

Special Report:  
Trust and  
the Coronavirus



# Edelman Trust Barometer 2020



**2020 Edelman Trust Barometer  
Special Report**

# Trust and the Coronavirus

## 10-market online Survey

- **Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, S. Africa, S. Korea, U.K. and U.S.**
- All data is nationally representative based on age, region and gender
- 10,000 respondents (1,000 per market)

**Timing of Fieldwork: March 6 – March 10, 2020**

### Margin of error

- 10-market global data margin of error: +/- 1.0% (N=10,000)
- Market-specific data margin of error: +/- 3.1 (N=1,000)

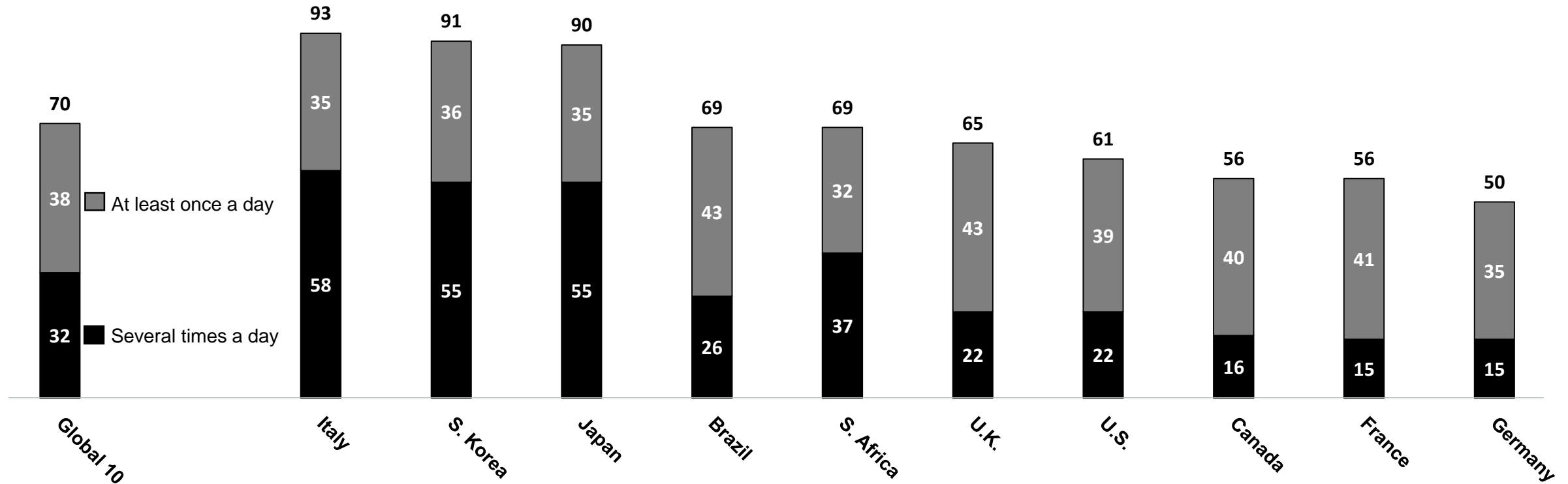
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# LOOKING FOR TRUSTWORTHY INFORMATION

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# 7 IN 10 FOLLOWING CORONAVIRUS NEWS DAILY

Percent who say they follow coronavirus news at least once a day or several times a day



# WORRY ABOUT RELIABILITY OF CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION

Percent who agree

I worry that there is **a lot of fake news** and false information being spread about the virus

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74%

It has been **difficult for me to find reliable and trustworthy information** about the virus and its effects

⊥

45%

We need to hear **more from scientists** and less from politicians

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85%

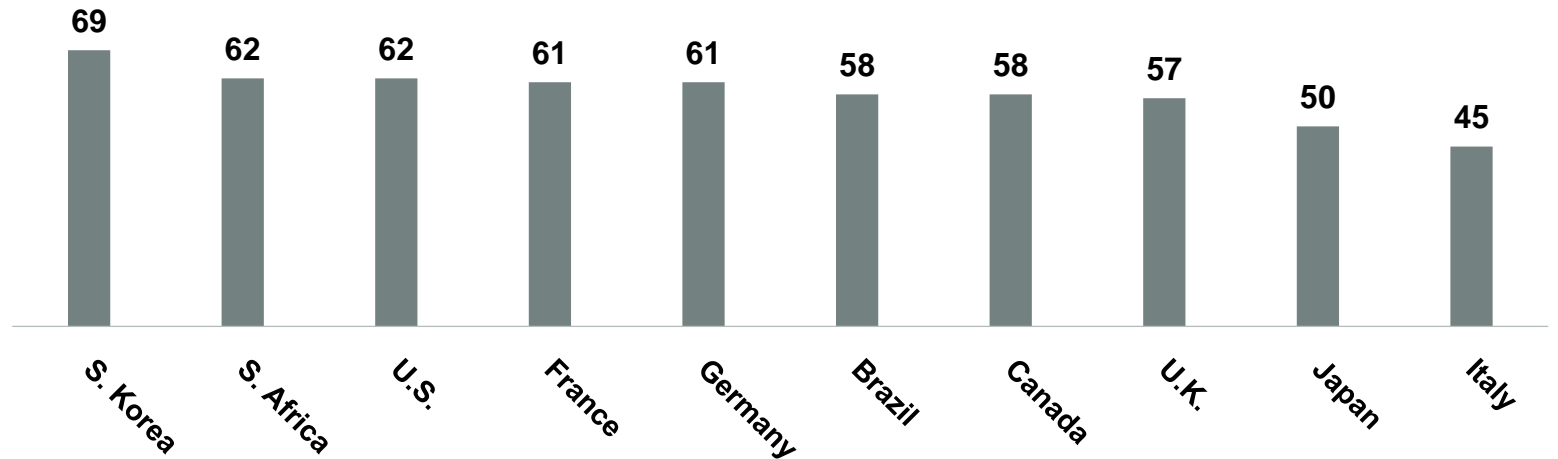
# MAJORITY CONCERNED ABOUT POLITICIZATION OF CRISIS

Percent who agree

Certain people are making the situation **seem worse than it is** for political gain

