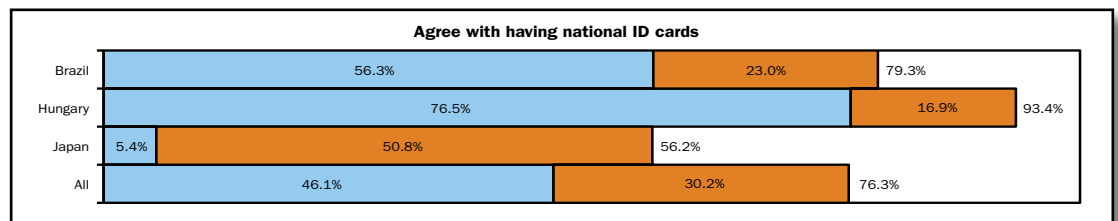
Some have suggested that everyone should have a government-issued national ID card that they must carry on them at all times and present it when asked by police or other security forces. To what extent would you agree or disagree with this idea?



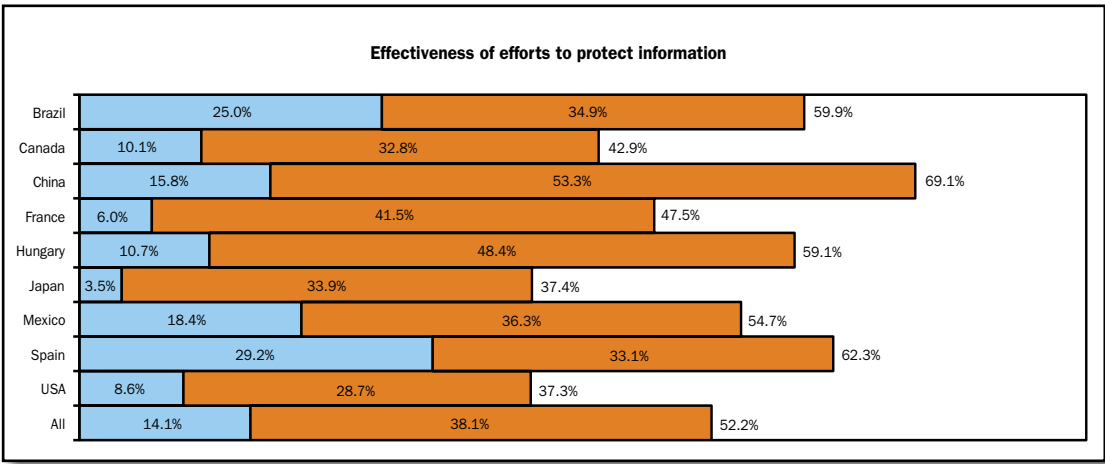
countries that do not have existing cards

Q9b:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with having a government-issued national ID card that everyone must carry on them at all times and present it when asked by the police or other security forces?



countries that have existing cards



■ Very effective
■ Somewhat effective

Q10:
In order to put national ID cards into use, the government would need to have a national database containing personal information on all citizens. This information could include address, gender, race, and tax information. How effective do you feel efforts to protect this type of information from disclosure would be?

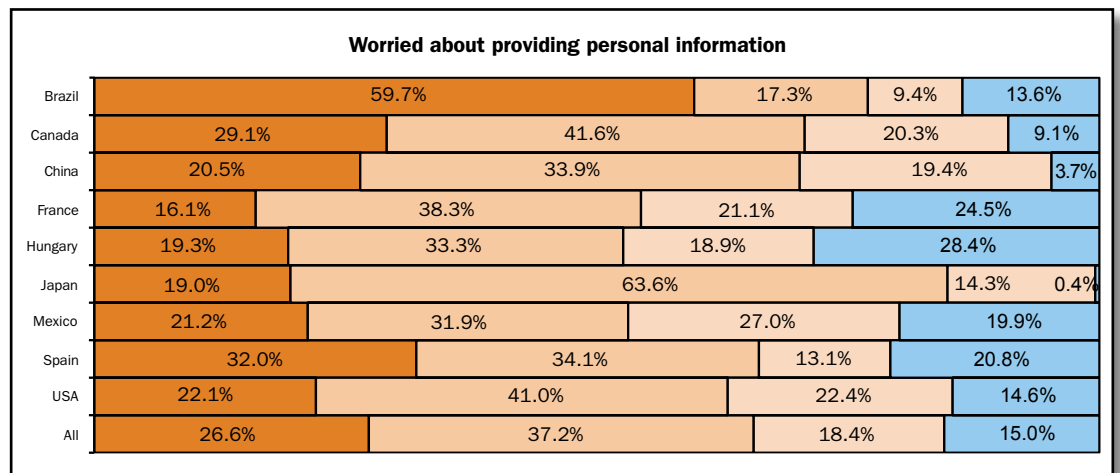
8: Internet

In most countries, a majority of people are worried about providing personal information on websites. Among internet users, at least half are worried about providing personal information on websites. Brazilian internet users are the most concerned group.

- Very worried
- Somewhat worried
- Not very worried
- Not worried at all

Q11:

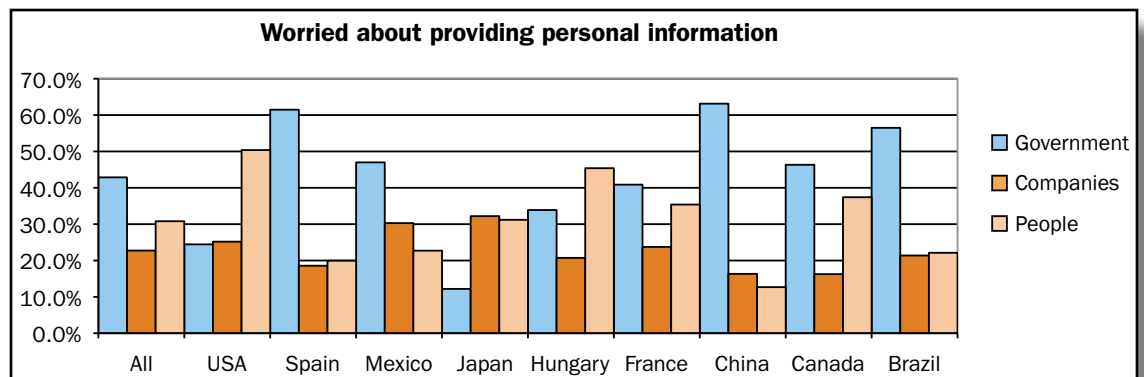
When it comes to privacy, how worried are you about providing personal information on websites, such as your name, address, date of birth, and gender?



Many people—especially Canadians and Americans—are not sure about who should have the most say over how companies use their websites to track personal information online.

Q12:

Who do you think should have the most say over how companies use their websites to track people's activities and personal information online?

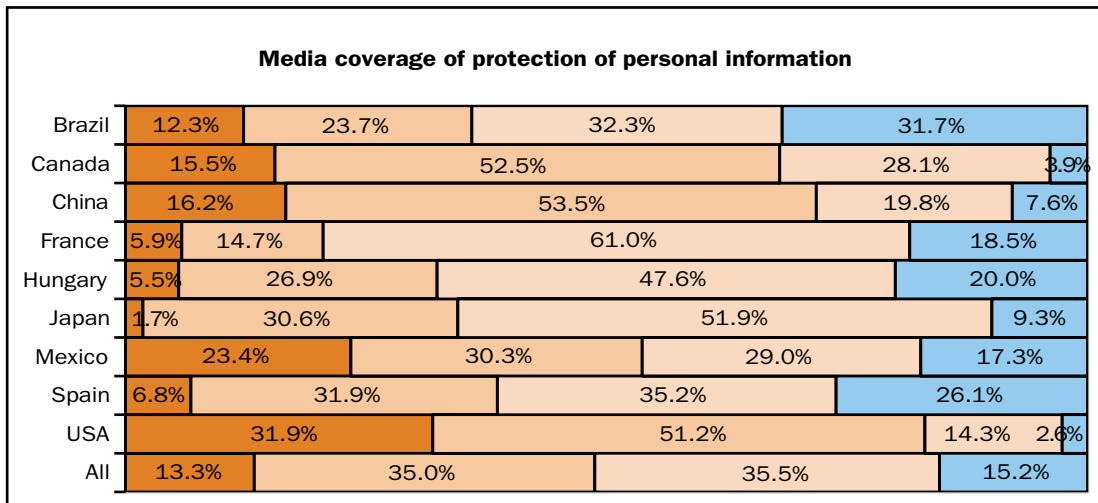


9:

