



Brazilian Public Opinion and the World

REPORT 2024

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Conceptual note:

This is a partial report with selected themes from opinion research results based on national samples from 1,600 to 2,000 respondents, margin of error 2.5 % (+/-). CEBRAP/IRI-USP conducted these surveys in 2011, 2014, 2016, 2018/2019, and 2023. This research stems from consecutive research projects funded by FAPESP (State of São Paulo Research Fund) since 2010. The CEBRAP/IRI-USP research group on public opinion and foreign policy is Brazil's largest repository of data on Brazilians' perceptions of international issues.

This report has been presented as a working paper to "The quest for Strategic Interdependence: What does Brazil think?" initiative held by the Brazilian Center for International Relations and the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) in April 2024.

New surveys will be conducted in 2025 and 2026.

The authors thank the technical assistance of researcher Alanna Lima dos Santos.

SELECTED RESULTS

- 1. Opinions about the USA **09**
- 2. Opinions about China **12**
- 3. Opinions about the rivalry between China and the USA **16**
- 4. Opinions about BRICS **18**
- 5. Opinions about Israel and Palestine **19**
- 6. Opinions about Brazil’s position on Ukraine **21**
- 7. Opinions about Venezuela **22**

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

1. Positive Perception of the United States

Brazilians hold generally favorable views towards the West, particularly towards Americans. This admiration is deeply ingrained and stems from a variety of factors, rooted in admiration for Western democratic values, technological advancements, and cultural influence.

2. Positive View of American Influence in Brazil

The impact of the United States on Brazil is widely perceived as positive and constructive. Brazilians likely attribute this positive view to the multifaceted nature of the influence exerted by these Western powers. Economically, US and European investments, trade partnerships, and technological transfers have played a pivotal role in driving Brazil's development and modernization efforts. Culturally, the exchange of ideas, artistic expressions, and societal norms between Brazil and the West has enriched the Brazilian cultural landscape, characterizing Brazil as an effective part of the Western world for Brazilians. Moreover, the diplomatic and historical ties between Brazil and Western nations have been characterized by cooperation and shared values, further solidifying the positive perception of US and European influence among Brazilians.

3. Ambivalence towards the Rise of China

Brazilian attitudes towards China's rise as a global power reflect a complex blend of apprehension and optimism. While some segments of society perceive China's influence as a potential threat, particularly in terms of economic competition that may affect local industries and job markets, others see it as an opportunity for mutual benefit. It is likely that concerns about China's expanding geopolitical influence and its implications for Brazil's sovereignty and regional dynamics contribute to a sense of ambivalence among Brazilians. There are some hints that the concerns about China's rise are related to the geopolitical implications rather than an intrinsic rejection of the Asian power.

4. Transactional Relationship with China

The relationship between Brazil and China is often characterized by pragmatism and transactionalism. Many Brazilians view China primarily as a key economic partner, with trade and investment forming the cornerstone of bilateral interactions. It seems that while these economic ties have yielded tangible benefits for both countries, such as infrastructure development and market access, the relationship may lack the depth of strategic alignment or shared values typically associated with traditional alliances. Consequently, for many Brazilians, Brazil-China relations should be driven by pragmatic considerations rather than deeper political or cultural affinities.

5. Non-Rivalry Perception of China

Despite occasional tensions and concerns, the majority of Brazilians do not perceive China as a direct rival to Brazil. Instead, there is a recognition of the potential for collaboration and cooperation between the two countries in various domains. Brazilians often view China as a partner with whom they can engage constructively on issues of mutual interest, such as trade, investment, and environmental sustainability.

Such perspective underscores a willingness to seek areas of convergence and partnership with China, even amid differences and competition in certain spheres.

6. Mixed Views on Chinese Influence in Brazil

Brazilian perceptions of Chinese influence in the country encompass a spectrum of perspectives, ranging from positive to negative. On one hand, Chinese investment and trade are perceived as having a significant role in driving economic growth and infrastructure development in Brazil; on the other, there is a recognition of the need for vigilance and scrutiny to ensure that it aligns with Brazil's broader interests and values.

7. Lack of Trust in Russia as a Partner

Brazilians generally do not view Russia as a reliable or trustworthy partner. It is likely that geopolitical tensions contribute to skepticism toward Moscow. Furthermore, it is possible that the lack of shared cultural or historical ties between Brazil and Russia contributes to a sense of distance and unfamiliarity, making it challenging to foster meaningful mutual understanding. In the absence of strong people-to-people links, perceptions of Russia are often shaped more by geopolitical considerations and media portrayals than by direct personal experiences.

8. Preference for Neutrality in US-China Rivalry

The majority of Brazilians favor a stance of neutrality in the rivalry between the United States and China. Rather than aligning with one side or the other, there is a preference for maintaining diplomatic and economic relations with both countries while safeguarding Brazil's own interests and sovereignty.