┌  
**58%**

Global 10



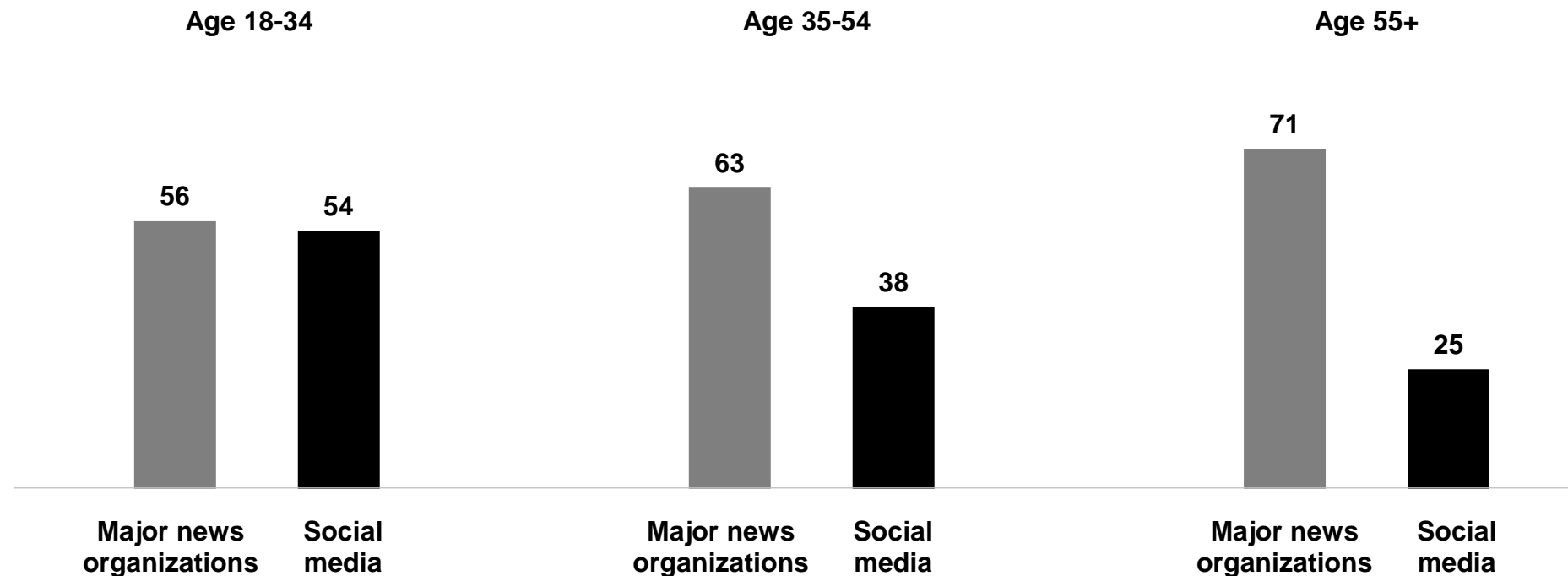
# NEWS ORGANIZATIONS MOST-RELIED ON INFORMATION SOURCE

Percent who are getting most of their information about the virus from each source

		Japan	S. Korea	S. Africa	U.K.	Canada	Germany	U.S.	Brazil	Italy	France
Major news organizations	64	73	73	67	67	66	65	63	59	55	52
National government sources	40	41	50	36	34	31	32	25	40	63	45
Social media	38	44	35	72	22	33	26	26	64	32	21
Global health organizations like the WHO	34	22	18	43	26	45	30	27	46	46	36
National health authorities like the CDC	29	15	25	28	37	41	18	45	25	36	20
My friends and family	27	36	34	44	20	22	25	22	30	20	21
Local government sources	26	27	29	28	15	27	27	20	31	33	21

# YOUNG ADULTS MOST LIKELY TO TURN TO SOCIAL MEDIA FOR CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION

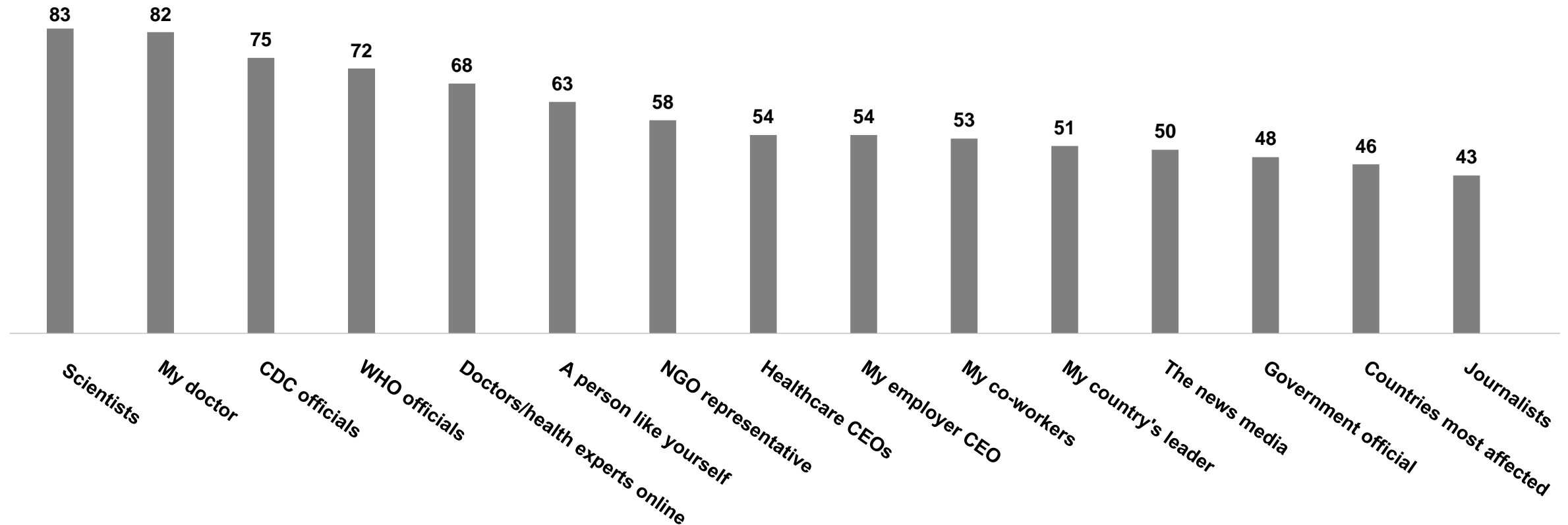
Percent who are getting most of their information about the virus from each source, by age