Media Coverage

The US and Canada are exposed to the most media coverage when it comes to safety of personal information. The majority of citizens in most countries think that terrorism receives more media attention than the safety of personal information. But note that 23.4% of

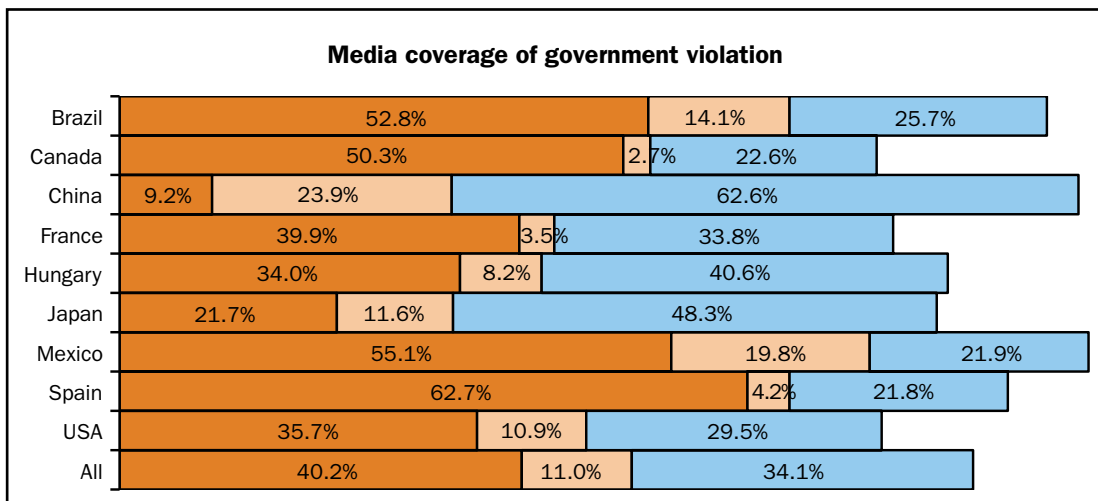
Mexicans, second highest after the US, say they are exposed to a lot of coverage. With the exception of China and Japan, respondents felt the media offered more coverage of stories about terrorism.



■ A lot of coverage
 ■ Some coverage
 ■ Not much coverage
 ■ No coverage at all

Q13:

How much coverage have you seen or heard through the media (TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, online information, advertisements) regarding concerns about the safety of your personal information?



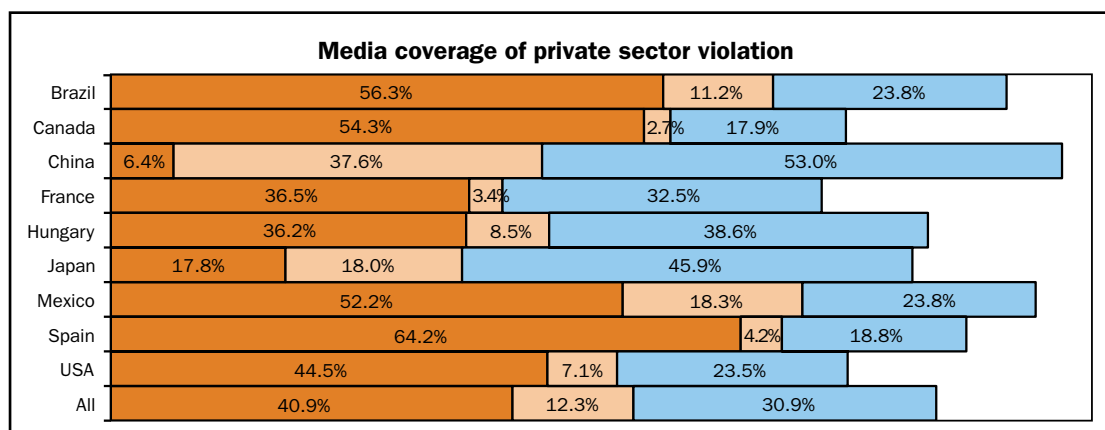
■ More attention to stories about terrorism
 ■ More attention to stories about violation of personal privacy
 ■ Pays equal attention to both

Q14:

In your opinion, would you say the media pays:

Q15:

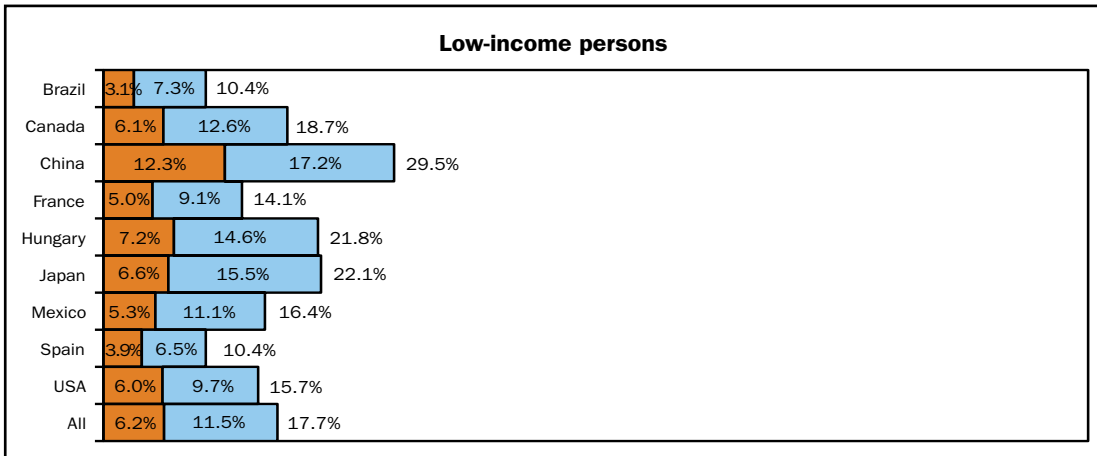
In your opinion, would you say the media pays:



- More attention to stories about terrorism
- More attention to stories about violation of personal privacy
- Pays equal attention to both

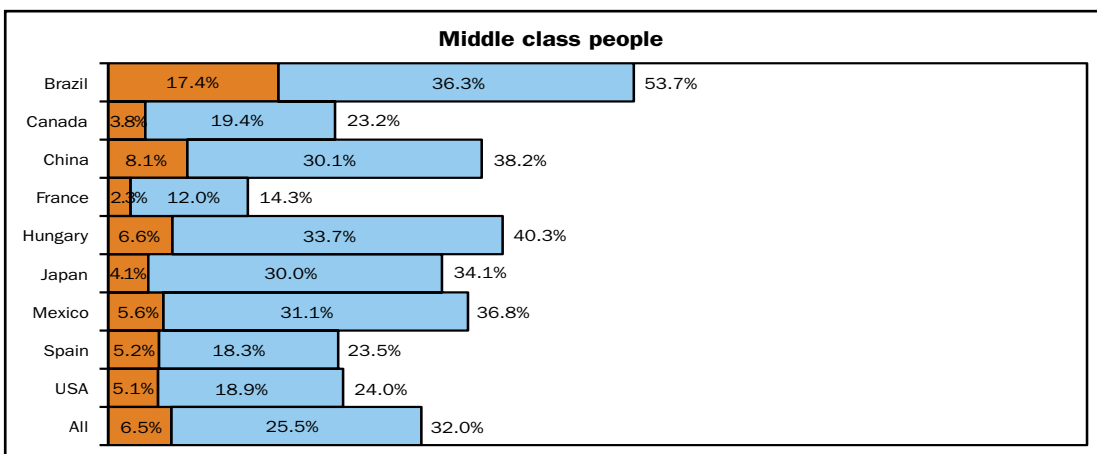
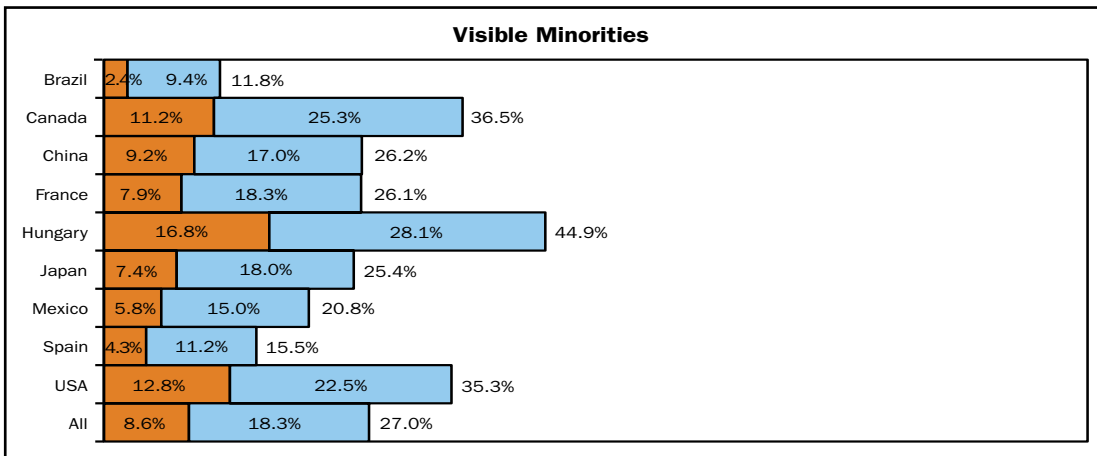
The majority of citizens are in agreement that the media focuses more on celebrities, government officials and high-income groups than on the poor and the disadvantaged. With the exception of Japan and China.