9. Perception of US-China Rivalry as a Threat to the International System

Brazilians often view the rivalry between the United States and China with deep concern, seeing it as a significant threat to the stability and balance of the international system. It is possible that such perception stems from the potential for escalating tensions between the world's two largest economies to destabilize global trade, security arrangements, and diplomatic relations. Many Brazilians fear that the intensification of this rivalry could lead to widespread economic disruptions, geopolitical conflicts, and a breakdown in international cooperation, with far-reaching consequences for Brazil and the rest of the world.

10. Neutral Perception of US-China Rivalry Implications for Brazil

Brazilians tend to adopt a nuanced and pragmatic stance towards the rivalry between the United States and China. While some Brazilians perceive this rivalry as a direct threat to Brazil's interests, particularly in terms of economic competition and geopolitical tensions, others see it as an opportunity for Brazil to strategically position itself and extract gains from the competition between the two global powers. This ambivalence reflects a recognition of the complex and multifaceted nature of the US-China relationship and its implications for Brazil's own diplomatic, economic, and security interests.

11. Divergent Views on BRICS

Brazilian attitudes towards the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) coalition are characterized by a significant degree of division. On one hand, a segment of the population regards BRICS as a crucial alliance that enhances Brazil's global standing and amplifies its influence on the world stage. On the other hand, there is a substantial contingent of Brazilians who harbor reservations about BRICS, viewing it as an uncomfortable coalition with authoritarian regimes, particularly Russia and China. Furthermore, a significant portion of the Brazilian population, approximately one-third, remains unaware of what BRICS actually entails.

12. Divergent Views on Brazil's position on Ukraine

The War in Ukraine has sparked significant debate and division within Brazilian society regarding the country's stance on the conflict. Approximately one-third of Brazilians align with President Lula's position. However, the remaining two-thirds of the population are divided between those who perceive Brazil as being too closely aligned with Russia and those who view the nation as overly supportive of Ukraine. This polarization underscores a lack of consensus regarding Brazil's appropriate role in the conflict. While some argue for a more neutral stance to preserve diplomatic relations and stability, others advocate for a more assertive position whether pro-Russia or pro-Ukraine. As Brazil navigates its role in the War in Ukraine, it faces the challenge of reconciling these divergent domestic perspectives while upholding its principles and obligations within the international community.

13. Negative Perceptions of Venezuela

Brazilians overwhelmingly hold negative perceptions of Venezuela, largely viewing it as an authoritarian regime under the leadership of President Maduro. Approximately 90% of Brazilians harbor critical views of Maduro's government, perceiving it as oppressive and undemocratic. It is likely that such widespread sentiment reflects deep concerns about the erosion of democratic institutions, human rights violations, and economic instability in Venezuela.

14. Diverse Perceptions on Brazil's Approach to Venezuela

Brazilian attitudes towards the country's stance on Venezuela vary significantly, highlighting a spectrum of opinions within society. Roughly, one-third of Brazilians believe that Brazil's engagement with Venezuela is too close for comfort, expressing apprehension about potential entanglements with a regime widely condemned for its authoritarian practices. Conversely, around 20% of Brazilians support the government's current approach, advocating for diplomatic engagement or pragmatic cooperation with Venezuela. Interestingly, only 9% of Brazilians feel that the government is overly supportive of the Venezuelan opposition, suggesting a nuanced understanding of the complexities surrounding Brazil's role in the Venezuelan crisis.

This divergence of views underscores the challenges faced by policymakers in navigating Brazil's foreign policy towards Venezuela, balancing considerations of regional stability, human rights concerns, and geopolitical interests.

15. Divergent Views on Brazil's position on Israel-Palestine conflict

The Israel-Palestine conflict has elicited divergent perspectives within Brazilian society. Approximately 40% of Brazilians advocate for a policy of neutrality, urging the country to step back and distance itself from direct involvement in the conflict. In contrast, around 30% of Brazilians support a proactive stance in favor of the two-state solution, advocating for Brazil to play a constructive role in promoting peace and stability in the region. However, there are also significant minorities within Brazilian society with more specific preferences. Roughly, 13% of Brazilians lean towards supporting Israel exclusively, prioritizing strategic alliances and shared values, while only 1% express a preference for Palestine alone, often emphasizing solidarity with the Palestinian cause and human rights concerns. These varied perspectives underscore the deep divisions within Brazilian society regarding the country's stance on the Israel-Palestine conflict.

