

# Social media on the up among risk-taking leaders of tomorrow

Global Perspectives Barometer 2012



Global Perspectives Barometer 2012

Design: St. Gallen Symposium

non-representative  
data surveys, evaluation and reporting:  
gfs.bern

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# Summary of key points

## Brief and method

The St. Gallen Symposium Global Perspectives Barometer was conducted for the first time in 2010. The study involved an online survey of the "Leaders of Tomorrow". These were students from all the continents who were approached specifically by the St. Gallen Symposium (cf. fact sheet).

The concept, the selection criteria and the survey itself were the responsibility of the St. Gallen Symposium. The study is not representative.

gfs.bern had some input on the survey. The questionnaire was originally based on the concerns barometer. Elements of the youth barometer have also been added this time to allow comparisons with young people in Switzerland.

The online questionnaire was carried out on the gfs.bern platform for the first time in February/March 2012.

gfs.bern's evaluation covered 876 (+253 compared to the previous year) responses from the selection of "Leaders of Tomorrow". The data cannot be seen as representative, but it does provide a view of young students from different countries with an interest in global affairs. As the survey procedure for 2012 was very similar to the previous year's survey and the questions were, in part, identical, statements on developments over time are possible to a degree. However, there were considerably more women involved in 2012 and the respondents themselves were significantly more left-wing than in the two previous years. So any developments over time should be interpreted very carefully.

## Risk, world of finance, globalisation

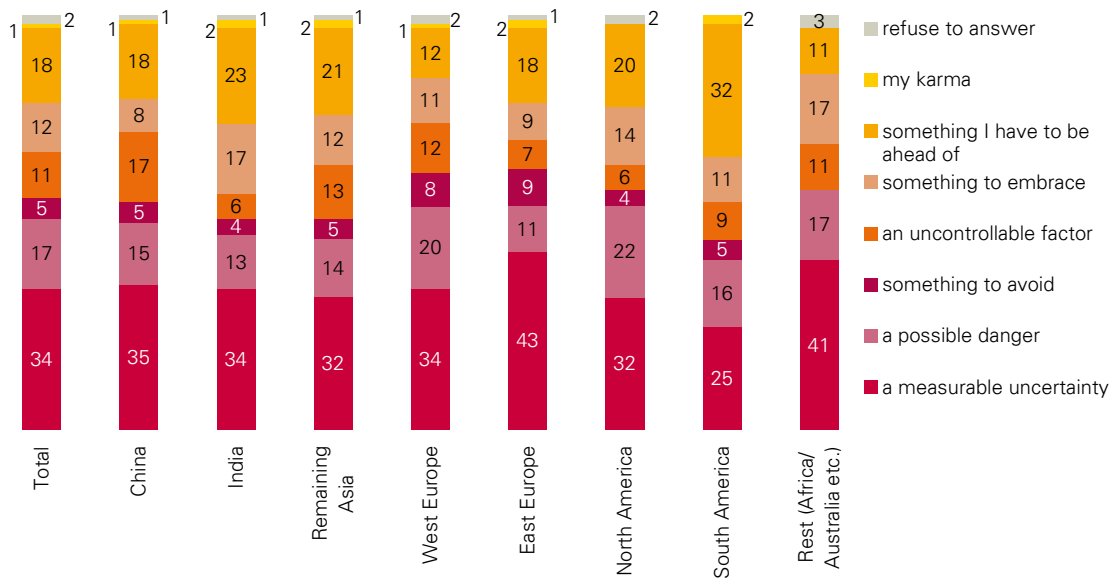
Although the Leaders of Tomorrow have grown up in a time of unprecedented levels of crisis, they are most likely to see risk as a measurable uncertainty, rather than something which is uncontrollable or needs to be avoided.

Grafik 1

### Risk is...

"To me, risk is..."

in % leaders of tomorrow



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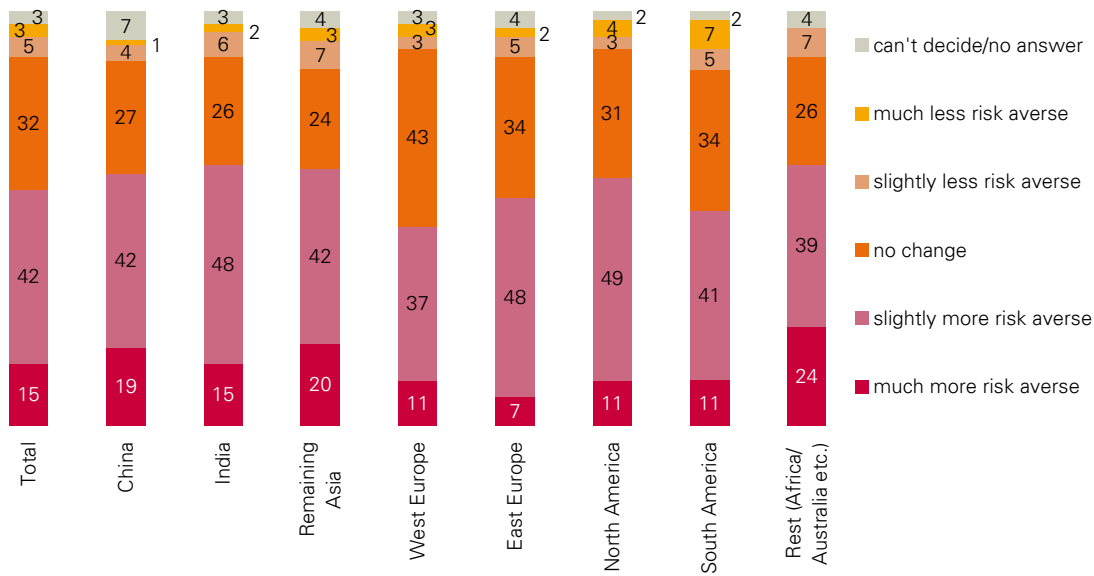
When asked directly about the risks of the world of finance, the Leaders of Tomorrow in Europe are surprisingly similar to the rest of the world in their reactions. On average, 15 % are distinctly risk-averse when it comes to financial decisions and 42 % are slightly risk-averse. As for the remainder, the financial crisis has changed nothing for 43 % and made a total of 8 % more likely to take risks.