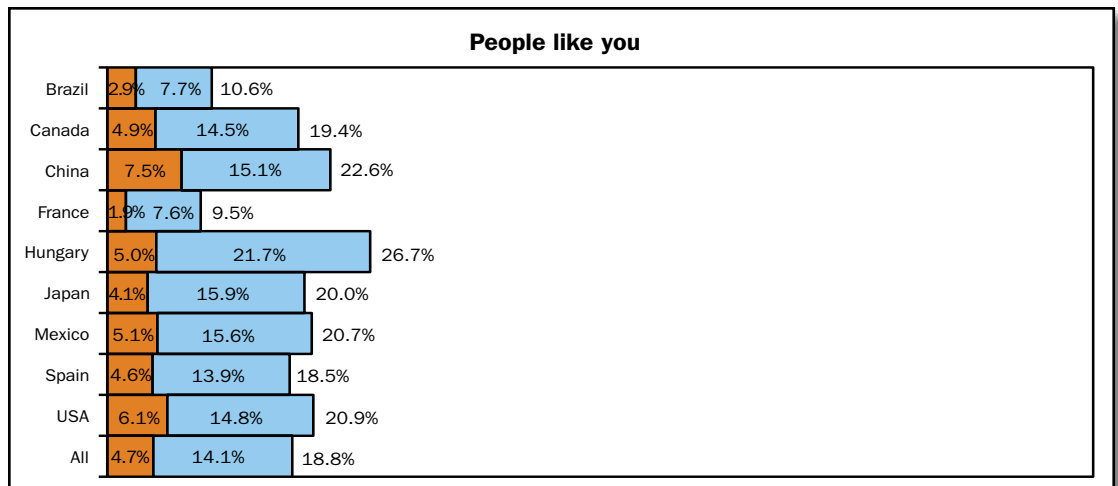
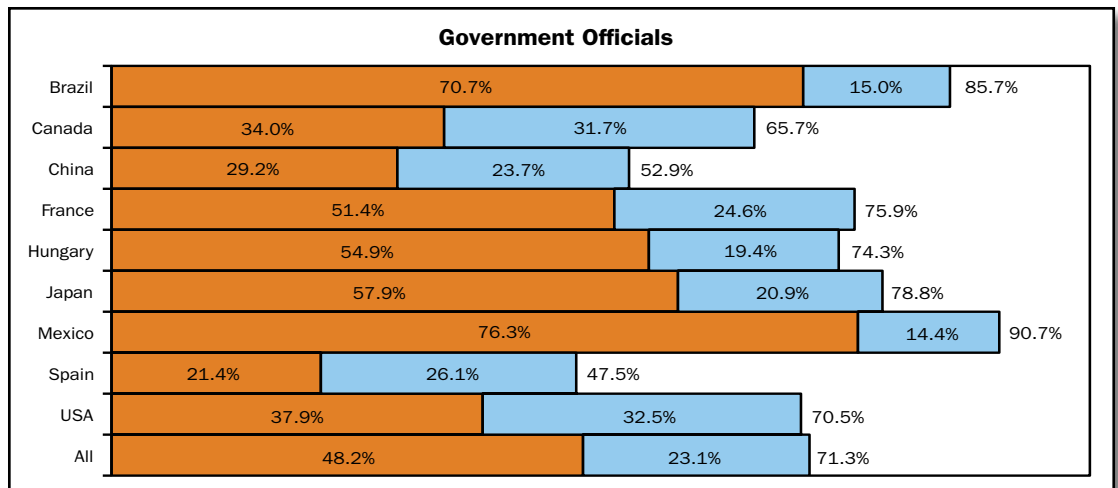
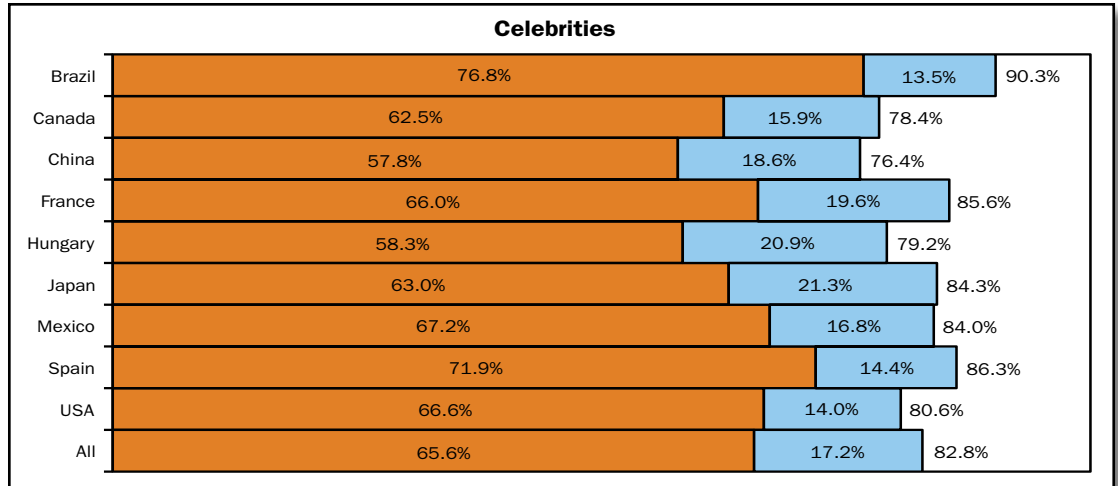
■ High amount of attention
■ Somewhat high amount of attention