16. Rejection of Brazil's position on the Gaza War

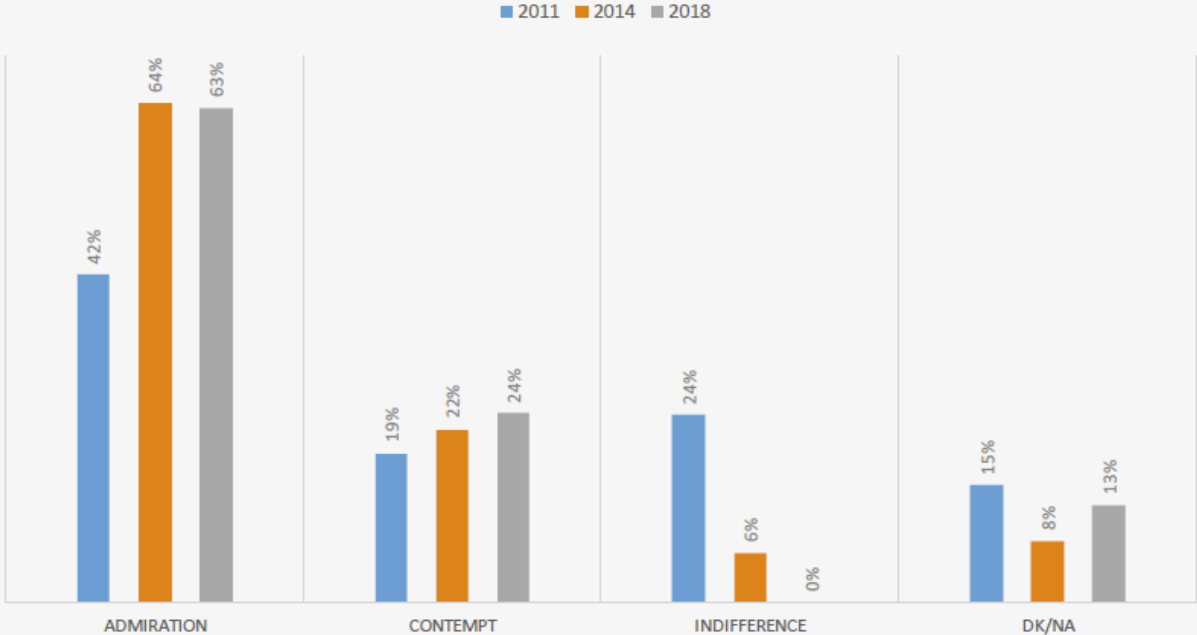
The majority of Brazilian reject Brazil's position in the Gaza War. Around 30% believe Brazil was too close to Hamas and 10% think Brazil was too close to Israel. Around 30% supported the country's position. These results show how complex is the perception about the conflict within Brazil's society and how difficult is for any government to find a position about the conflict that is supported by any majority.



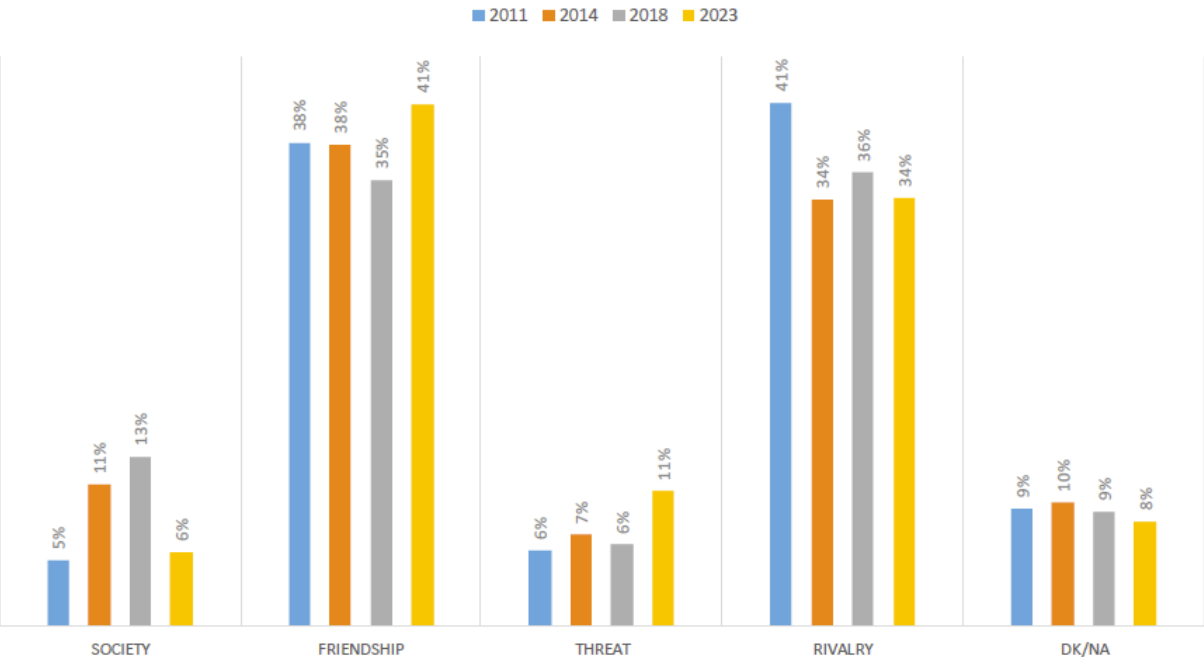
1. Opinions about the United States:



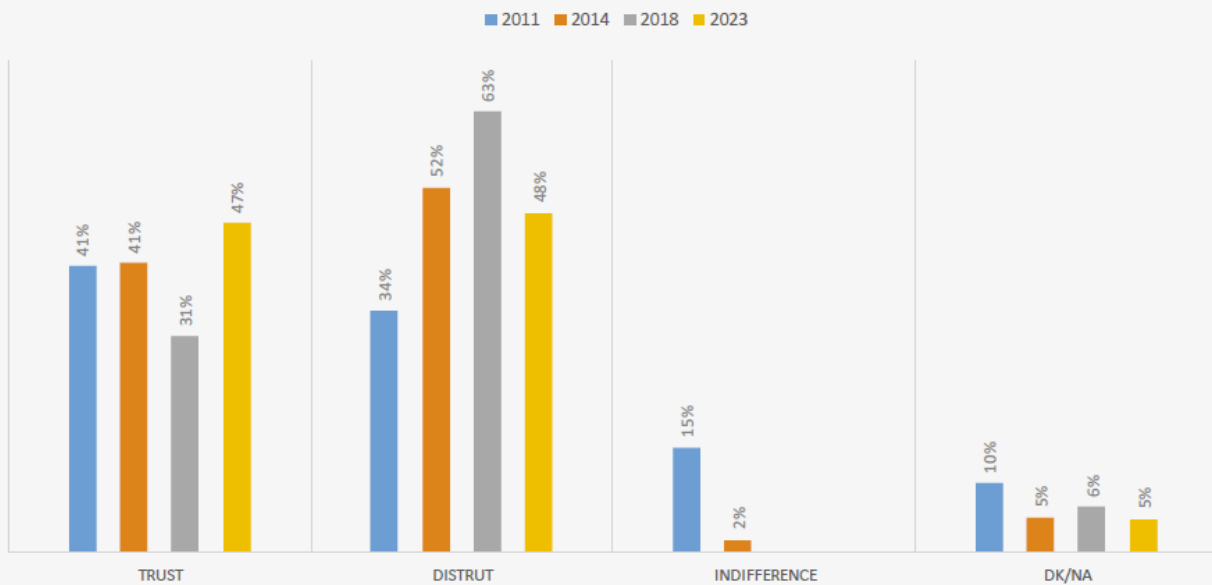
Of the following words, which one best describes your feelings toward the United States?



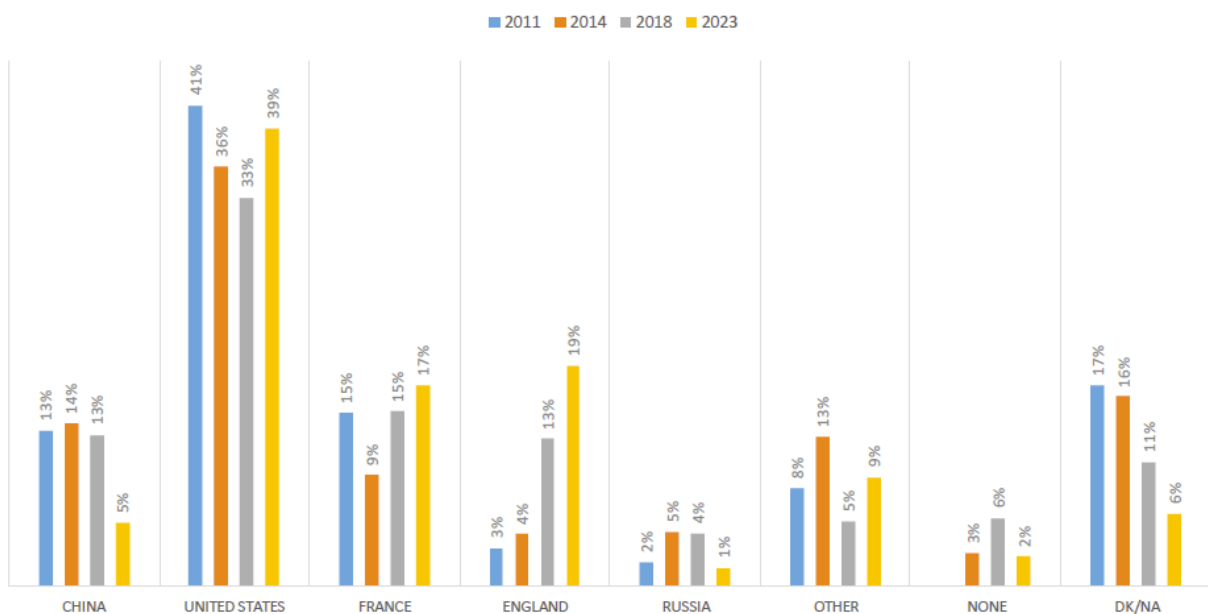
How would you describe the relationship between Brazil and the United States?