Grafik 2

## Facing risk

"Following the financial crisis, do you consider yourself more risk-averse in your financial decision making?"

in % leaders of tomorrow



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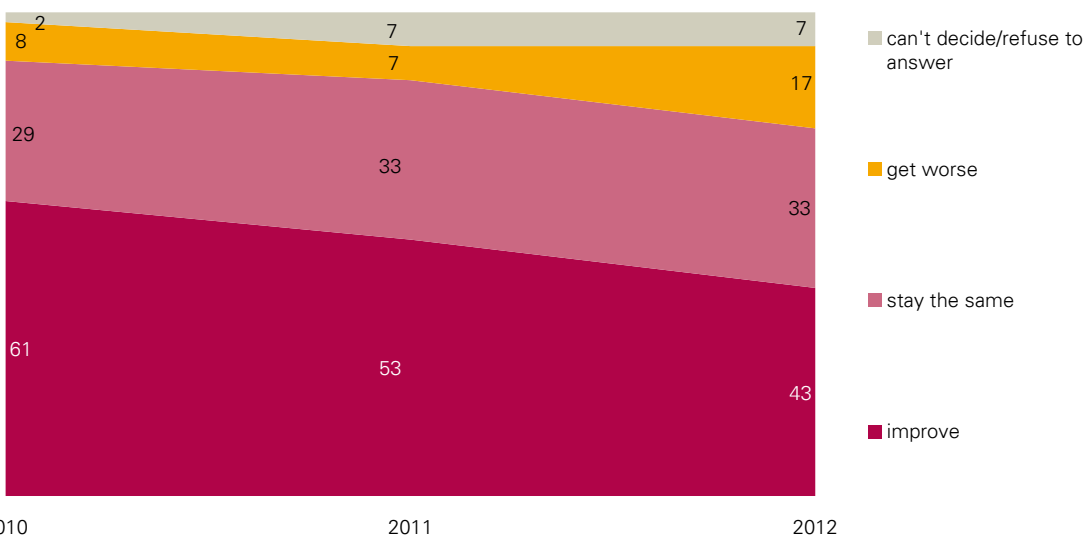
A majority of the Leaders of Tomorrow are still assuming that their own financial situation will improve. But the proportion expecting it to deteriorate has increased significantly.

Grafik 3

## Trend upcoming individual financial situation

"Thinking about the next 12 months, would you say that in financial terms, compared with now things are going to improve, stay the same, get worse?"

in % leaders of tomorrow



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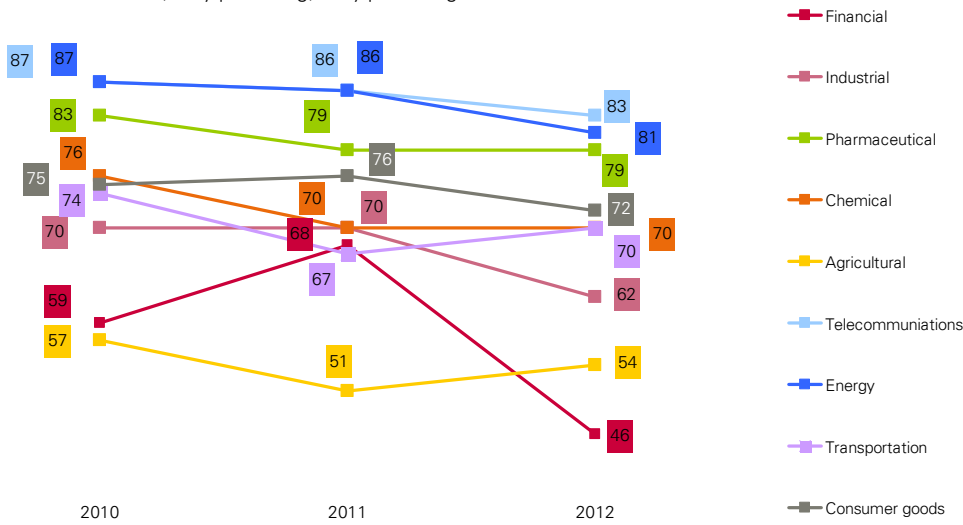
These assessments of their personal financial situation fit in with the fact that, for the first time, the financial sector is rated as less promising than the agricultural sector.

Grafik 4

## Trend promising sector

"How promising do you believe the current business situation is in the following sectors?"

in % leaders of tomorrow, very promising, fairly promising



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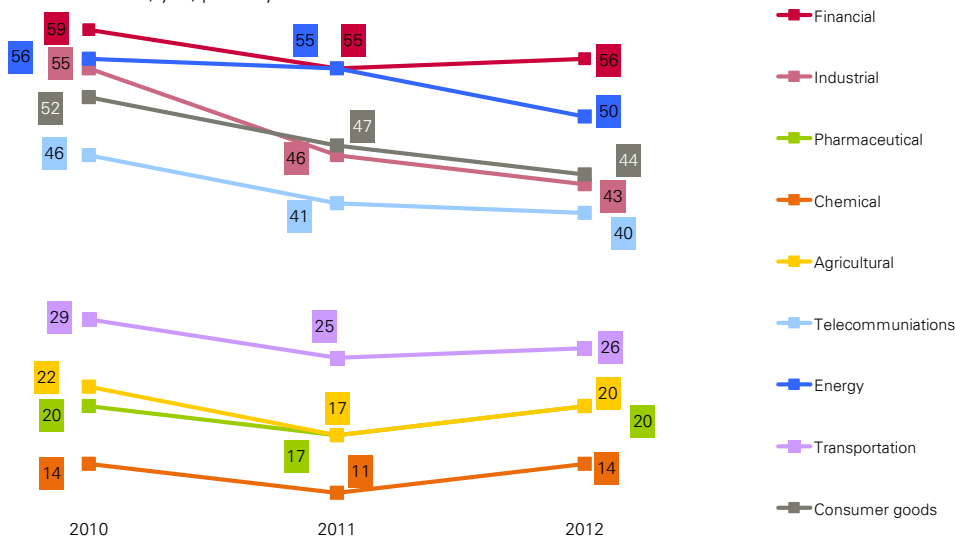
In this respect, it is surprising that the Leaders are most likely to want to work in the financial sector. But this most likely ties in with the profile of the Global Leaders of Tomorrow. They are largely so self-assured and prepared to take risks that they believe they can get a foothold even in the least promising sector and earn good money, as is still widespread in this sector.

Grafik 5

## Trend preferred sector

"In which sector are you most likely to work in the next 5 years?"