# MOST TRUSTED SPOKESPEOPLE: SCIENTISTS, HEALTH OFFICIALS AND DOCTORS

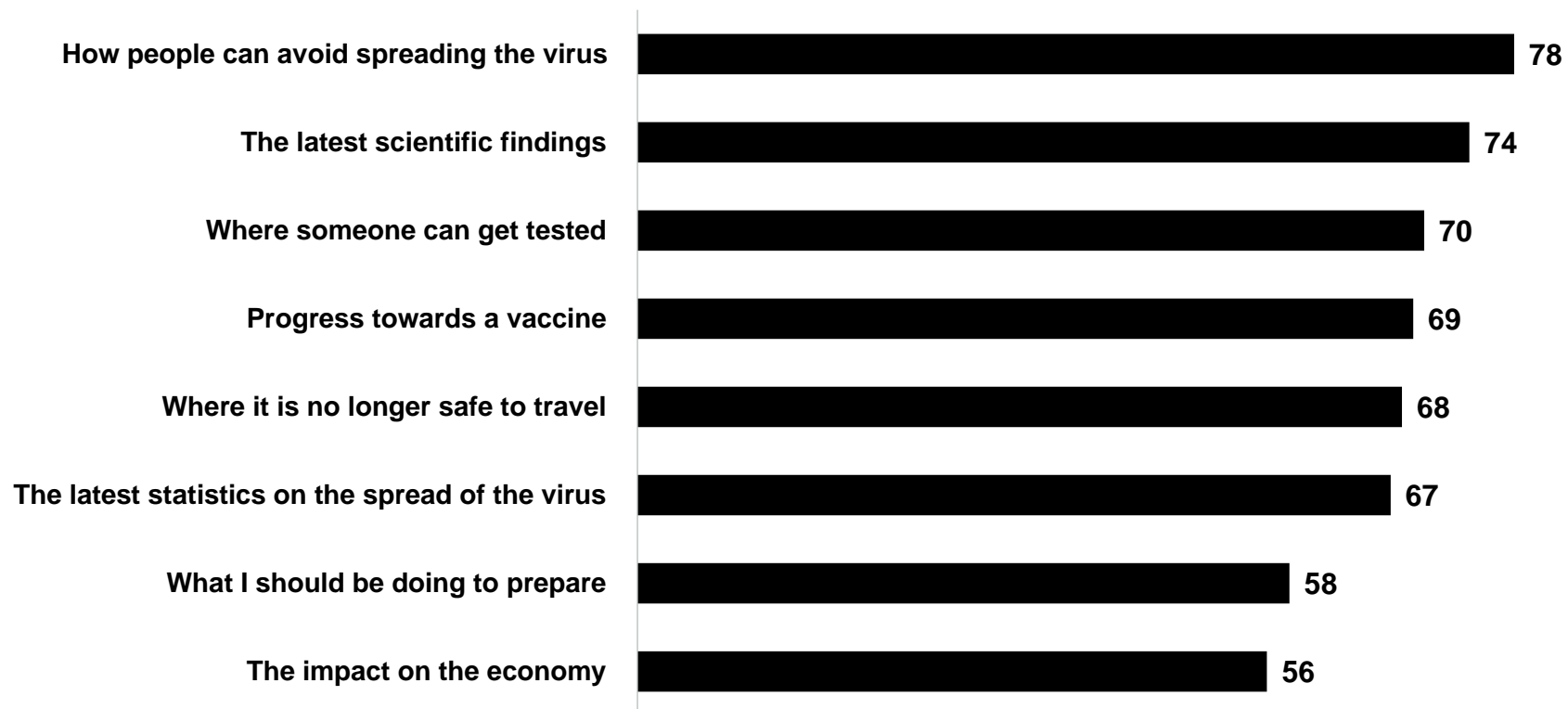
Percent who trust each information source to tell the truth about the virus



2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Trust and the Coronavirus. Q13. Please indicate how much you trust each of the following sources to tell you the truth about the virus and its progression. 9-point scale; top 4 box; trust. Question shown to those who have heard of the virus (Q1/1). 10-mkt avg. "My employer CEO," "HR executive," "Sr. executives," and "Co-workers" were only asked of those employed (Q43/1). Data collected between March 6 and March 10, 2020.

# WANT REGULAR GUIDANCE FROM HEALTH AUTHORITIES

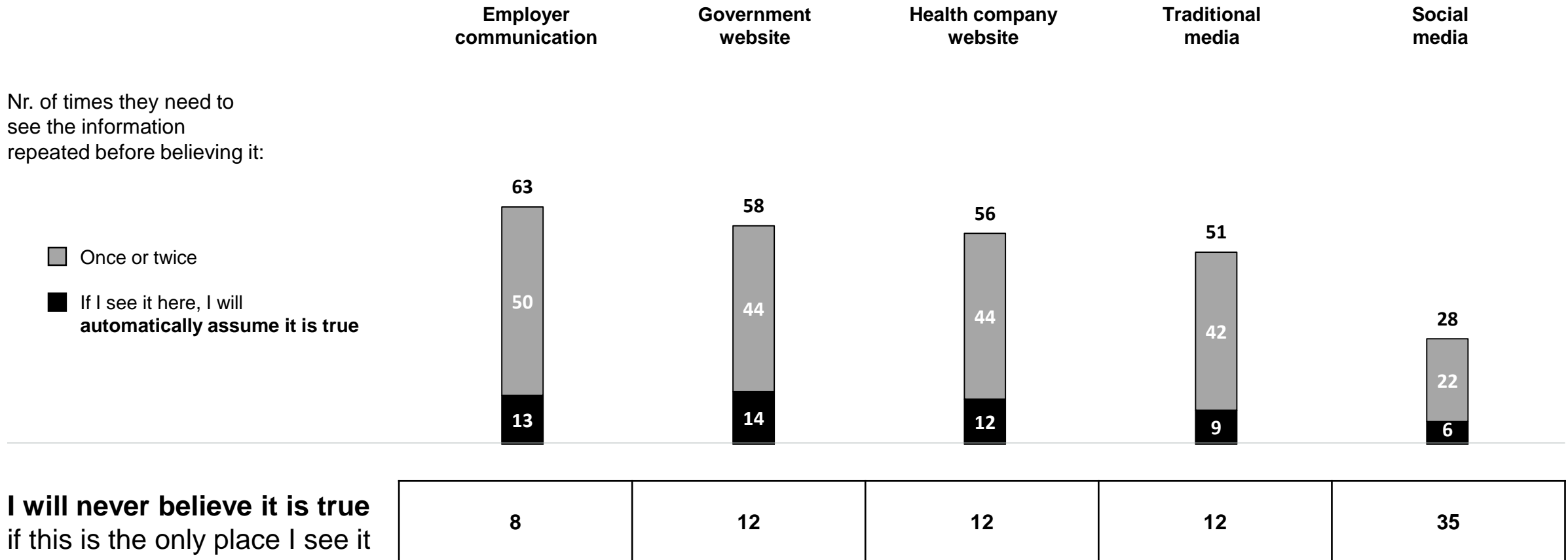
Percent who believe government and health authorities should be sharing information about each with the public on a regular basis



2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Trust and the Coronavirus. Q7. Which of the following information about the coronavirus should the government and health authorities be sharing with the public on a regular basis? Pick all that apply. Question shown to those who have heard of the virus (Q1/1). 10-mkt avg. "All of the above" responses were added to each item. Data collected between March 6 and March 10, 2020.

# EMPLOYERS BELIEVED MOST READILY

Percent who report they believe coronavirus information from each source



2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Trust and the Coronavirus. Q14. When you see a new piece of information about coronavirus in each of the following places, how many times do you need to see it or hear repeated before you believe it is really true? Question shown to those who have heard of the virus (Q1/1). "Once or twice" is a sum of codes 2 and 3. 10-mkt avg. "Employer communications" was only asked of those employed (Q43/1). Data collected between March 6 and March 10, 2020.