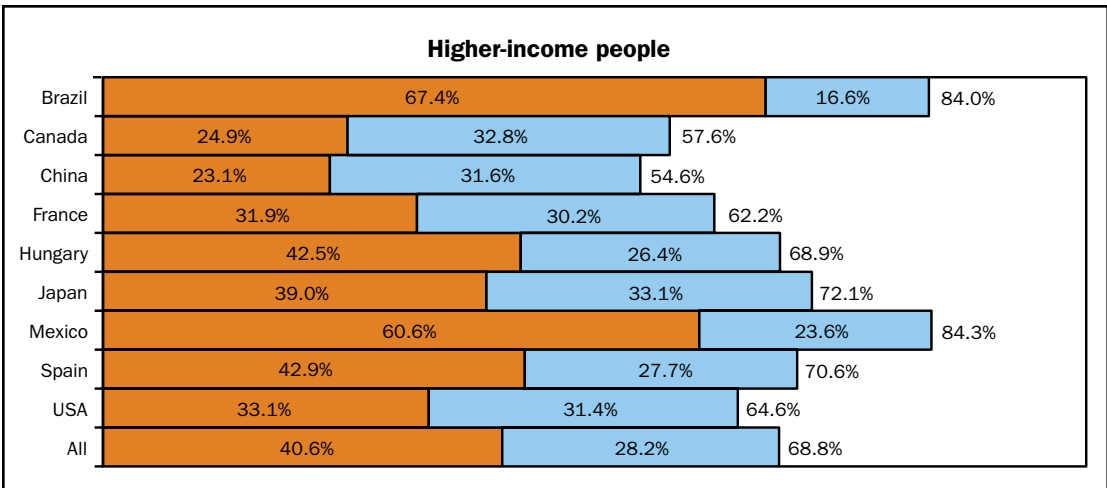
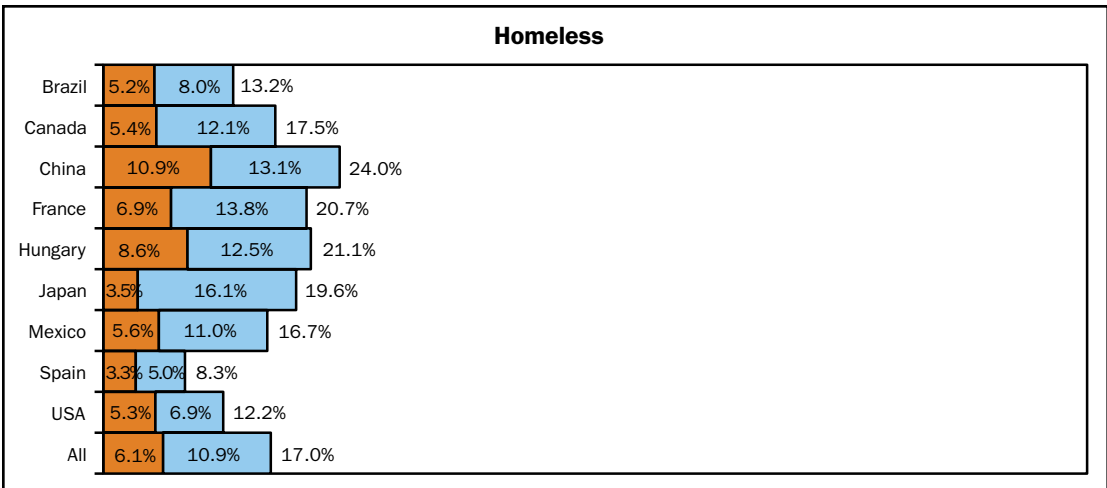
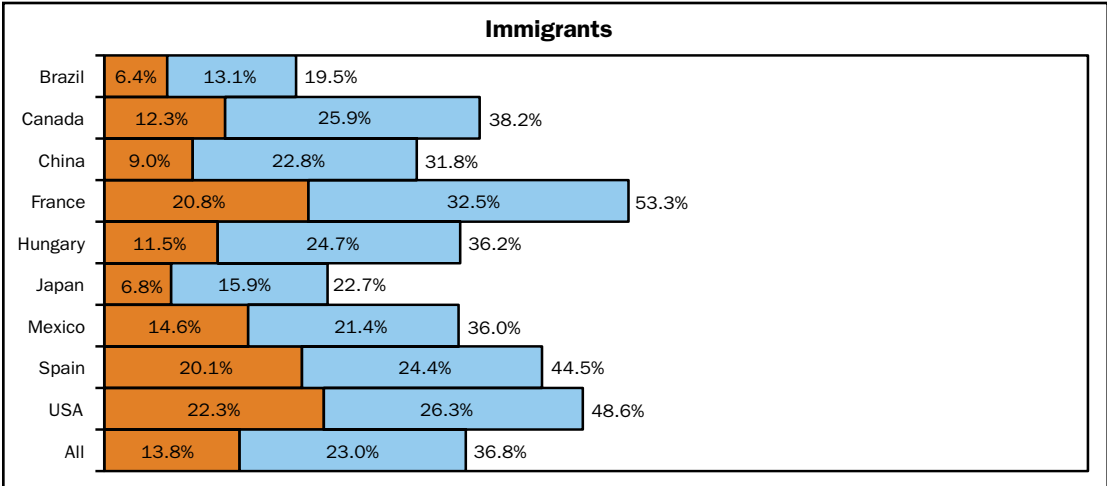


Q16:

When it comes to media coverage of privacy of personal information, in your opinion, how much attention does each of the following groups receive by the media?





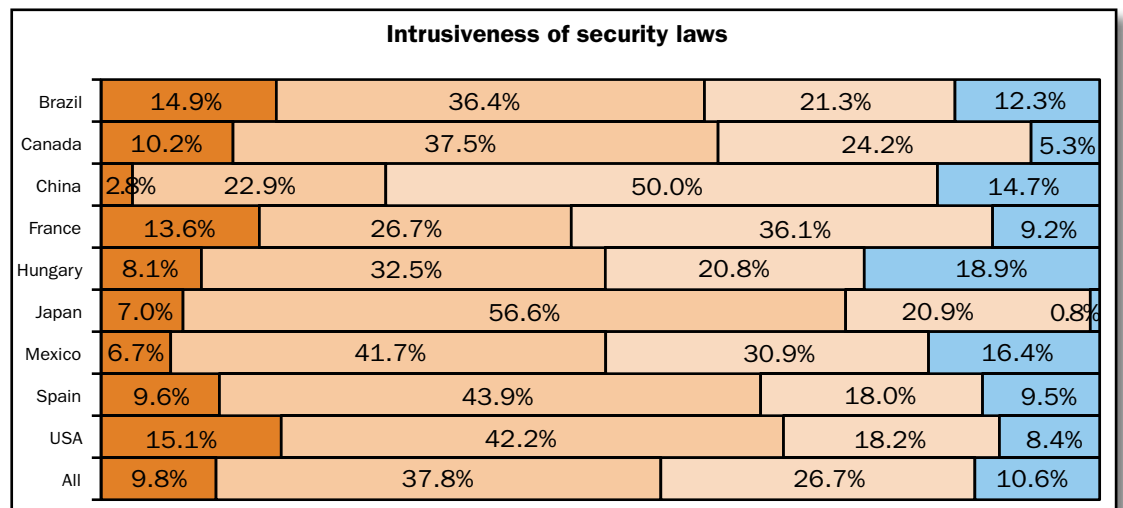


10: Terrorism and Security

Except for Hungary, China and France, about half of all citizens believe that laws aimed at protecting national security are intrusive upon personal privacy.

Q17:

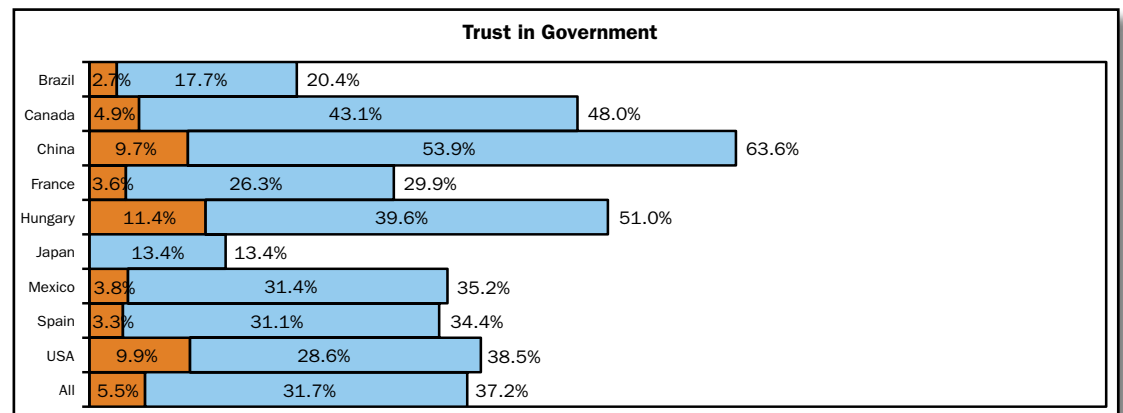
The government of has enacted laws aimed at protecting national security. To what extent do you believe laws aimed at protecting national security are intrusive upon personal privacy?



■ Highly intrusive ■ Somewhat intrusive □ Not very intrusive ■ Not intrusive at all

Q5: (Repeated)

When it comes to the privacy of personal information, what level of trust do you have that your government is striking the right balance between national security and individual rights?

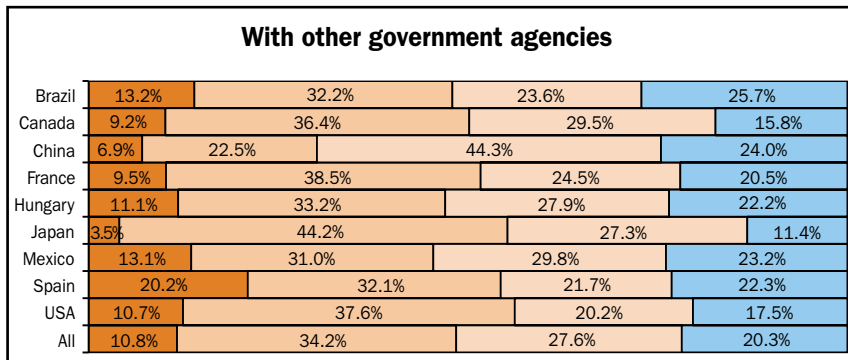


■ Very high ■ Reasonably high

11: Information Sharing

The majority of citizens of all countries are accepting of having their personal information shared with government agencies, though less so when the third party is a foreign government agency. People are also much less open to the idea of personal information held by

government agencies going to private sector organizations. Prior consent and the suspicion of wrong doing are regarded in all countries as important factors when it comes to sharing personal information.