in % leaders of tomorrow, yes, possibly



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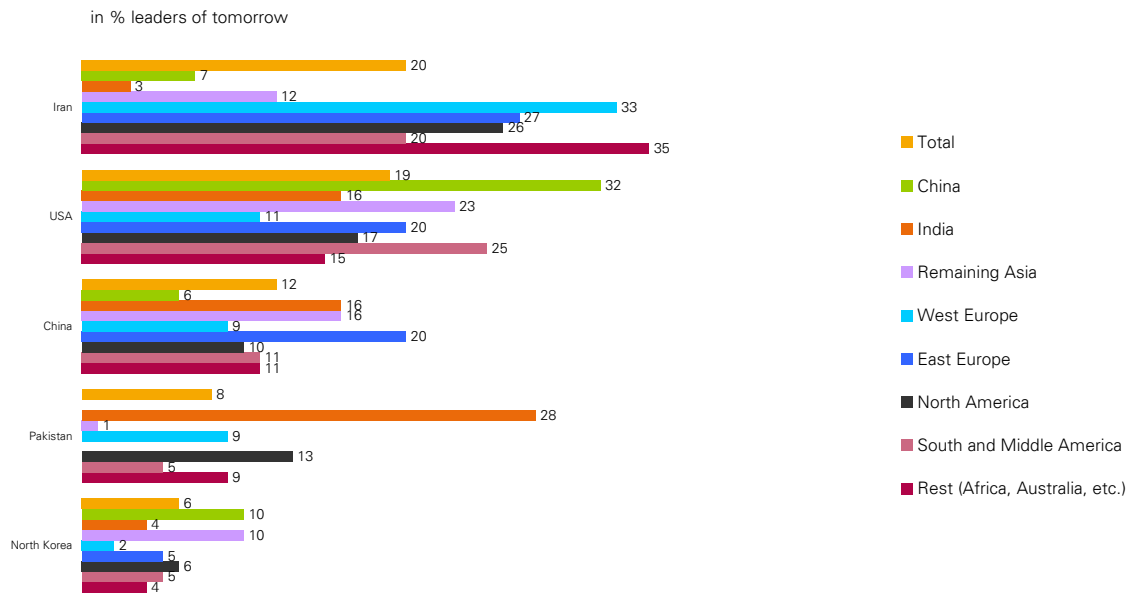
When it comes to countries threatening world peace, nationality continues to be important. Leaders from western countries largely see Iran as the biggest threat, while the USA is seen as the biggest threat by the other countries, and

specifically for China. In the Global Perspective Barometer, the USA and Iran share the dubious honour of being perceived as the greatest threat to world peace. They are followed by China, Pakistan (which is seen most as a threat by the Indian Leaders) and North Korea ahead of Israel, the EU, Afghanistan, Russia and India.

Grafik 6

## Emerging risks (1)

"Which of the following world powers is currently the single-most largest threat to world peace and prosperity?"



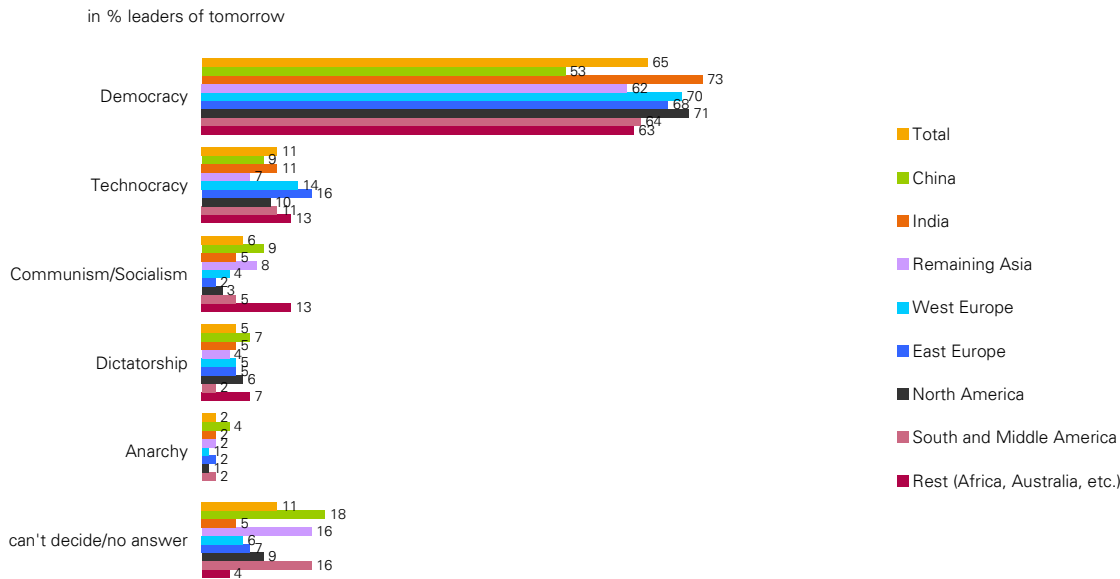
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Although there has been a great deal of debate in recent years as to which form of government provides the greatest economic advancement, there is little doubt among the Leaders as to which form of government is best for overcoming social and political risks. Democracy is way out in front in every country.

Grafik 7

## Managing risk

"Rate the following forms of rule regarding to their ability to manage societal and political risks. Which of the following forms of rule is best suited to manage societal and political risks?"



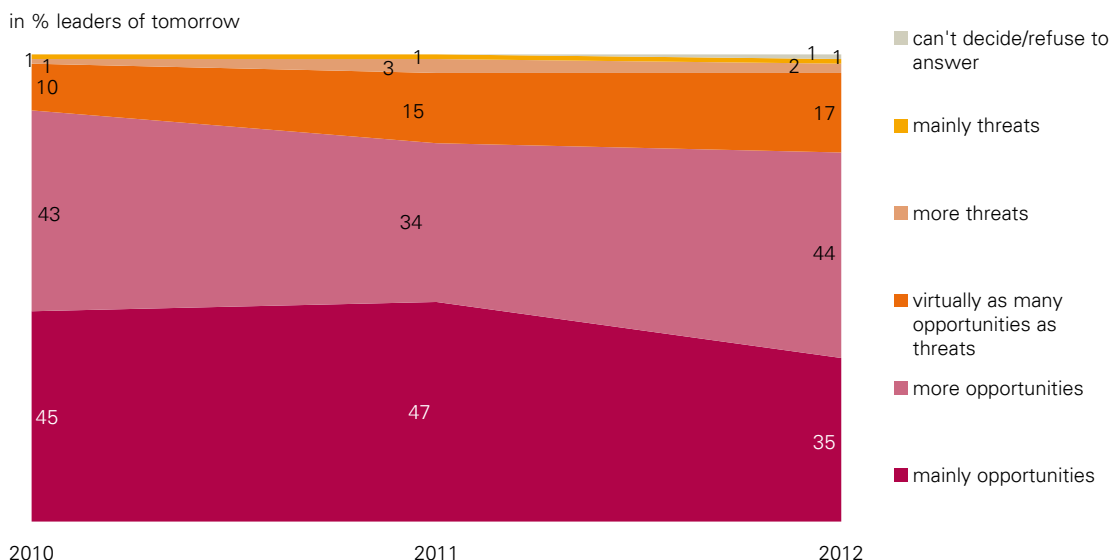
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It may be the perceived threats as well as the crises which make the Leaders of Tomorrow surveyed in 2012 more sceptical about globalisation than the groups in the previous two years. However, there is still a clear majority who see opportunities for themselves in globalisation.

Grafik 8

## Trend globalization concerning individuals

"Do you think that the processes of globalization as they currently unfold, on balance bring more opportunities or more threats for future development? For you personally, globalization brings...."