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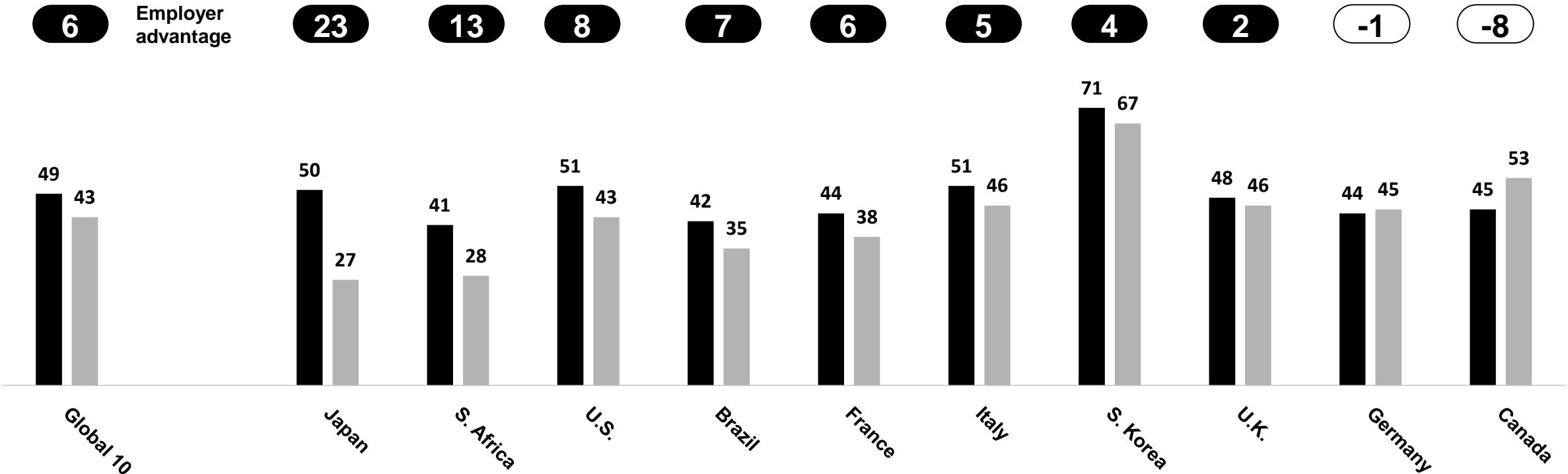
**A CRITICAL ROLE FOR BUSINESS**

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# MY EMPLOYER SEEN AS BETTER PREPARED THAN MY COUNTRY

Percent who say each is well-prepared for the viral outbreak

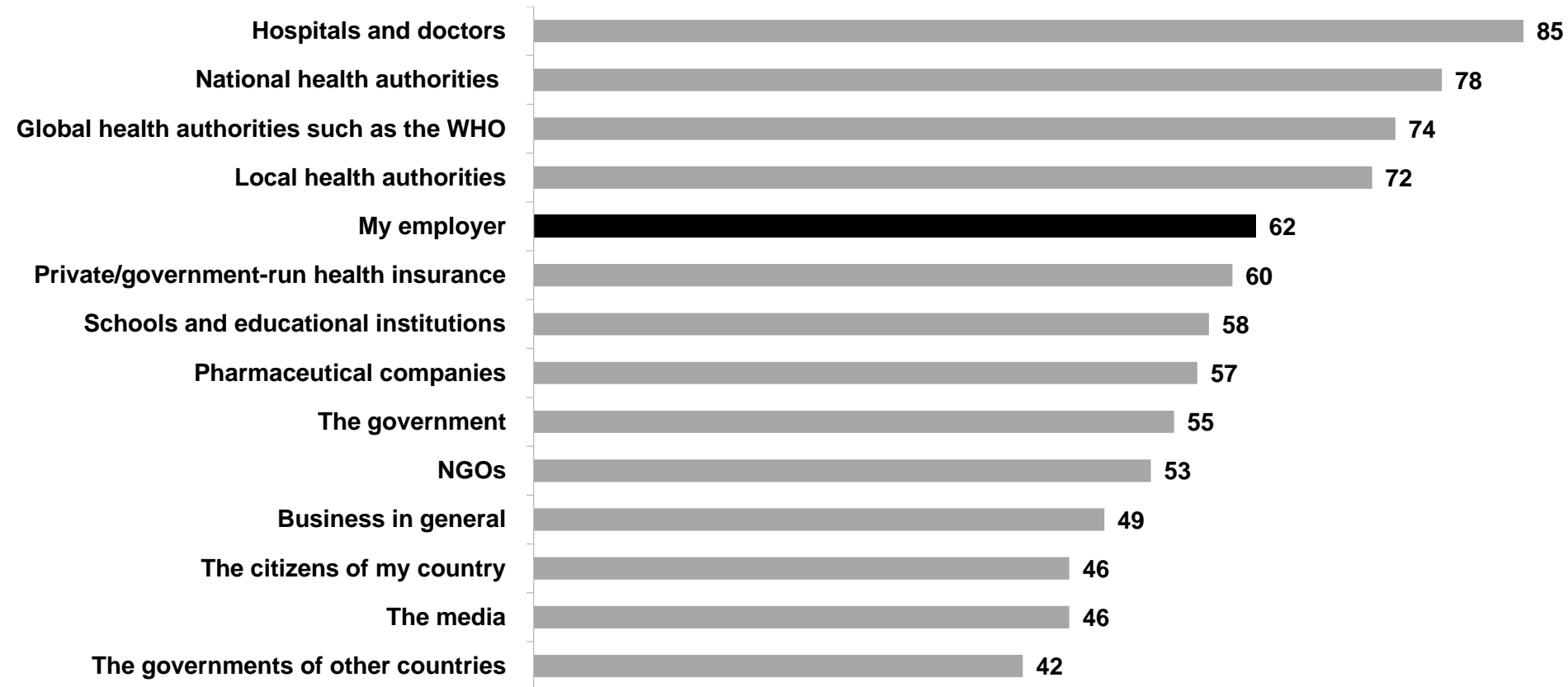
■ My employer ■ My country



2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Trust and the Coronavirus. Q3. Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below using a nine-point scale where one means “strongly disagree” and nine means “strongly agree”. 9-point scale; top 4 box, agree. Question shown to those who have heard of the virus (Q1/1). 10-mkt avg. “My employer” was only asked of those employed (Q43/1). Data collected between March 6 and March 10, 2020.

# AFTER HEALTH AUTHORITIES, EMPLOYERS MOST TRUSTED TO RESPOND EFFECTIVELY

Percent who trust each to respond effectively and responsibly to the coronavirus outbreak



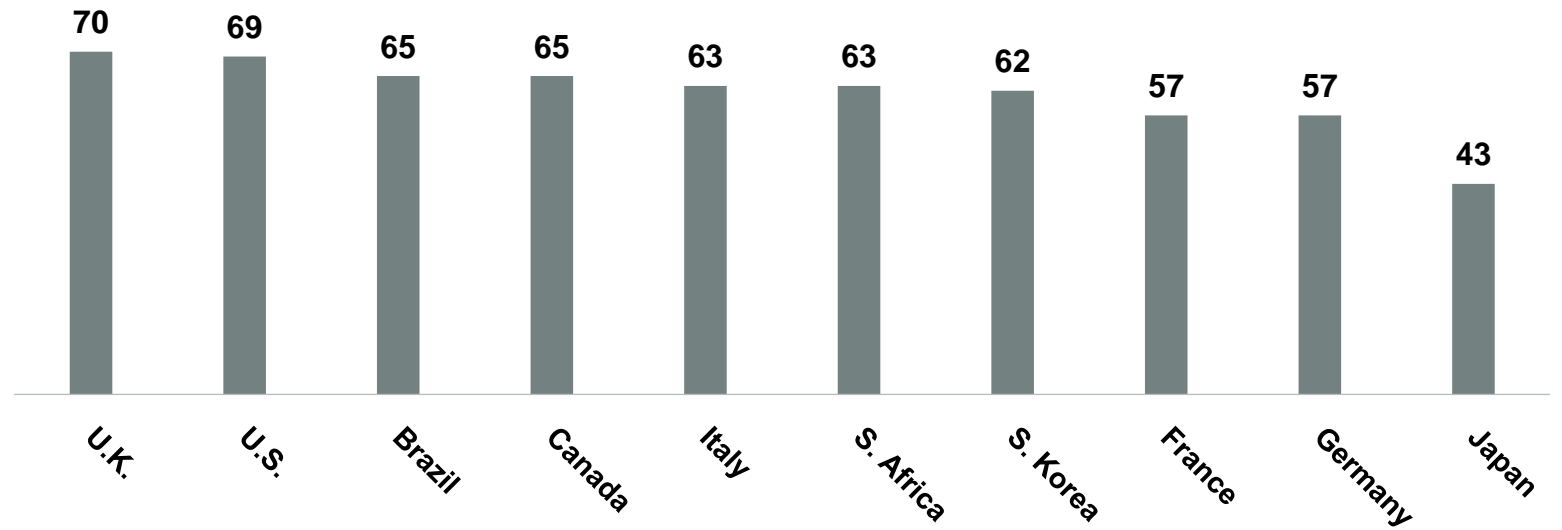
2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Trust and the Coronavirus. Q11. Please indicate how much you trust each of the following to respond effectively and responsibly to the coronavirus outbreak. 9-point scale; top 4 box, trust. Question shown to those who have heard of the virus (Q1/1). 10-mkt avg. "My employer" was only asked of those employed (Q43/1). Data collected between March 6 and March 10, 2020.