Yes, it is the government's right under all circumstances

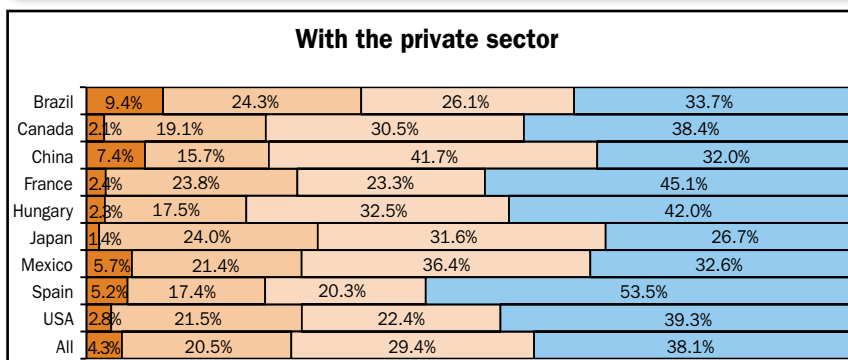
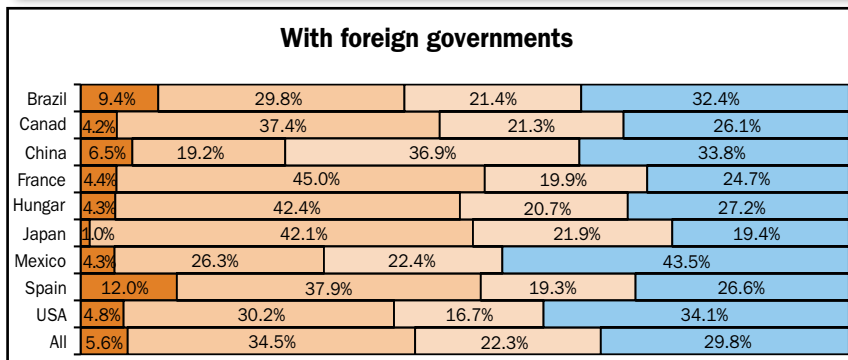
Yes, if the citizen is suspected of wrong-doing

Yes, as long as the government has expressed consent of the citizen

No, under no circumstances should government share information about citizens

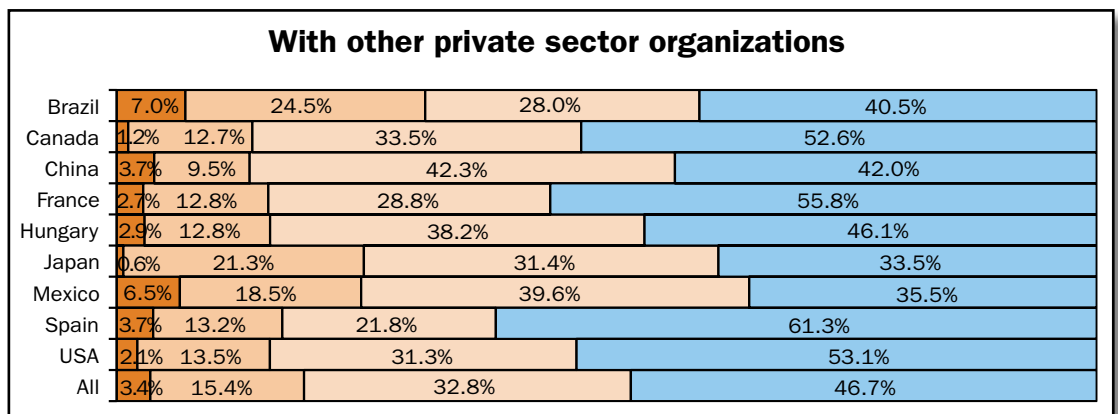
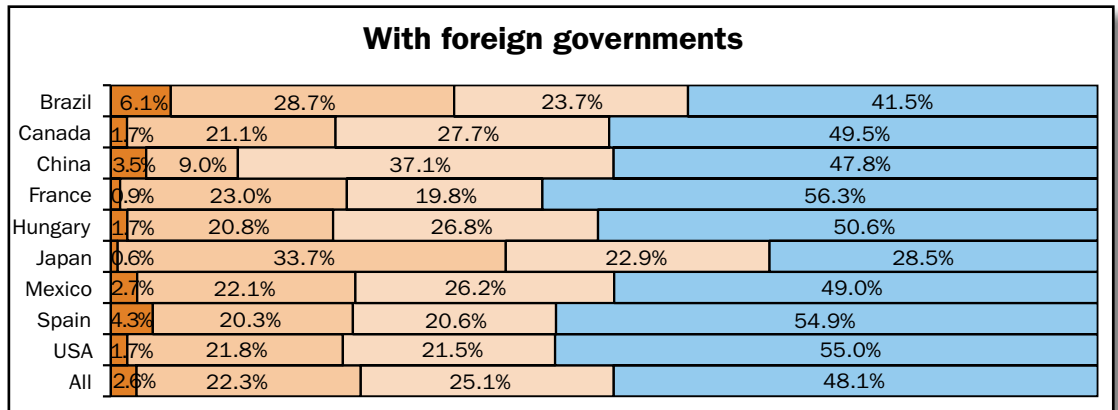
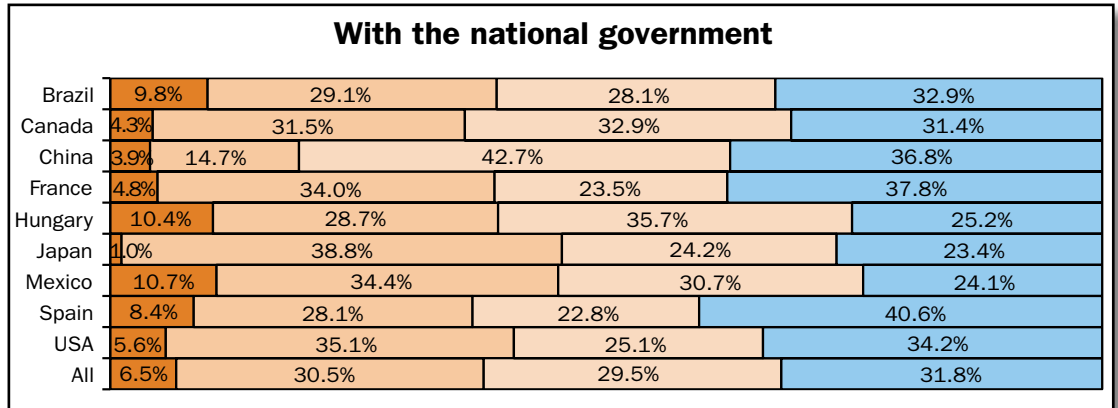
Q17:

To what extent do you think it is appropriate for a **government agency** to share citizen's personal information with third parties, such as other government agencies, foreign governments and the private sector?



Q19:

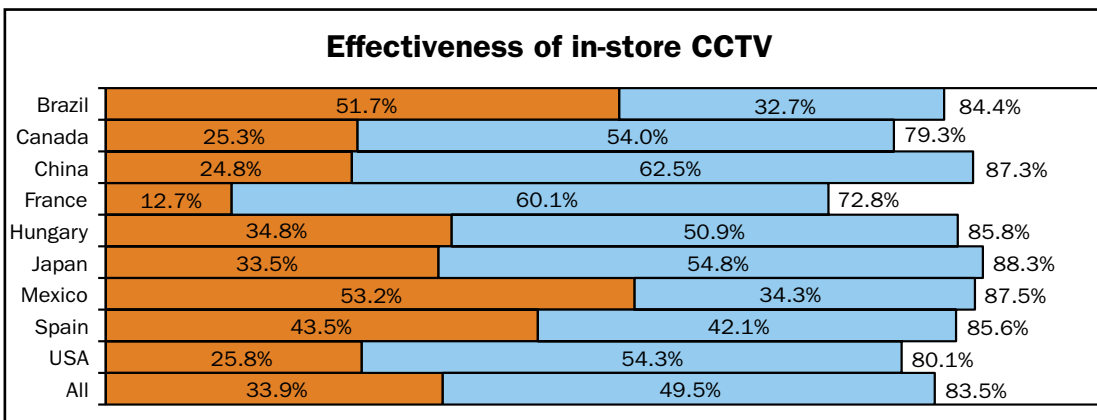
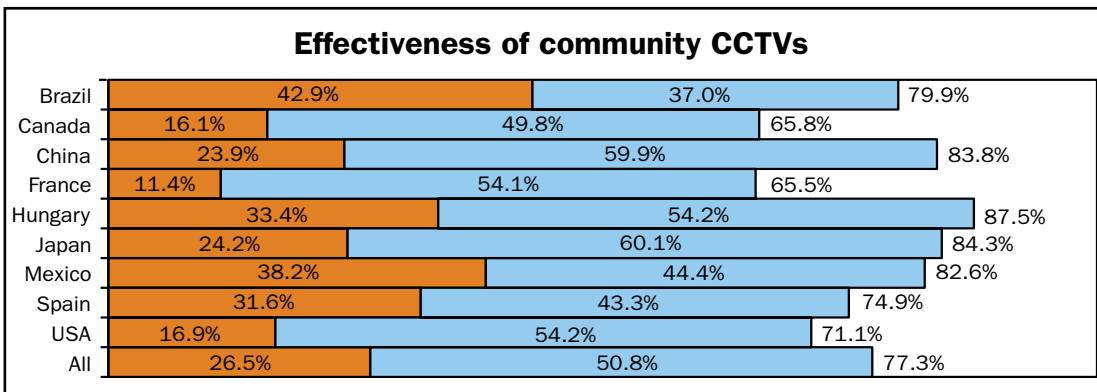
To what extent do you think it is appropriate for a **private sector organisation** to share or sell its customers' personal information with third parties, such as the national government, foreign governments and other private sector organisations?