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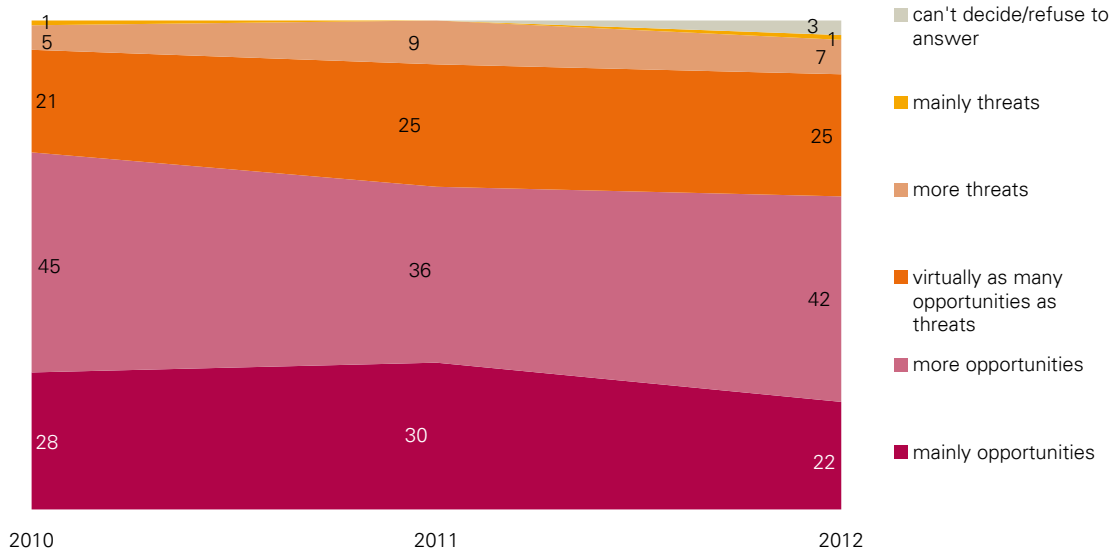
The consequences of globalisation for their own country are viewed as slightly more critical. Only 22 % believe there are considerably more opportunities than risks.



## Trend globalization concerning country

"Do you think that the processes of globalization as they currently unfold, on balance bring more opportunities or more threats for future development? For the country you are currently studying, globalization brings...."

in % leaders of tomorrow

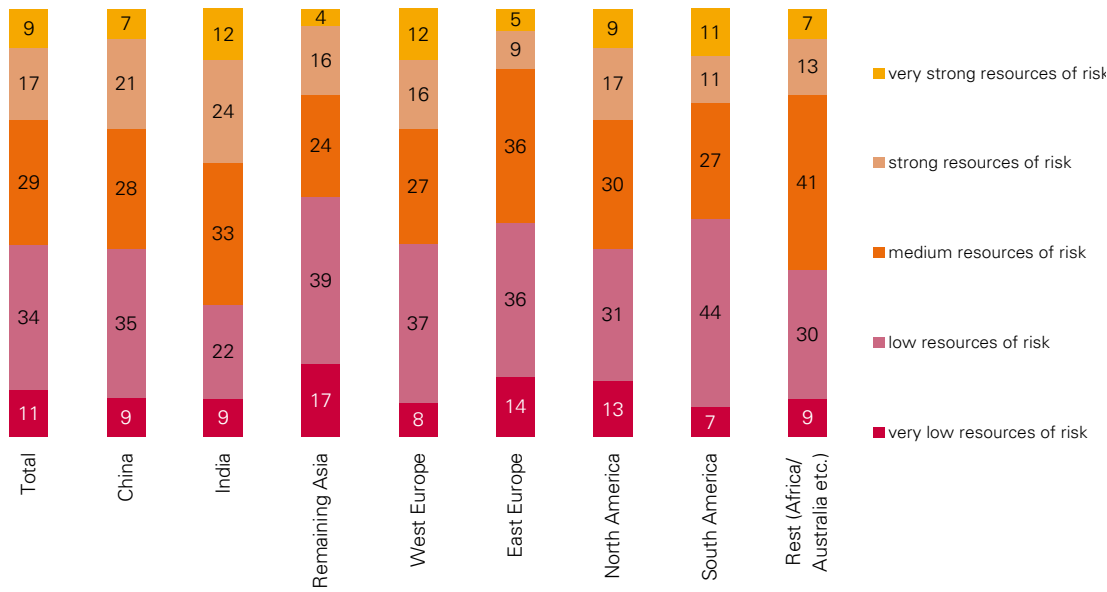


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We have put together an index on risk resources based on confidence in social players, assessment of the economic situation, the pros and cons of globalisation and handling of financial risks. This is based on the assumption that someone with a great deal of confidence in the players and the (economic) future and who is prepared to take financial risks has the most risk resources. Such a person does not take risks because they are forced to, but because they really believe the risk will pay off. According to our results, just over half the respondents have at least average risk resources. It is surprising that although there are slight differences between countries, these are not significant. It is true to say that, for the Leaders, country of origin is not decisive to their level of risk resources.

## "Resources of risk"-Index

in % leaders of tomorrow

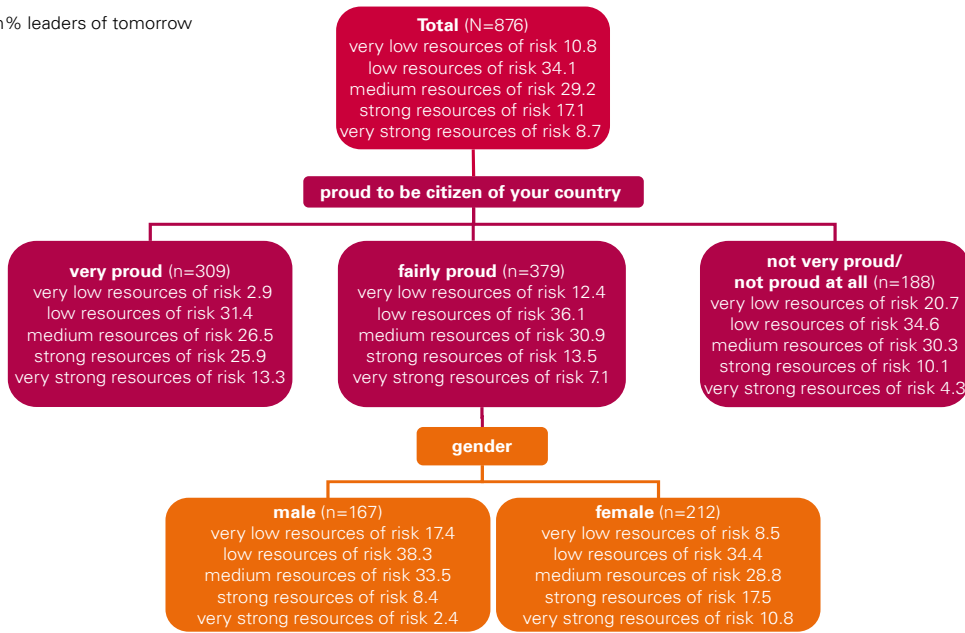


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Irrespective of their nationality, how proud a Leader is of his or her nation plays an important role in terms of risk resources. Those who are proud of their own nationality have considerably better risk resources than people who cannot identify with the situation in their country or with the principle of nationality. In the large group of people who are "quite" proud of their country, gender then becomes a factor. Women who are fairly proud of being a citizen of their country have stronger risk resources than men.

