

People of all generations brace themselves for a riskier world and want their governments to do more, Swiss Re survey says

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Zurich, 27 August 2013 – People around the world say they're acutely aware of the risks they may face in the future, and are ready to shoulder the financial burden personally. This is a key result from a landmark survey commissioned by Swiss Re on the occasion of its 150 years anniversary. At the same time, respondents of the survey want their political leaders to do more to tackle a riskier world ahead. Key findings include:

- **70% of respondents are prepared to take personal responsibility for their own retirement costs**
- **84% think that climate change will be responsible for more natural disasters in the future**
- **Nearly 8 in 10 fear damage from an earthquake, flood or other natural disaster within the next 20 years**
- **75% would use renewable energy if it were made available**
- **91% want governments to do more to promote energy efficiency**
- **Hunger is a major concern, not just in the developing world**

The survey was commissioned by Swiss Re on the occasion of its 150 year anniversary and conducted by Gallup, the consulting, polling and research organisation. Gallup spoke with nearly 22 000 citizens across 19 markets on five continents, aged 15 and above. The survey was carried out in April and May 2013. Under the motto "Open minds – connecting generations", Swiss Re aims to foster a dialogue about risks and how society and generations are to tackle them in the future.

People were asked what concerns them most, including ageing, climate change, natural disasters, energy and food supplies. Almost everyone is worried about prospects for the economy. Concerns about global warming and natural disasters are also widespread.

Most respondents say they are well aware of the risks they may face in future, and are willing to take action to address them – even if this is going to hit their own pocket. But many also say that government policy does not fully address the risks faced today and by future generations.

Swiss Re's Group Chief Risk Officer David Cole urges: "These findings show that individuals are willing to take as much responsibility as their leaders. The findings are a call for better co-operation between government and the private sector. It's vital to prepare systematically



for the future and make societies more resilient. That's where Swiss Re also plays a key role with its risk expertise."

Making ends meet in retirement and covering the sickness bill

- The survey results show that, all over the world, self-reliance is seen as a key to coping with the risks of the future
- More would prefer to pay into a non-state pension plan to make ends meet during retirement (29%), retire later (19%) or cut back on spending once retired (22%) than rely on the state (13%)
- On funding long-term care for elderly relatives, roughly a third to a half across all markets and age groups say they would take out insurance to help cover the cost
- But large numbers, on average 43%, expect the government still to pay for universal healthcare; a further 35% say healthcare for the poor should be publicly funded

Climate change worries

- A majority of survey respondents feel threatened by the risk climate change poses to their community. 58% think that climate change will in future contribute to natural disasters 'to a great extent' or 'to some extent' and 26% 'to a small extent'.
- 77% fear being hit by a natural disaster in the next two decades – and many believe that the state would leave them with the bill for any damages
- But only a quarter (27%) thinks their government's disaster preparedness is 'bad' or 'very bad'

Money a limiting factor for green energy

- 9 in 10 people (91%) want to see governments doing more to ensure efficient energy use
- 3 in 4 people would use renewable energy if it were made available, but nearly half of them (48%) say they can't afford to pay more

Food waste and prices are the main culprits in food security

- 90% think that many around the world do not have access to enough food and an overwhelming majority (80%) think that more food needs to be produced to feed everybody
- 81% of respondents say that the main cause of food shortages is food waste
- 66% think that shortages in their country are due to high prices suggesting that the public and private sectors need to do more to make food available to all

David Cole adds: "One striking and encouraging outcome of this survey is the broad agreement between young and old – both on how they perceive risks and how societies can best address the risks. This



alliance between the generations is exactly what we need to create the inclusive, resilient communities of tomorrow."

On-line survey results and discussion

Swiss Re aims to generate a dialogue about the biggest risks people and societies face. Visit riskwindow.swissre.com to select and view the survey results in many different formats. Share results on openminds.swissre.com and other online discussion platforms.

Notes to editors

About the Risk perception survey

Swiss Re's [Risk perception survey](#) was carried out in April and May 2013 by The Gallup Organisation – Europe.

Results are based on telephone and online interviews with more than 1 000 people per country, aged 15 and older, conducted in 19 markets. The samples are representative of the total population aged 15 and older in most markets; in five markets, interviews were only conducted in urban areas. The 19 markets selected for this study were:

- Canada, the United States, Brazil (only urban areas) and Mexico
- France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and South Africa (only urban areas)
- Australia, China (only urban areas), Hong Kong, India (only urban areas), Indonesia (only urban areas), Japan, Singapore and South Korea

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