- Yes, it is the organization's right under all circumstances
- Yes, as long as the organization has expressed consent of the customer
- Yes, if the customer is suspected of wrongdoing
- No, under no circumstances should organizations share information about their customers

12: CCTV

The majority of participants believe community and in-store CCTVs are at least somewhat effective in reducing crime. In-store CCTVs are more widely seen as effective.



■ Very effective
■ Somewhat effective

Q20:

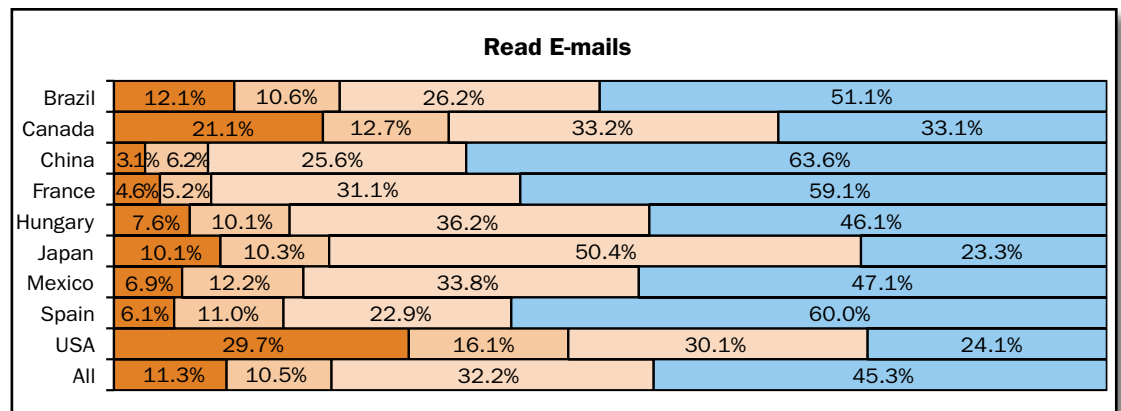
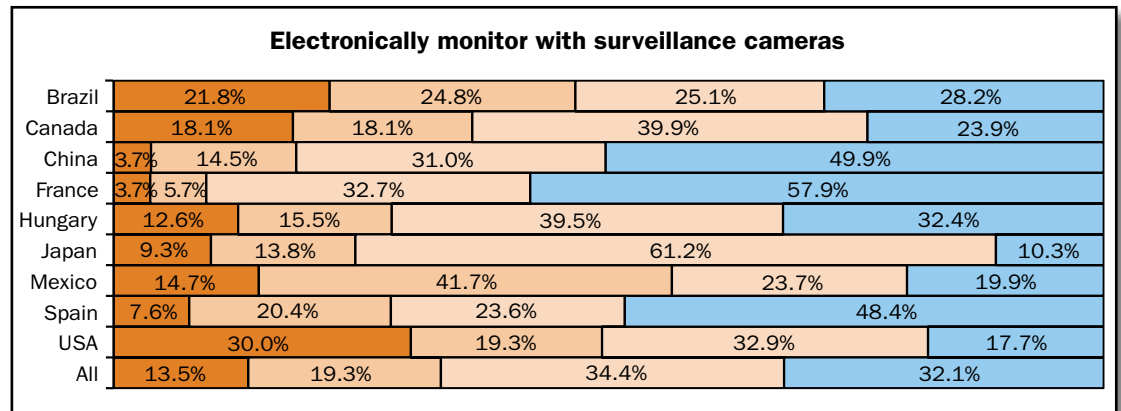
Some communities and private companies are using surveillance cameras, also known as Closed Circuit Television or CCTVs, to monitor public places in order to deter crime and assist in the prosecution of offenders. In your opinion, how effective are the following CCTVs in reducing crime? Community CCTVs (such as outdoor cameras in public places)

13: Workers

French and Spanish participants object the most to employers' electronically monitoring employees using surveillance cameras and emails. Canadians and Americans are notably more accepting of monitoring of emails, than are people in other countries.

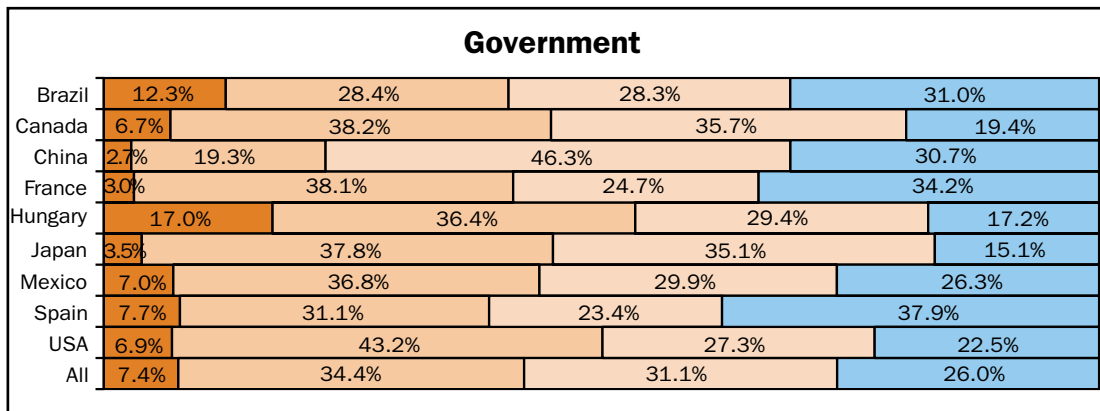
Q21:

To what extent do you think employers should be allowed to monitor their employees electronically with surveillance cameras and to read the e-mails their employees send or receive on the employer's computers?



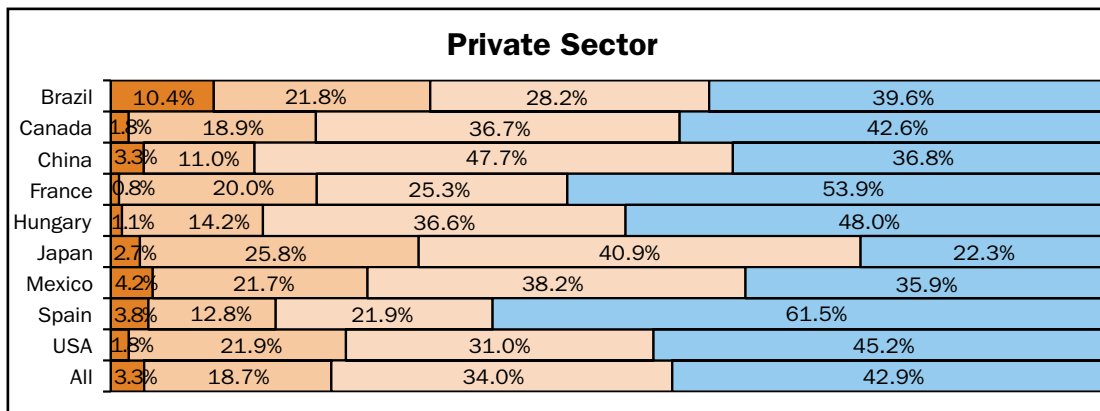
- Yes, right of employer
- Yes, for evaluation
- Yes, if employee consents
- No, under no circumstances

The majority of participants think it is appropriate for an employer to share their employees' personal information to the government, but are reticent when it comes to sharing employee information with the private sector.



Q22:

To what extent do you think it is appropriate for an employer to share their employees' personal information with third parties, such as the government or the private sector?