## Answer tree "resources of risk-index"

in% leaders of tomorrow



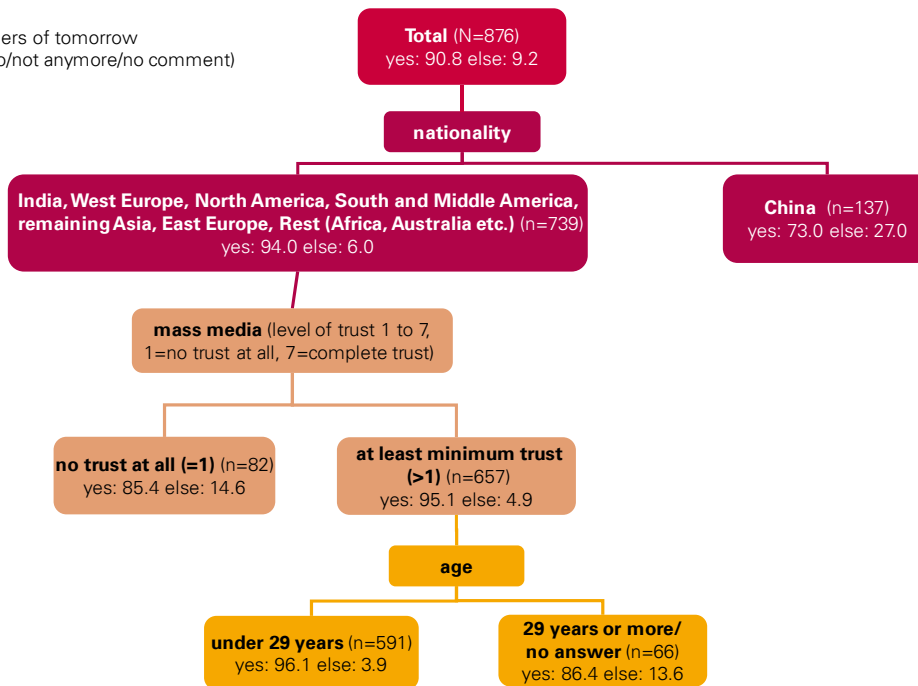
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## Communication revolution

Distribution of social media among the Leaders remains at a very high level, with 91 % (previous year: 90 %) members of Twitter/Facebook or MySpace. However, the distribution profile is most dependent on whether a respondent hails from China or from another country. In countries other than China it is dependent on whether people have a minimum level of trust in mass media. Where this trust is established, the level of distribution is as high as 95 %. The probability of membership increases to 96 % for those not from China, under 29 years old and with a minimum level of trust in mass media.

## Answer tree of social media membership

in % leaders of tomorrow  
(else = no/not anymore/no comment)



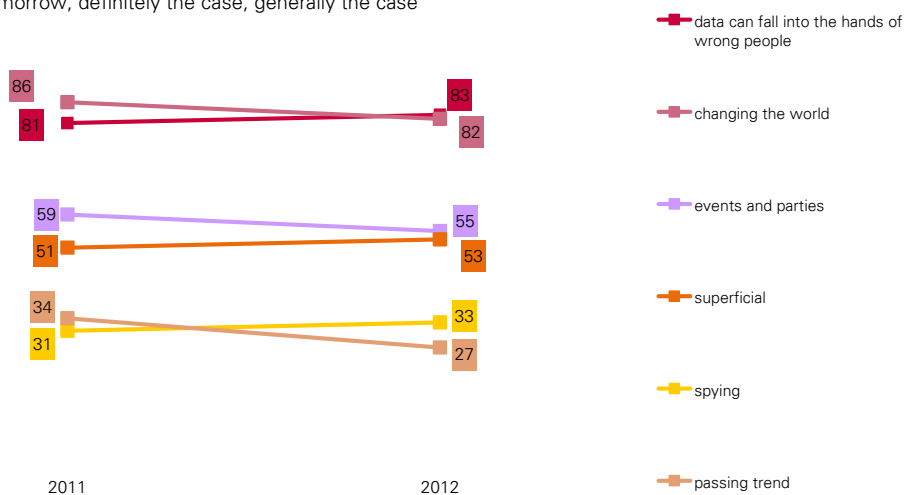
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The statements on social media were viewed similarly to last year. A huge majority of 82 % still believes social media has the potential to change the world, although the figure is slightly down. Agreement with the view that it is just a passing trend is down a long way. Only 27 % (previous year: 34 %) believe this, considerably less than in the Swiss Youth Barometer (42%).

## Trend statements about Twitter / Facebook / MySpace

"Please tell me if the following statements about Twitter / Facebook / MySpace apply to you personally or are true in your opinion."

in % leaders of tomorrow, definitely the case, generally the case



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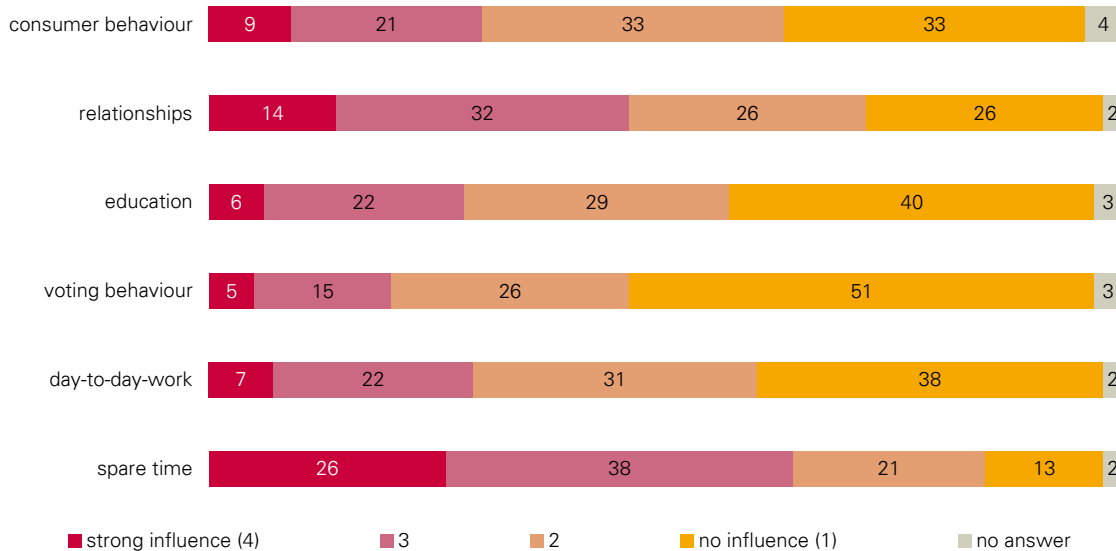
For the majority of the Leaders of Tomorrow, many areas of their lives are still untouched by social media. However, a clear majority is influenced by social media when it comes to planning free time. Almost half feel there is at least a clear influence on relationships. About 30 % of the leaders see the influence of social media in their everyday work, education or consumer behaviour. One fifth is broadly influenced by social media when deciding which way to vote. Differences between the countries are minor.