# MAJORITY TRUST EMPLOYERS TO TAKE RESPONSIBLE ACTION

Percent who trust their employer to respond effectively and responsibly to the coronavirus outbreak

**62%**

Global 10



2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Trust and the Coronavirus. Q11. Please indicate how much you trust each of the following to respond effectively and responsibly to the coronavirus outbreak. 9-point scale; top 4 box, trust. Question shown to those who have heard of the virus (Q1/1). 10-mkt avg. "My employer" was only asked of those employed (Q43/1). Data collected between March 6 and March 10, 2020.

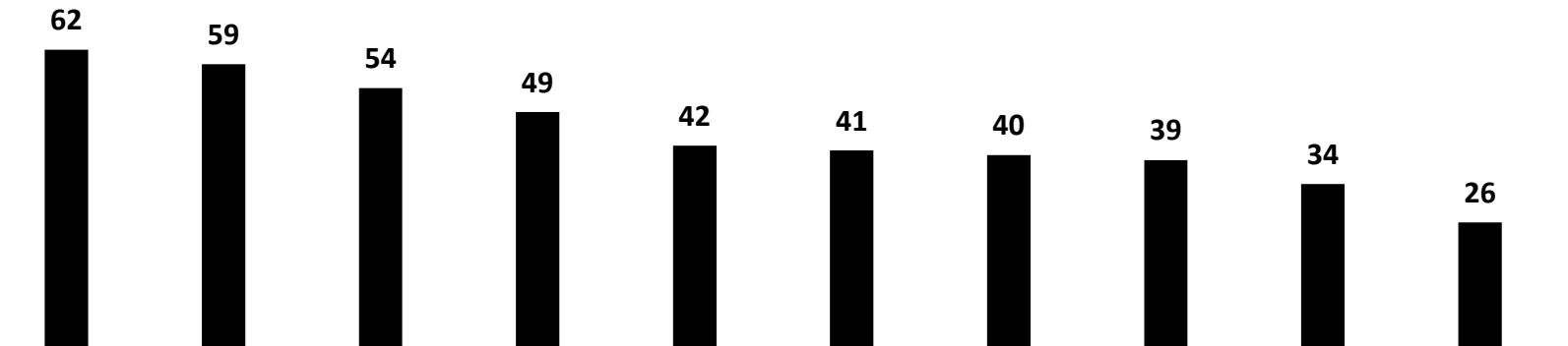
# GOVERNMENT SEEN AS FAR MORE EFFECTIVE WHEN PARTNERED WITH BUSINESS

Percent who trust each the most to effectively lead efforts to combat the virus

	Global 10	Germany	Brazil	Italy	S. Africa	Canada	U.S.	Japan	U.K.	France	S. Korea
Business alone	5	4	6	3	7	3	8	7	2	4	5
Government alone	20	11	19	21	15	22	13	15	23	17	42

Government and business  
**working together  
as a team**

**45%**





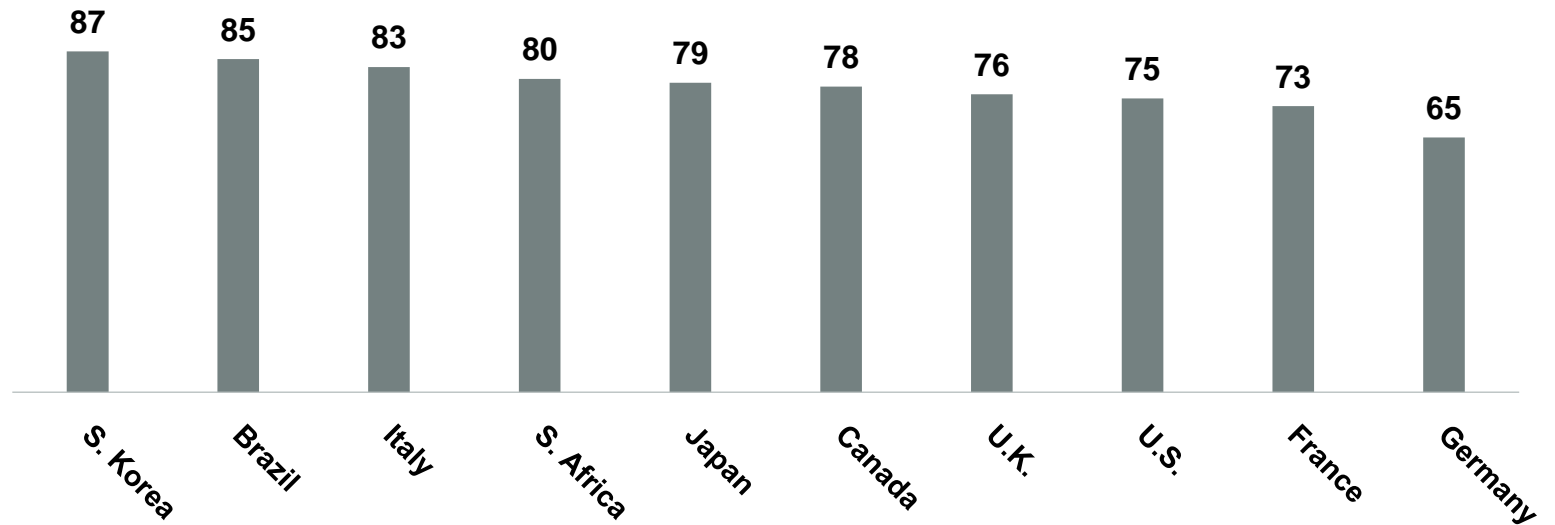
# BUSINESS MUST ACT TO PROTECT EMPLOYEES AND LOCAL COMMUNITY

Percent who agree

Businesses have a responsibility to ensure their employees are protected from the virus in the workplace *and* that their employees do not spread the virus into the community