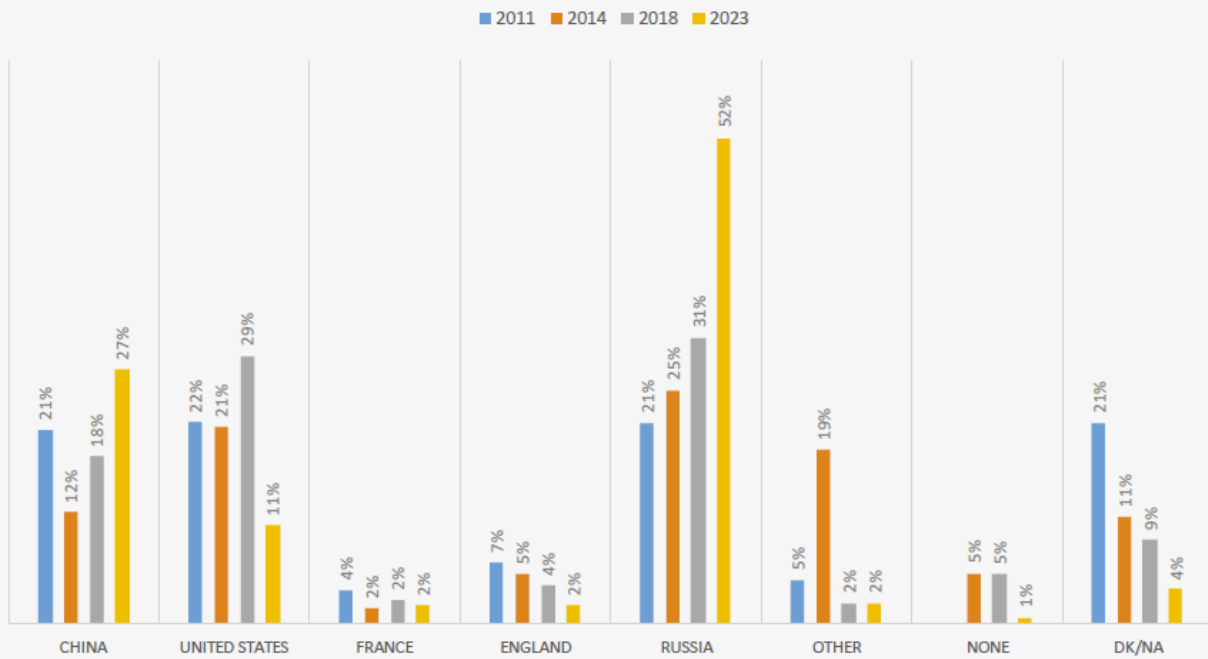
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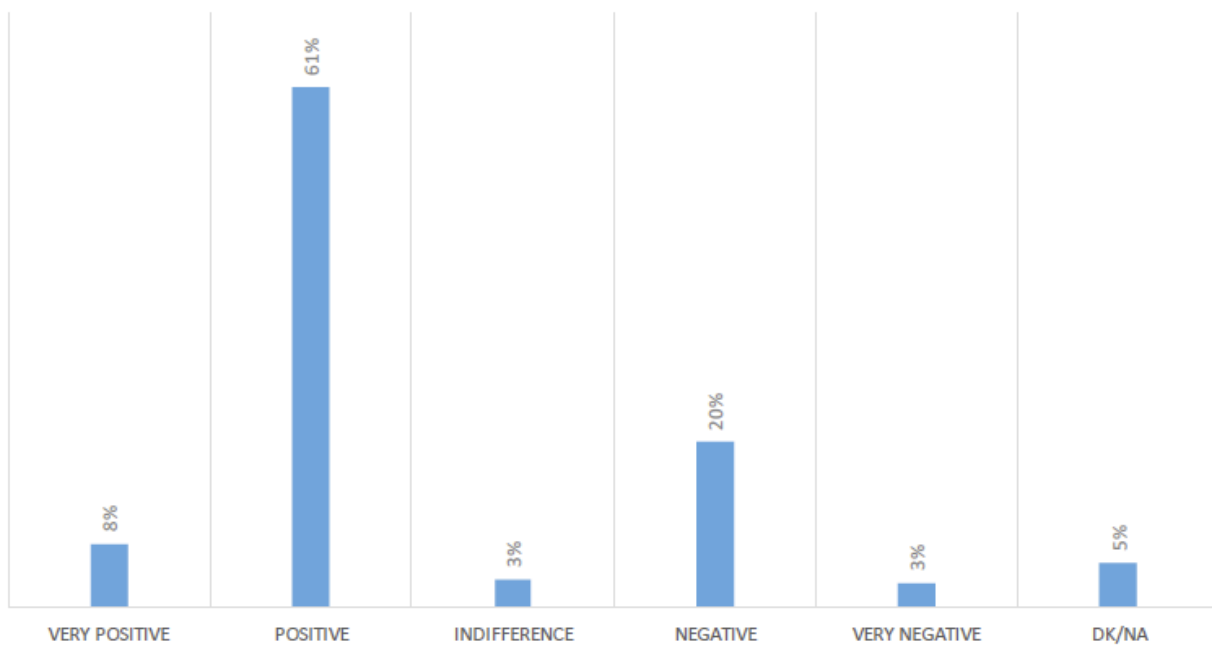
Which of the following countries inspires you with the greatest confidence in maintaining peace in the world?