Grafik 14

## Influence of social media: Total

"To what extent do social media such as Facebook influence your decision making in the following fields?"

in % leaders of tomorrow

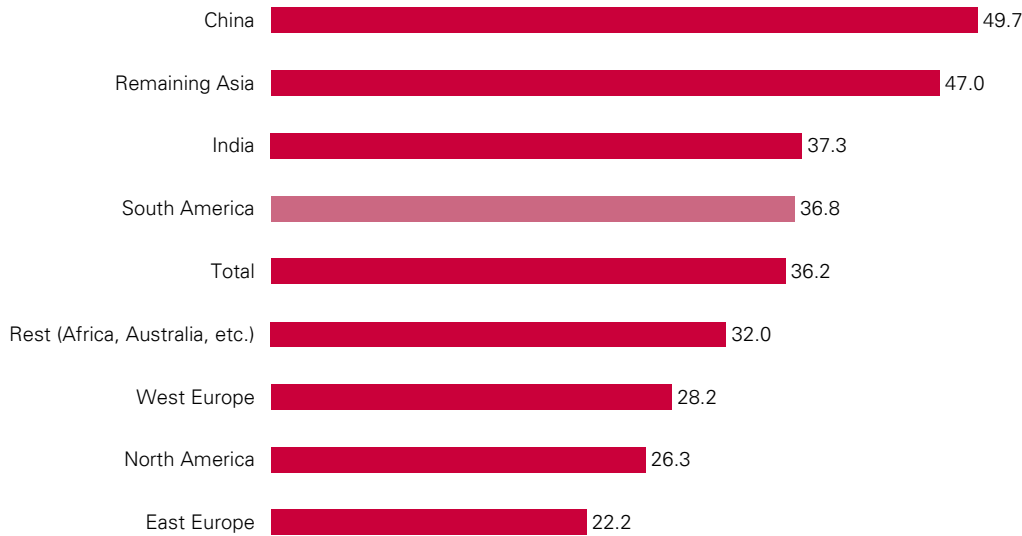


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It is striking that respondents from Eastern and Western Europe ascribe less influence to social media across the board than do other respondents. The influence scores are highest in Asia and South America.

## Index: Influence of social media on different areas of life

in % leaders of tomorrow, who on average attest a strong (4) oder rather strong (3) influence of social media on different areas of life



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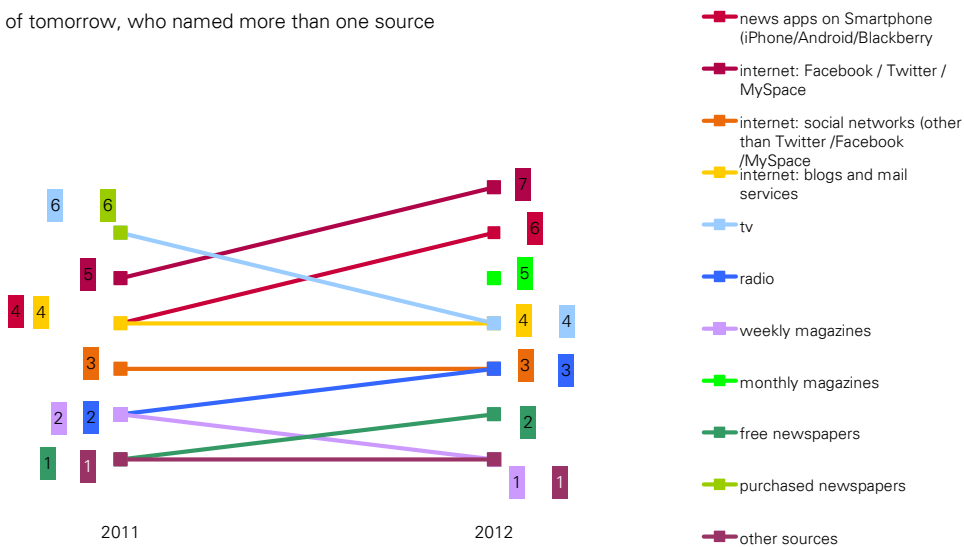
Compared to the previous year, social media has gained massively in significance for information about everyday events, with 61 % (previous year: 51 %) finding out about everyday events via social networks (Facebook, Twitter, MySpace). Other social networks are also gaining significance rapidly. For the Leaders of Tomorrow, social media is already the second most important source of information after news websites, and considerably more important than for young people in Switzerland according to the 2011 Youth Barometer. Blogs, mail services and news apps have also increased in significance for the Leaders of Tomorrow. But despite the increasing amounts of online information, it is still not drowning out other sources: reading of weekly magazines and bought newspapers has actually increased.

Online news pages remain the most important source of information (61 %) among many Leaders of Tomorrow who use multiple media to find out about daily news. Behind them, news apps and social media are gaining huge amounts of ground, while all other sources of information are named as the most important source of information by similarly low numbers as in the previous year (in the graphic, the 61 % figure for news pages is not shown).

## Trend Filter: Most important information source (focus)

"Which is the most important information source for you?"

in % leaders of tomorrow, who named more than one source

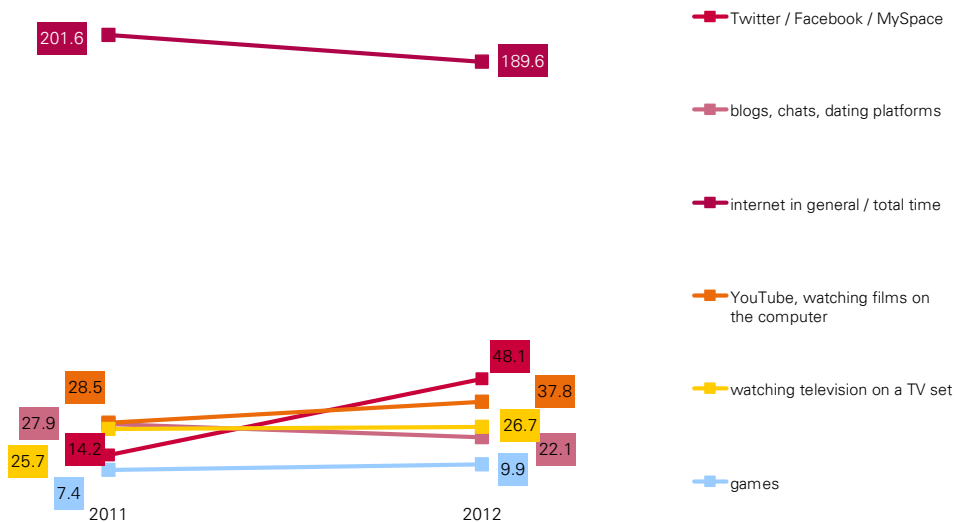


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Finally, the time spent on social media has increased, although overall online time is slightly down. However, the proportion of Leaders of Tomorrow finding out about everyday events several times a day has increased from 53 % to 57 %.