78%

Global 10



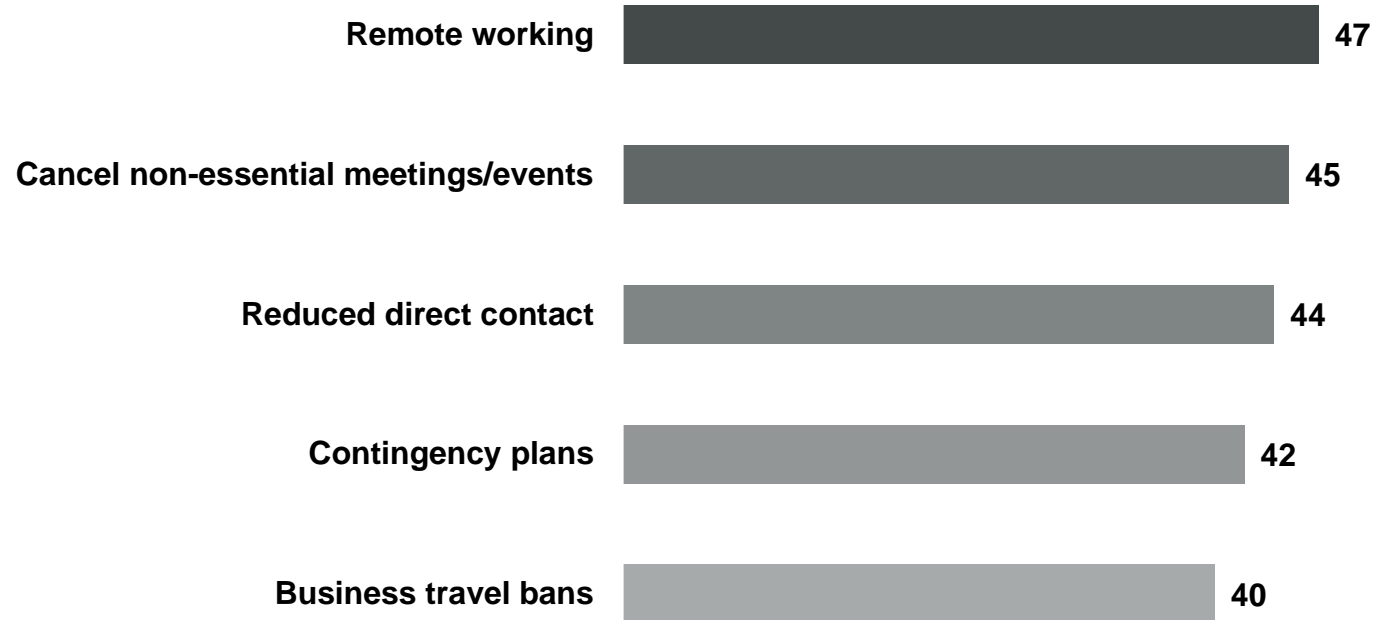
2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Trust and the Coronavirus. Q3. Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below using a nine-point scale where one means “strongly disagree” and nine means “strongly agree”. 9-point scale; top 4 box, agree. Question shown to those who have heard of the virus (Q1/1). 10-mkt avg. Data shown is a net of those that agreed with r5 and r6. Data collected between March 6 and March 10, 2020.

# EMPLOYERS EXPECTED TO ADAPT OPERATIONS

Percent who expect their employer to take each action

Net percent of employees who expect their employer to make one or more of these changes in their operations

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**79%**



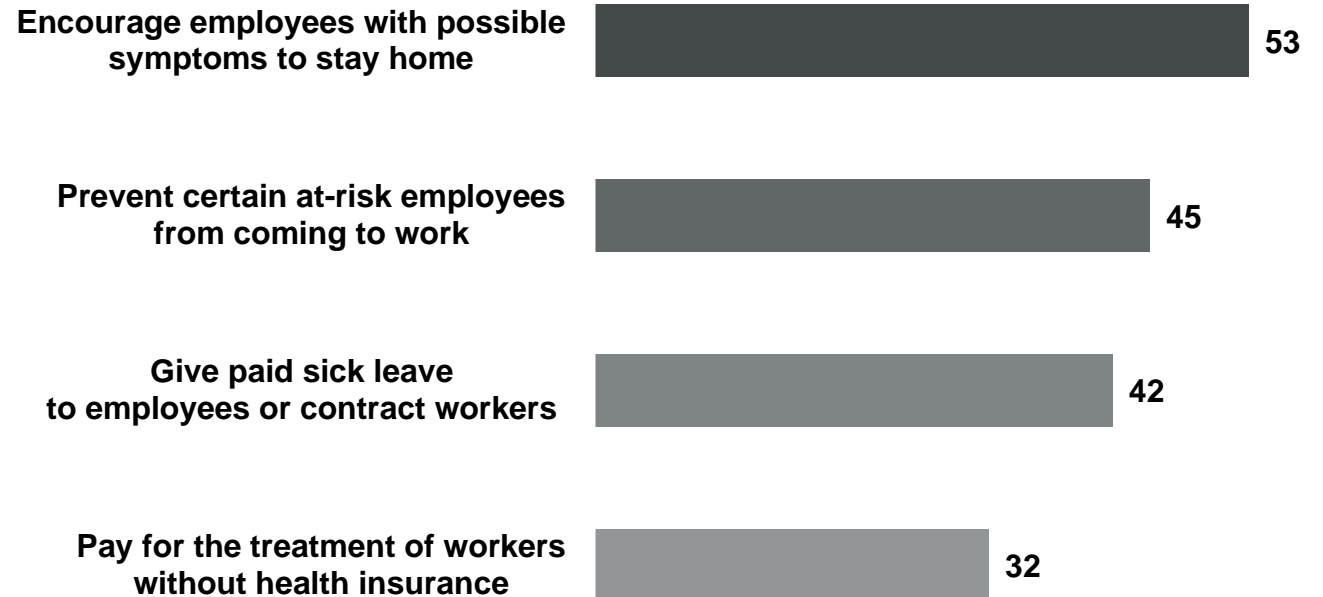
# EMPLOYERS EXPECTED TO ADAPT HR POLICIES

Percent who expect their employer to take each action

Net percent of employees who expect their employer to make one or more of these changes to HR policies