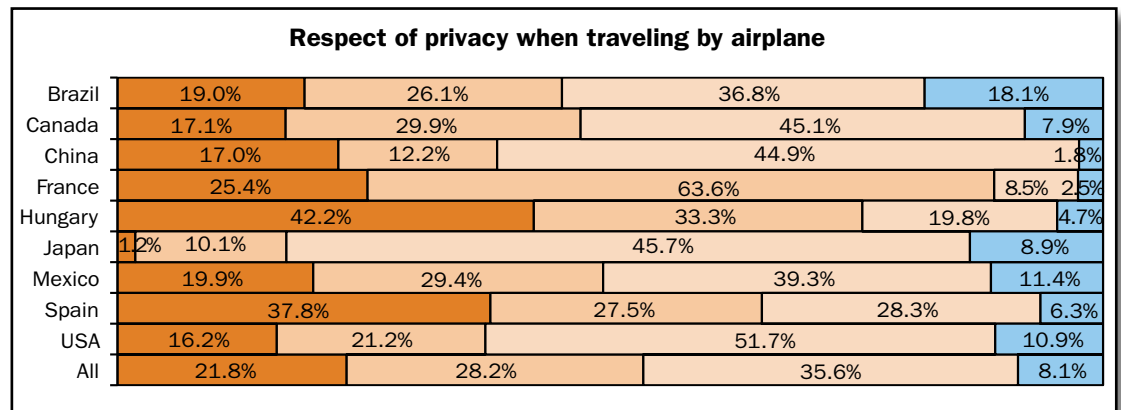
- Yes, right of employer
- Yes, for evaluation
- Yes, if employee consents
- No, under no circumstances

14: Travellers

French and Spanish participants are the most likely to feel airport and customs officials respect their privacy.

Q23:

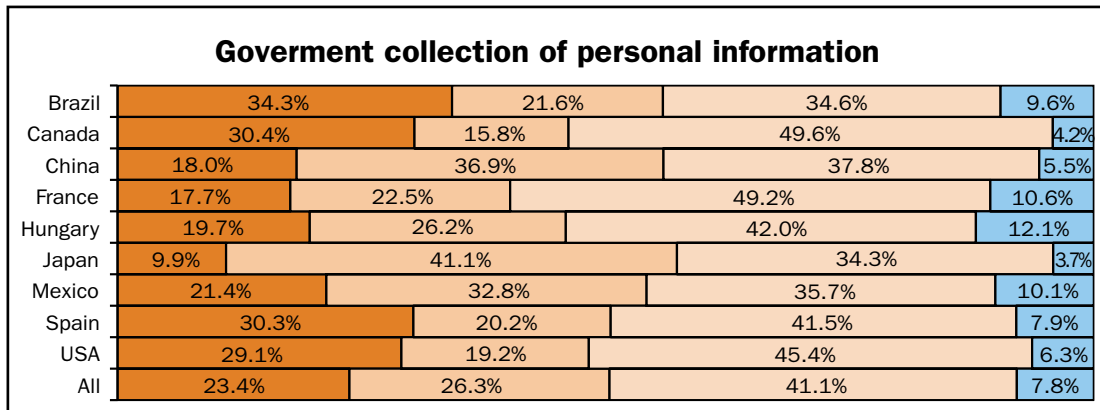
To what extent is your privacy respected by airport and customs officials when travelling by airplane?



- Completely respected
- A lot of respect
- Somewhat respected
- Not respected at all

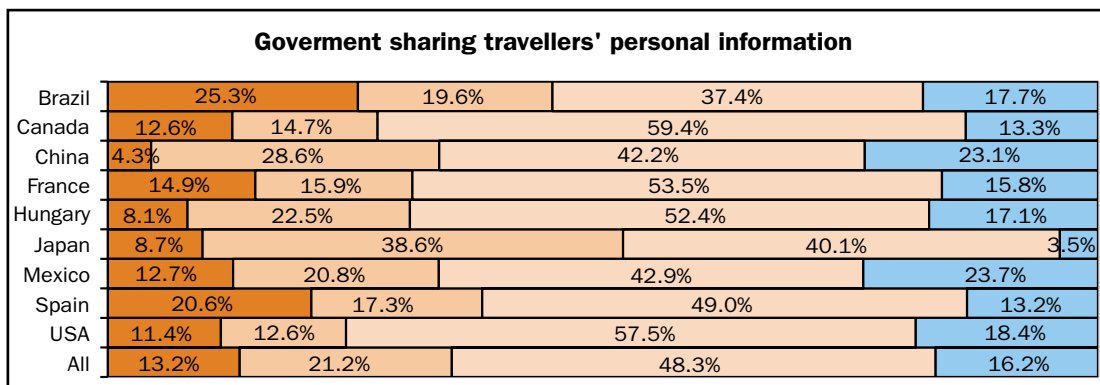
At least a third of citizens in all countries object to the government collecting and sharing traveller's personal information, unless the traveller is suspected of wrongdoing. Mexican and Spanish participants are more accepting than others of the idea of increased scrutiny of minority groups at airport security checks.

- Yes, under any circumstances
- Yes, with consent
- No, unless suspect
- No, under no circumstances



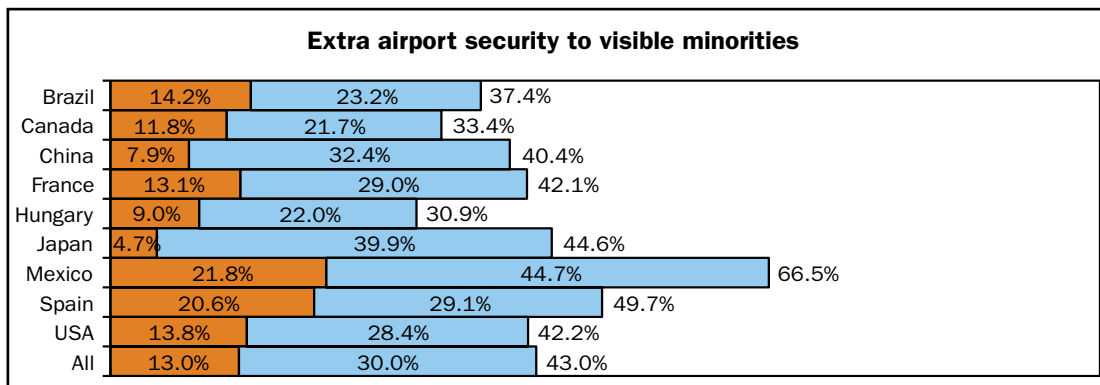
Q24:

Do you think your country's government should have the right to collect personal information about travellers?



Q25:

Do you think your country's government should be able to share travellers' personal information with foreign governments?



Q26:

How acceptable do you feel it would be for airport officials to give extra security checks to visible minorities?

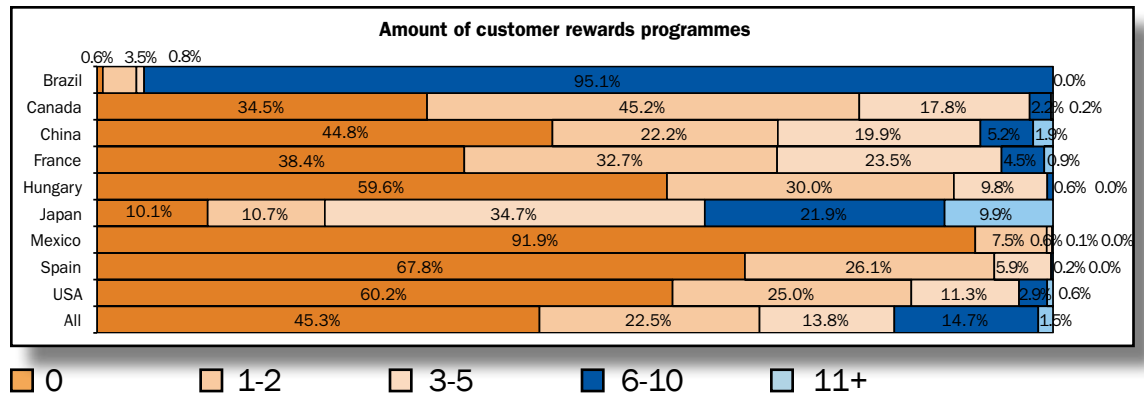
- Very acceptable
- Somewhat acceptable

15: Consumers

People are ambivalent about businesses creating profiles of their customers and their membership in rewards-type customer profiling programs. Either people don't know, or they don't care.