"On an average day, how long do you use the following media for personal use?"

mean values of minutes per day



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Overall, the question on trust in the media brings very split responses. 39 % tend to trust the media in their own country, while 49 % do not. However, levels of trust have increased slightly compared to the previous year. As can be expected, the level of trust varies massively among the different countries.

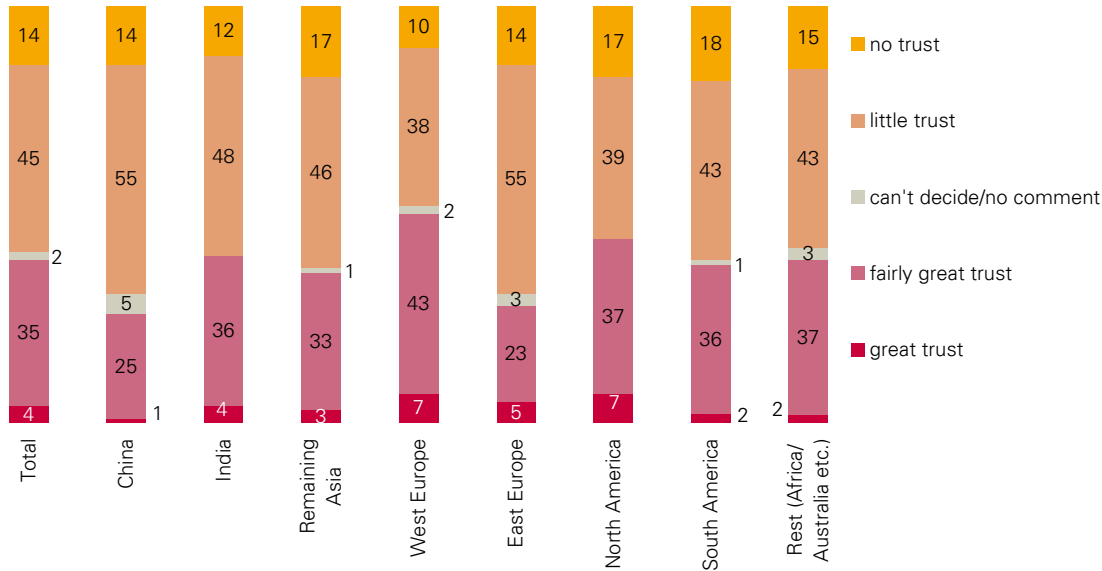
Leaders from Eastern Europe and China have very little trust in the media, while the majority of those in Western Europe are more confident.

Grafik 18

## Trust in media of one's country

"How much do you trust the media in your country?"

in % leaders of tomorrow



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## Economics and politics

Views on the economic situation were considerably better in the two previous years than they are now. The number of responses which were critical about general economic developments has more than doubled. Amazingly, the proportion who believe the economic situation in their own country is significantly better than in other countries has also increased. It was only in Eastern Europe that a clear majority felt that their own country was worse off than others.

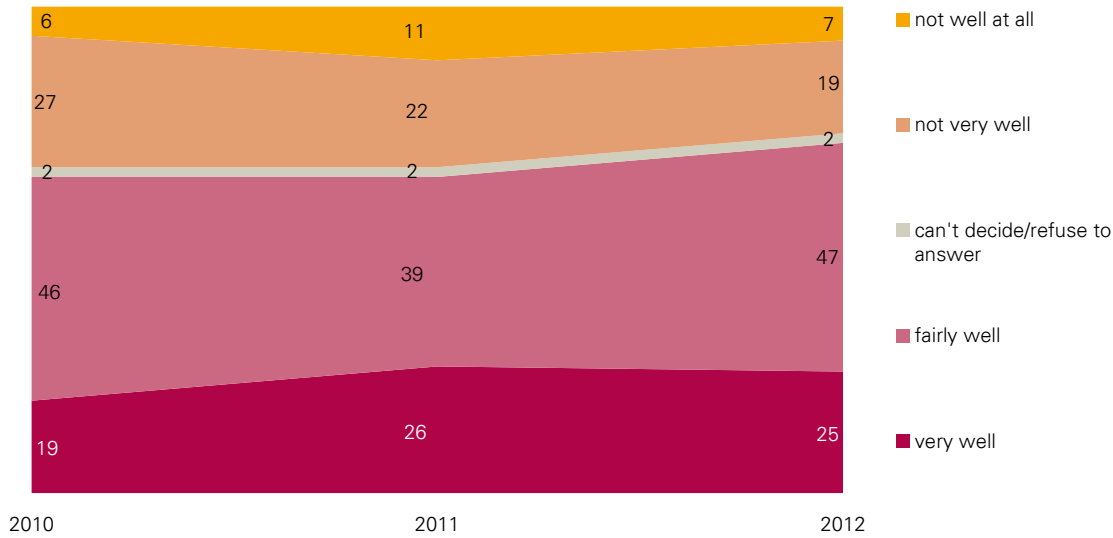


Grafik 19

## Trend my country's economy

"How is your country's economy faring on an international scale compared to other countries? Very well, fairly well, not very well, not well at all?"

in % leaders of tomorrow



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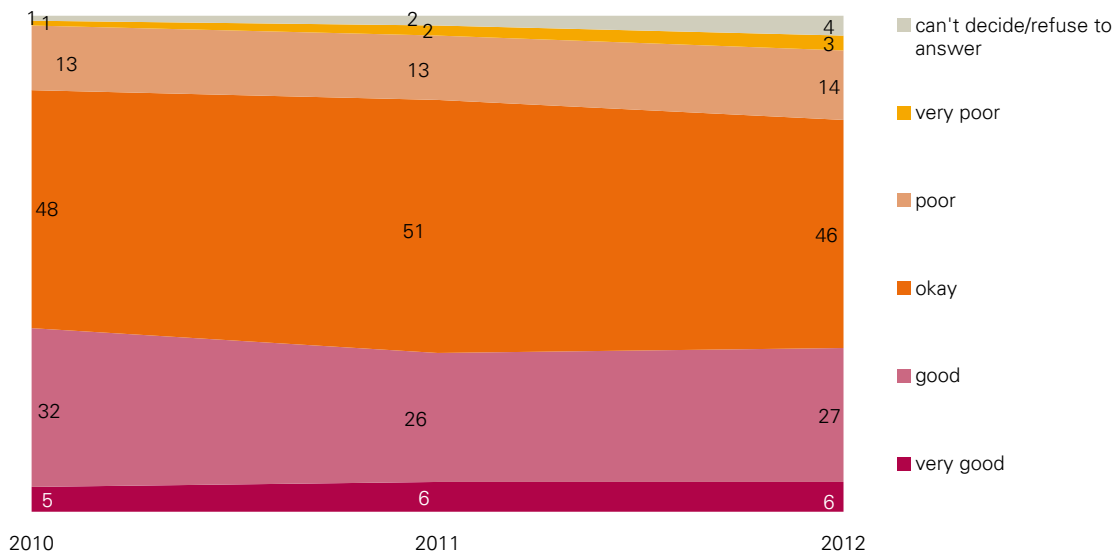
Only a slightly increased proportion on last year perceived their own situation as poor or very poor. This appears to reflect developments within their own country, while views on general economic developments are barely seen as problematic.