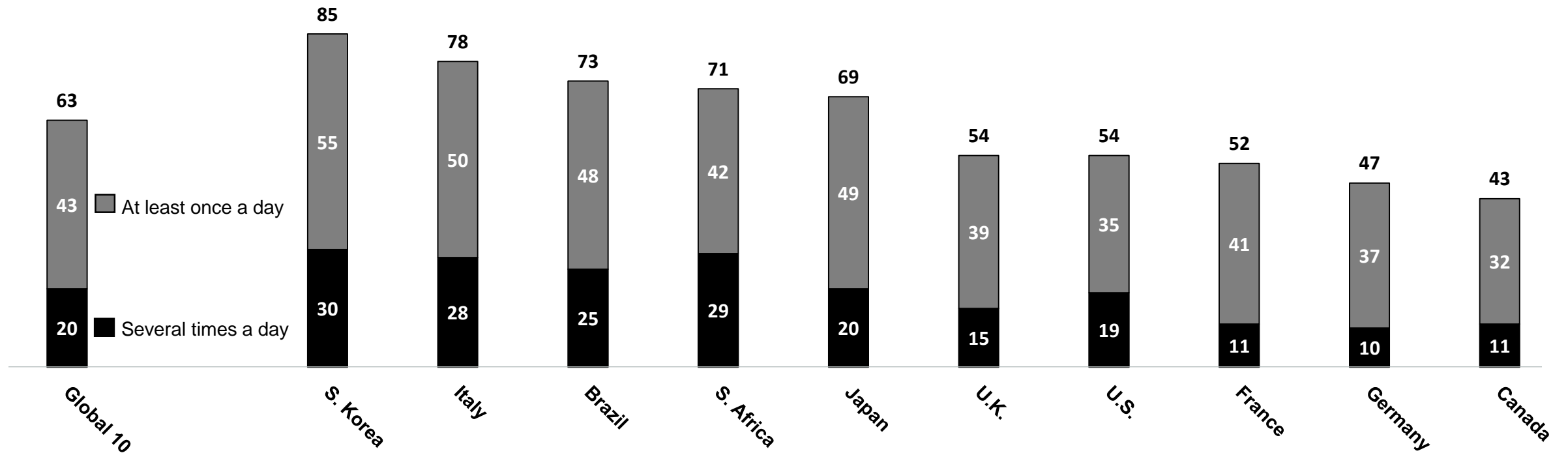
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**73%**



# LOOKING FOR DAILY UPDATES FROM MY EMPLOYER

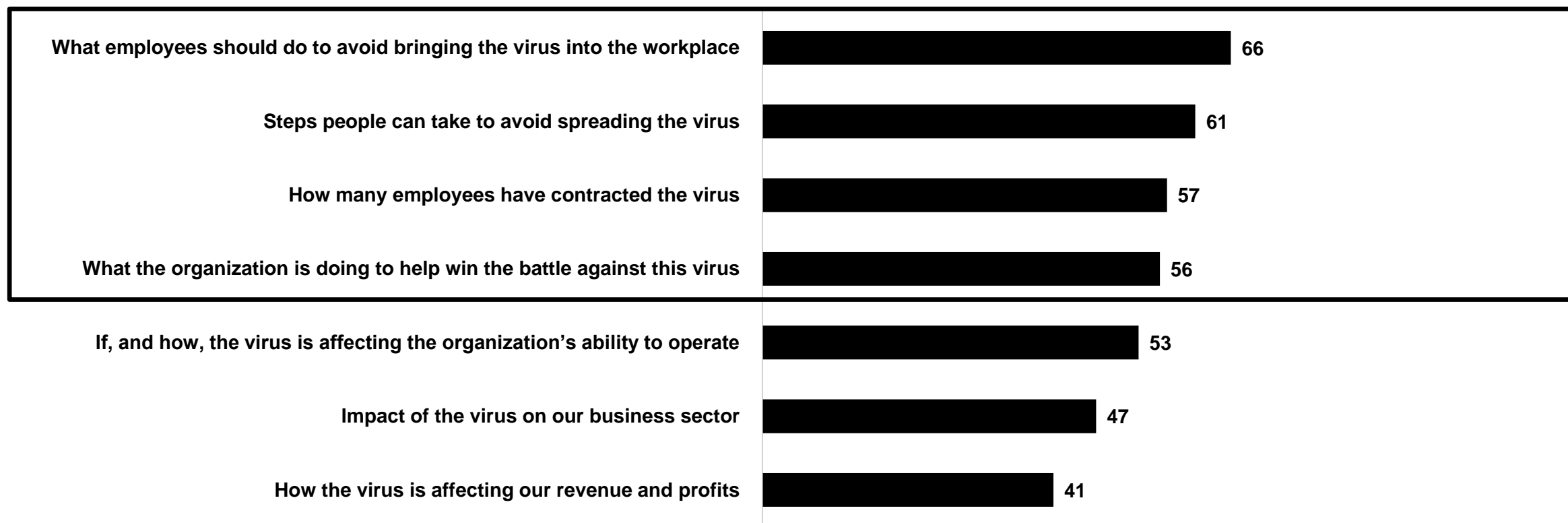
Percent who say they want their employer to update information about the virus at least once a day or several times a day



2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Trust and the Coronavirus. Q10. How often would you like to be updated on the information you just indicated your employer should be sharing? Question shown to those who are aware of the virus and are employees and listed information their employer should be sharing (Q1/1 AND Q43/1 AND Q9/1-14,16). 10-mkt avg. Data collected between March 6 and March 10, 2020.

# EMPLOYER COMMUNICATIONS: EMPLOYEE SAFETY MORE CRITICAL THAN BUSINESS IMPACT

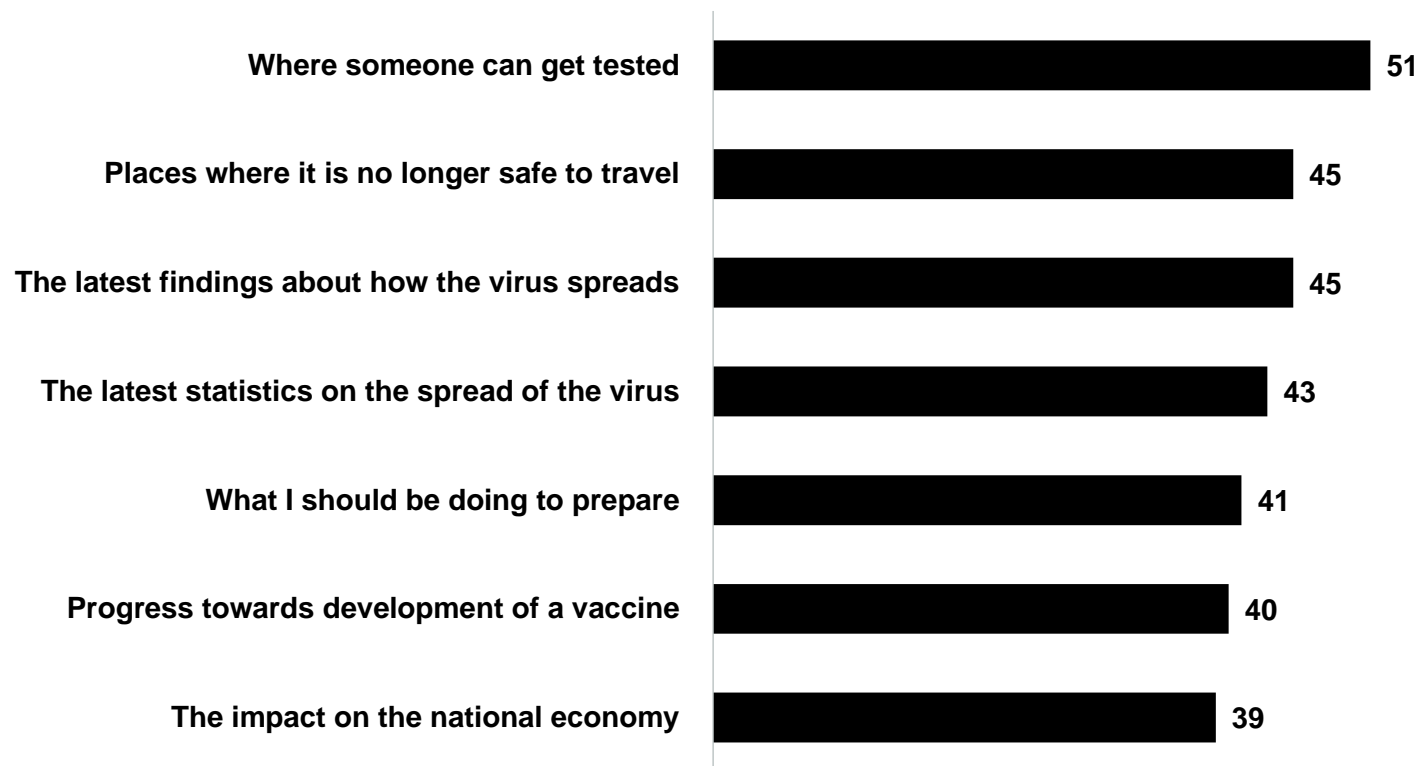
Percent who say employers should be sharing each kind of information with employees on a regular basis