Q27:

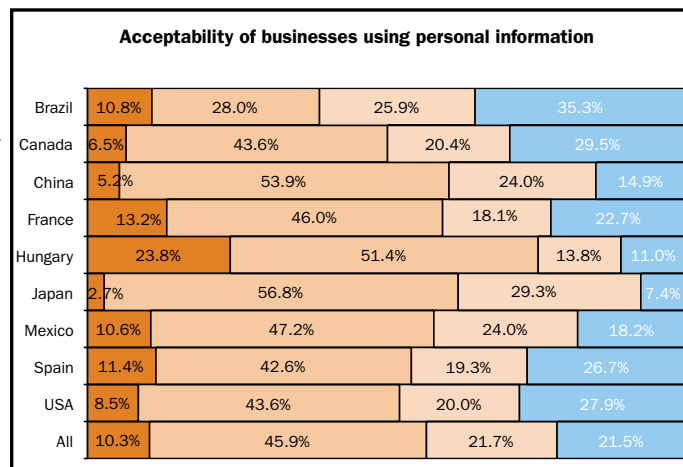
Some companies offer customer rewards programmes where you can earn points or rewards based on how often you buy something from them or use their services (for example frequent flyer programmes or [local examples like Air Miles]). How many of these types of programmes do you collect points or rewards from?



Except for Brazil, at least half of citizens in all countries think it is acceptable for businesses to use customer profile information to inform them of products and services that might interest them.

Q28:

Many businesses create profiles about their customers that include information about purchasing habits, personal characteristics and credit history. How acceptable to you would it be for a business to use information from your customer profile to inform you of products or services that they think would be of interest to you?



- Very acceptable
- Somewhat acceptable
- Somewhat unacceptable
- Not acceptable at all

16:

Anchoring Vignettes

As a way to deal with the possibility of cross-cultural differences in understanding abstract concepts, a novel methodology called “anchoring vignettes” was employed. Developed by Gary King and colleagues, this approach calls for a self-assessment question to be asked early in the survey and then a series of vignettes that approximate to the response variables in the self-assessment to be asked later on. All vignettes include a fictional person, a scenario and then the same self-assessment question is asked, except about that fictional character. Once the survey was completed the self-assessment and vignette responses were put through a nuanced model to try to ameliorate the affect of culture difference.

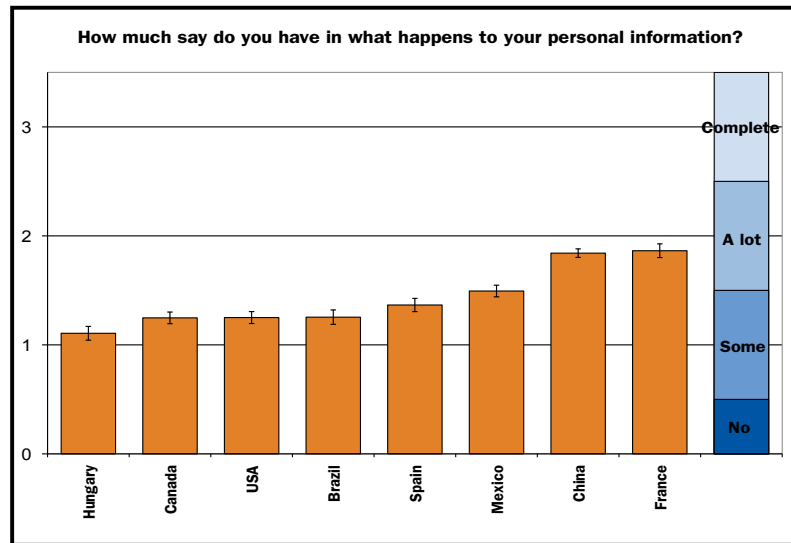
For this survey, two abstract concepts were investigated: control over information and respect while travelling. The first two graphs show the results of the self-assessment questions. Following are the results once the modelling has been done. The changes that occur when the model is applied are noticeable as the order of countries changes. This is an indication that there were cultural differences in understanding these concepts and that by using the anchoring vignettes the differences are made visible.

Note: See Andrey Pavlov’s chapter in the forthcoming book *Privacy, Surveillance, and the Globalization of Personal Information: International Comparisons*, Edited by Elia Zureik, with L. Lynda Harling Stalker, Emily Smith, David Lyon and Yolande E. Chan.

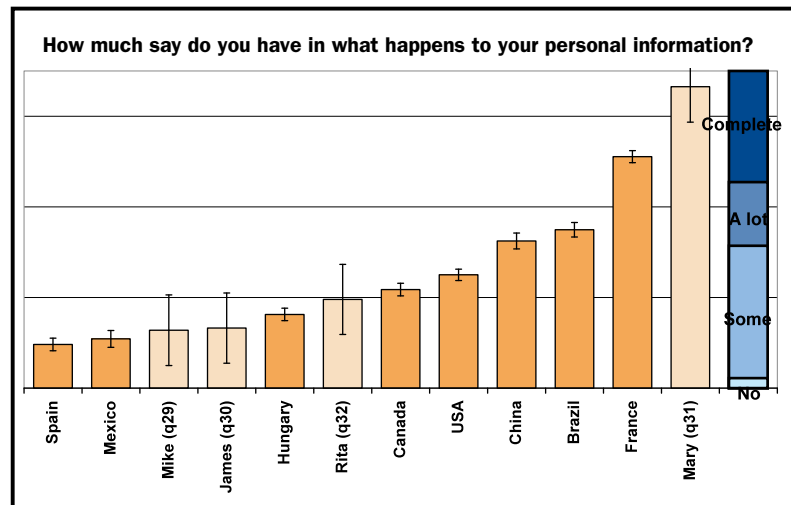
Control Over Information

Q2:

To what extent do you have a say in what happens to your personal information?

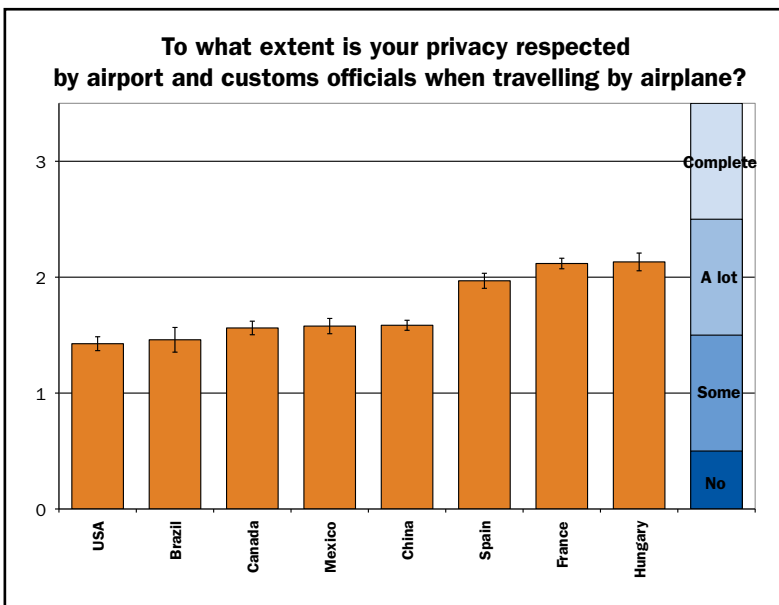


No model - self assessment question



With vignettes responses put through model

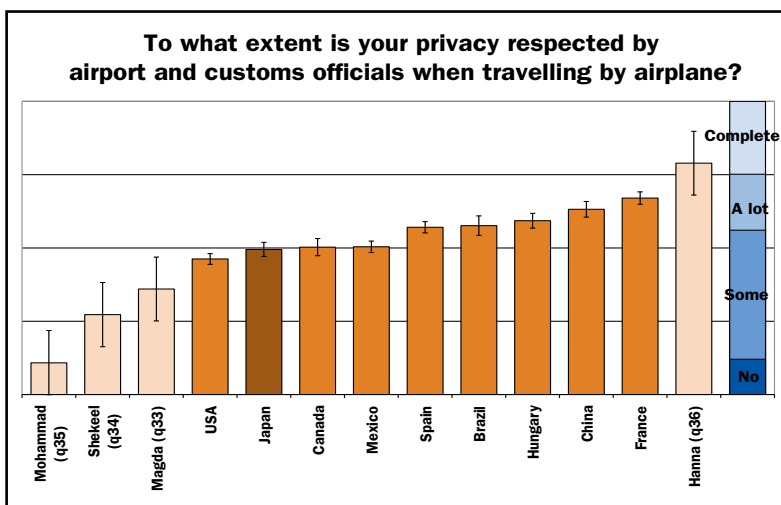
Respect While Travelling



No model -
self assessment question

Q28:

To what extent is your privacy respected by airport and customs officials when travelling by airplane?



With vignettes responses
put through model

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