Grafik 20

## Trend current individual financial situation

"How would you assess your current financial situation? Is it very good, good, okay, poor, very poor?"

in % leaders of tomorrow



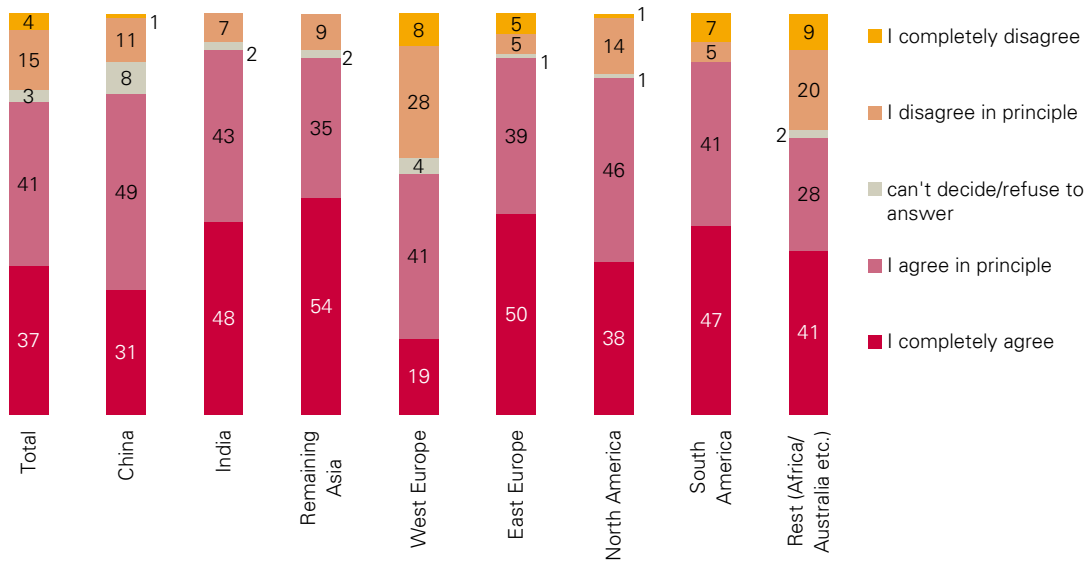
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When it comes to the political questions, there is a greater sense of disillusionment than in the previous year. A clear majority wants fundamental reform, with this desire very strongly expressed in India, Asia as a whole, Eastern Europe and South America.

## Need of fundamental reform

"Please state to what extent you agree with this statement: The political system in my country is in need of fundamental reform."

in % leaders of tomorrow



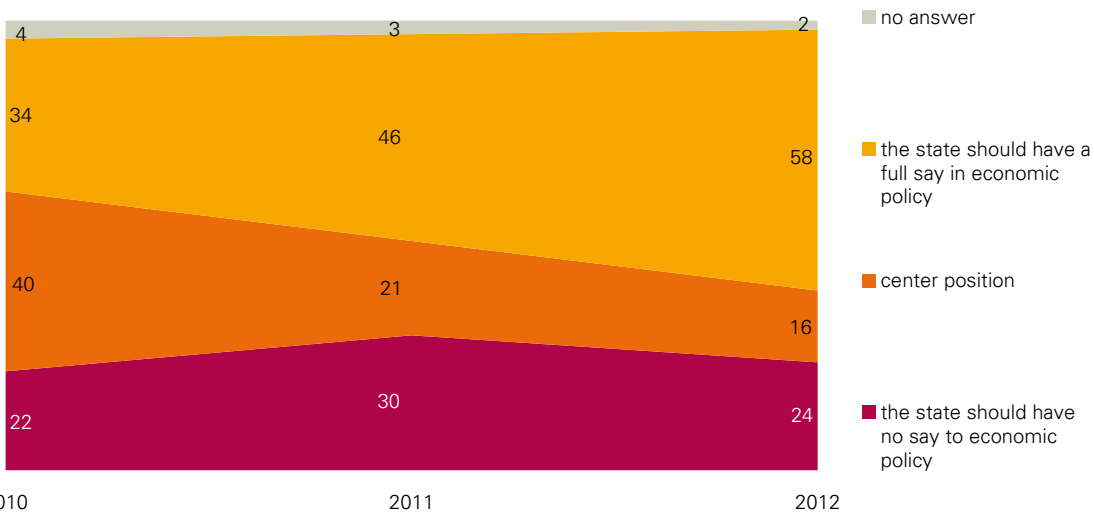
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Views on the role of the state in economic policy have changed compared to the Leaders survey in 2010. For the first time, the majority believes that the state should have full control over economic policy. It is only in Western Europe that only a relative majority of 47 % are in favour of this.

## Trend the role of the state in economic policy

"Throughout the course of history, people have attempted to regulate industry, and control and organize economic systems in vastly different ways. The role of the state in these processes has also varied. To what extent should the state have a say in economic policy? Where would you position yourself on the scale below?"

in % leaders of tomorrow



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## Initial results

Based on these results, we have formulated findings which we will use as a basis for discussion and for analysis of how the research should continue.

### Finding 1

The Leaders of Tomorrow have a certain willingness to take risks, although they view the general economic situation slightly more critically than in previous years. Generally, they have confidence in their own abilities, in the information available, in the economy and in the economic players within their own country.

### Finding 2

The communication revolution continues apace among the global thinking elite. The internet is way ahead of television or newspapers as the most important source of information among the Leaders of Tomorrow. Social media is massively on the rise and now takes on a very important position in terms of other aspects of life and decision-making.

### Finding 3

The Leaders of Tomorrow are still on the winning side when it comes to globalisation. They focus on opportunities for their own country and for themselves. But they are now more likely to observe economic deterioration and have more concerns about globalisation itself. National pride and the feeling of being in a better position than other countries have an impact on the attitudes of the young people, for example on their willingness to take risks.

We have also formulated the following working hypotheses.

### Working hypothesis 1

The euro crisis caused Western European leaders much less concern than those in Eastern Europe. The economic and political issues are combined to produce an overall assessment which is very critical.

### Working hypothesis 2

Social media will continue its triumphal march as information and consumer media, although social media does take on increasing significance in poorly formed civil societies. However, the increased significance of social media alone does not promote the formation of a more active civil society.

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