2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Trust and the Coronavirus. Q9. Which of the following information about the coronavirus should your employer be sharing with their employees on a regular basis? Pick all that apply. Question shown to those who have heard of the virus and are employees (Q1/1 AND Q43/1). 10-mkt avg. "All of the above" responses were added to each item. Data collected between March 6 and March 10, 2020.

# EMPLOYERS EXPECTED TO BE A CONDUIT FOR RELIABLE INFORMATION ABOUT THE VIRUS

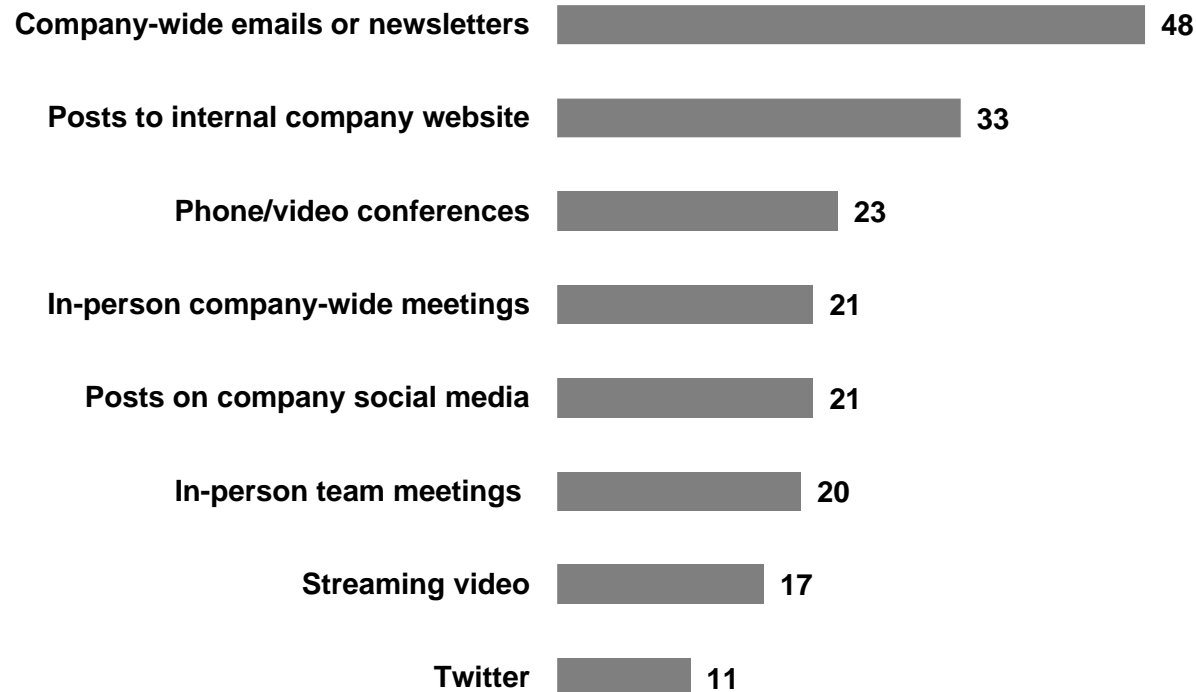
Percent who say employers should be sharing each kind of information with employees on a regular basis



2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Trust and the Coronavirus. Q9. Which of the following information about the coronavirus should your employer be sharing with their employees on a regular basis? Pick all that apply. Question shown to those who have heard of the virus and are employees (Q1/1 AND Q43/1). 10-mkt avg. "All of the above" responses were added to each item. Data collected between March 6 and March 10, 2020.

# EMPLOYERS EXPECTED TO USE ALL CHANNELS TO COMMUNICATE ABOUT THE VIRUS

Percent who prefer employers use each channel to communicate about the virus



It does not matter to me as long as **regular communication** is taking place

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**21%**

# MAINTAINING TRUST DURING THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

**1.**

**Business and government must partner to respond effectively**

**2.**

**Take steps to protect employees, customers and the local community**

**3.**

**Communicate trustworthy information daily**

**4.**

**Leverage scientists and other authoritative spokespeople**



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# **APPENDIX: EMPLOYER EXPECTATIONS BY COUNTRY**

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# COUNTRY DATA: EMPLOYERS EXPECTED TO ADAPT OPERATIONS

Percent who expect their employer to take each action

	Global 10	Italy	S. Africa	Brazil	S. Korea	Canada	Germany	France	Japan	U.K.	U.S.
<b>Make one or more of these changes (net)</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>73</b>
Remote working	47	59	56	49	47	47	41	49	39	43	43
Cancel non-essential meetings/events	45	51	49	40	57	45	35	42	51	45	40
Reduced direct contact	44	58	56	48	46	43	38	39	38	37	35
Contingency plans	42	40	55	42	40	46	45	32	31	43	40
Business travel bans	40	42	49	49	44	41	42	40	41	27	29

2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Trust and the Coronavirus. Q15. Which of the following do you expect your employer to do in response to the virus? Pick all that apply. Question shown to those who have heard of the virus and are employees (Q1/1 AND Q43/1). 10-mkt avg. Employees who expect employer to make changes to operations is a net of r11-r15. Data collected between March 6 and March 10, 2020.

# COUNTRY DATA: EMPLOYERS EXPECTED TO ADAPT HR POLICIES

Percent who expect their employer to take each action

	Global 10	S. Africa	Brazil	Canada	Japan	Italy	France	S. Korea	U.K.	U.S.	Germany
<b>Make one or more changes to HR policies (net)</b>	<b>73</b>	84	77	76	74	73	72	71	70	69	66
Encourage employees with possible symptoms to stay home	53	67	53	58	55	51	52	54	50	47	46
Prevent certain at-risk employees from coming to work	45	60	48	49	39	48	46	47	41	35	38
Give paid sick leave to employees or contract workers	42	49	45	45	55	43	36	40	45	38	29
Pay for the treatment of workers without health insurance	32	54	41	36	25	31	28	30	23	24	25

2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Trust and the Coronavirus. Q15. Which of the following do you expect your employer to do in response to the virus? Pick all that apply. Question shown to those who have heard of the virus and are employees (Q1/1 AND Q43/1). 10-mkt avg. Employees who expect employer to make HR policy changes is a net of r7-r10. Data collected between March 6 and March 10, 2020.