Which of the following countries inspires you the least confidence in maintaining peace in the world?



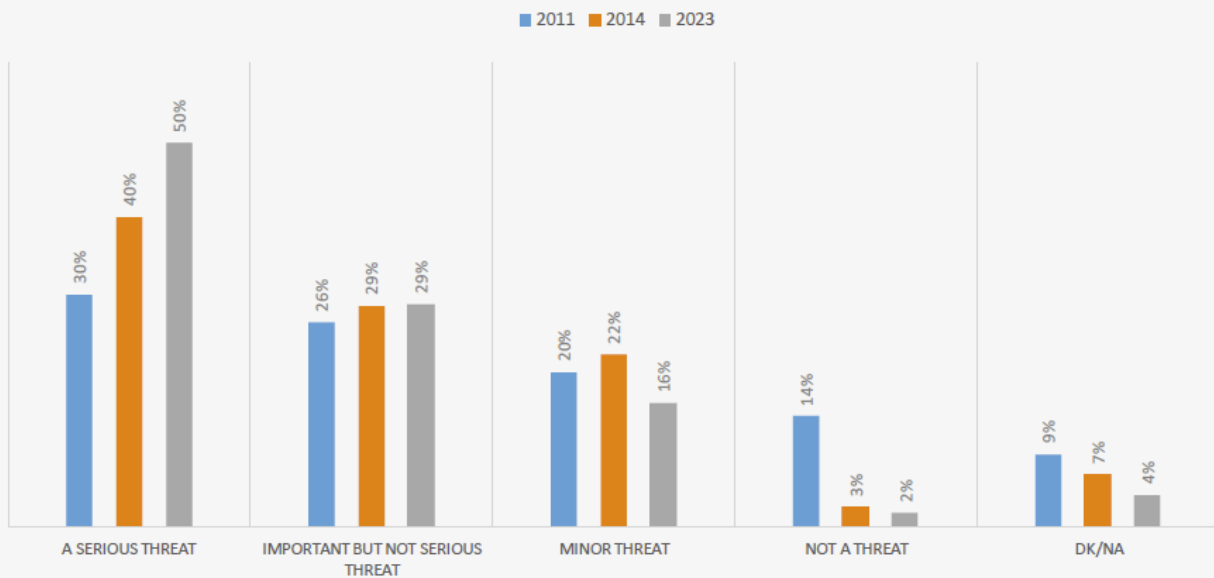
In general terms, how do you describe the United States' influence in Brazil? (2023)



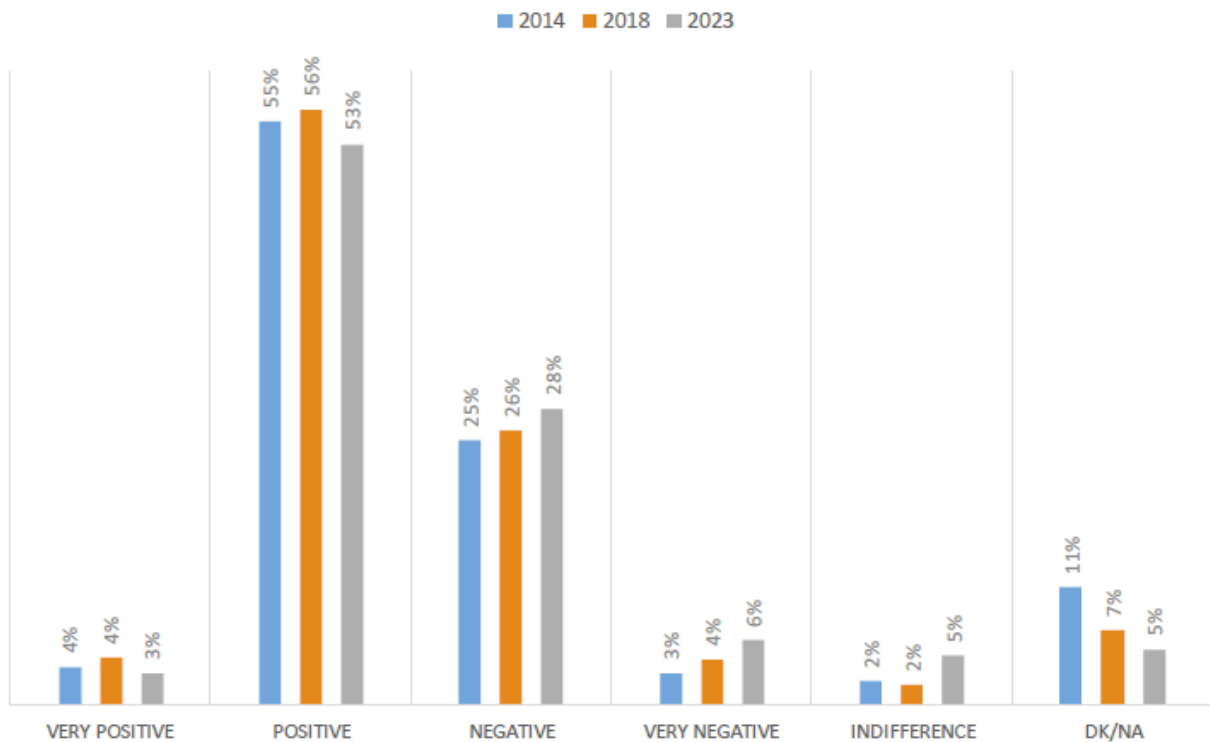
2. Opinions about China:



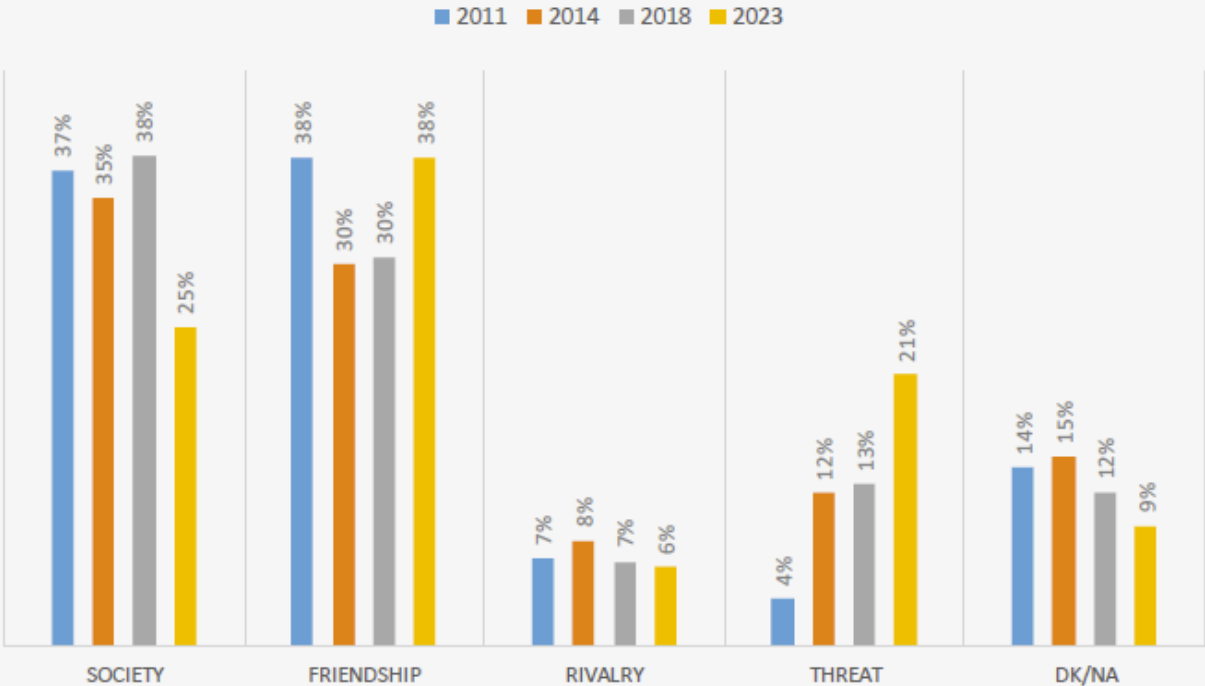
Do you consider China's emergence as a global power to be:



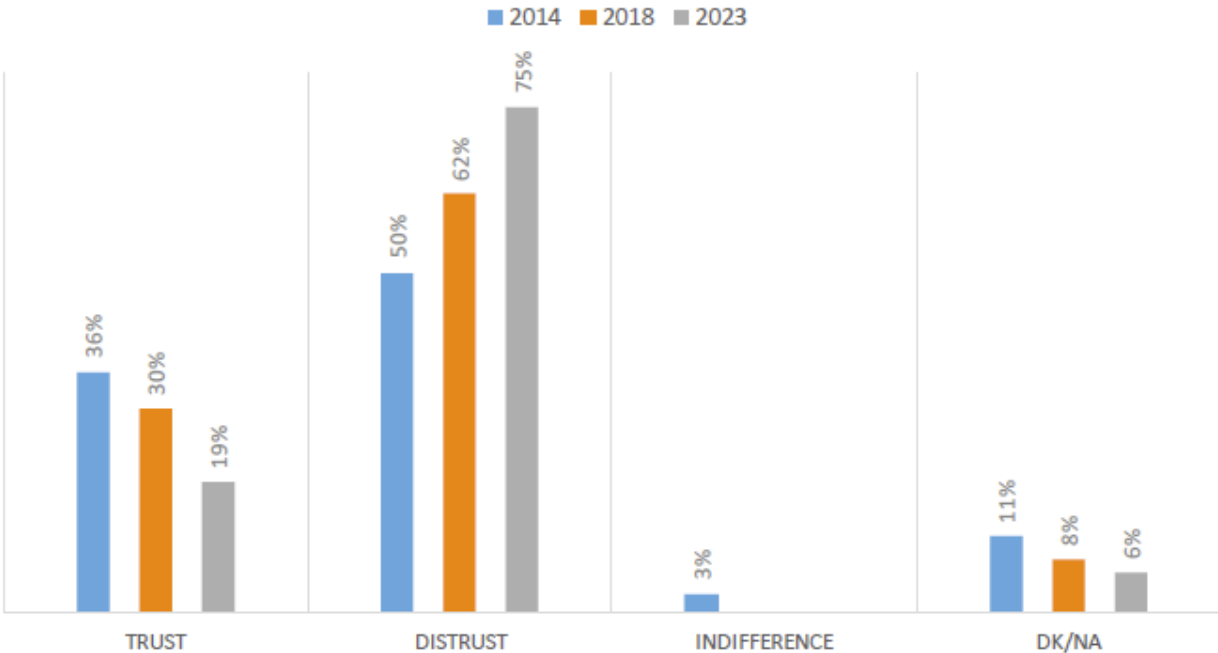
What is your opinion about the Chinese who reside in Brazil?



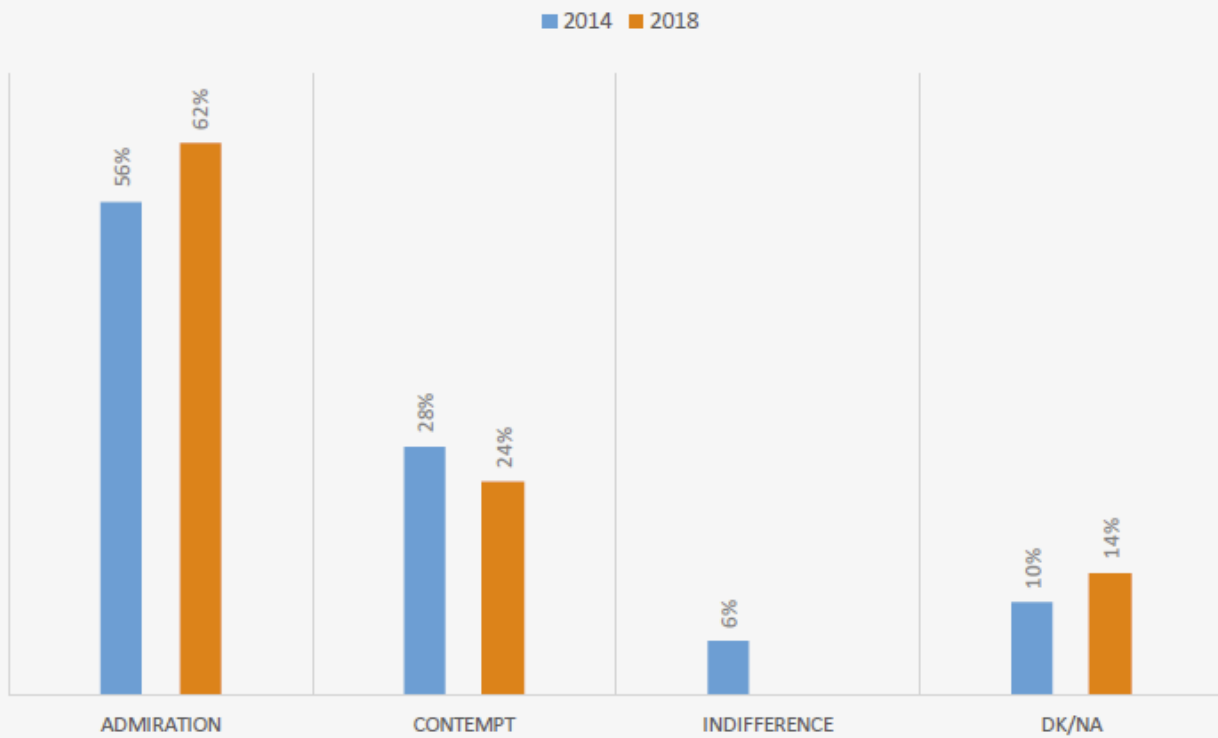
Would you describe Brazil's relationship with China as one of friendship, partnership or rivalry?



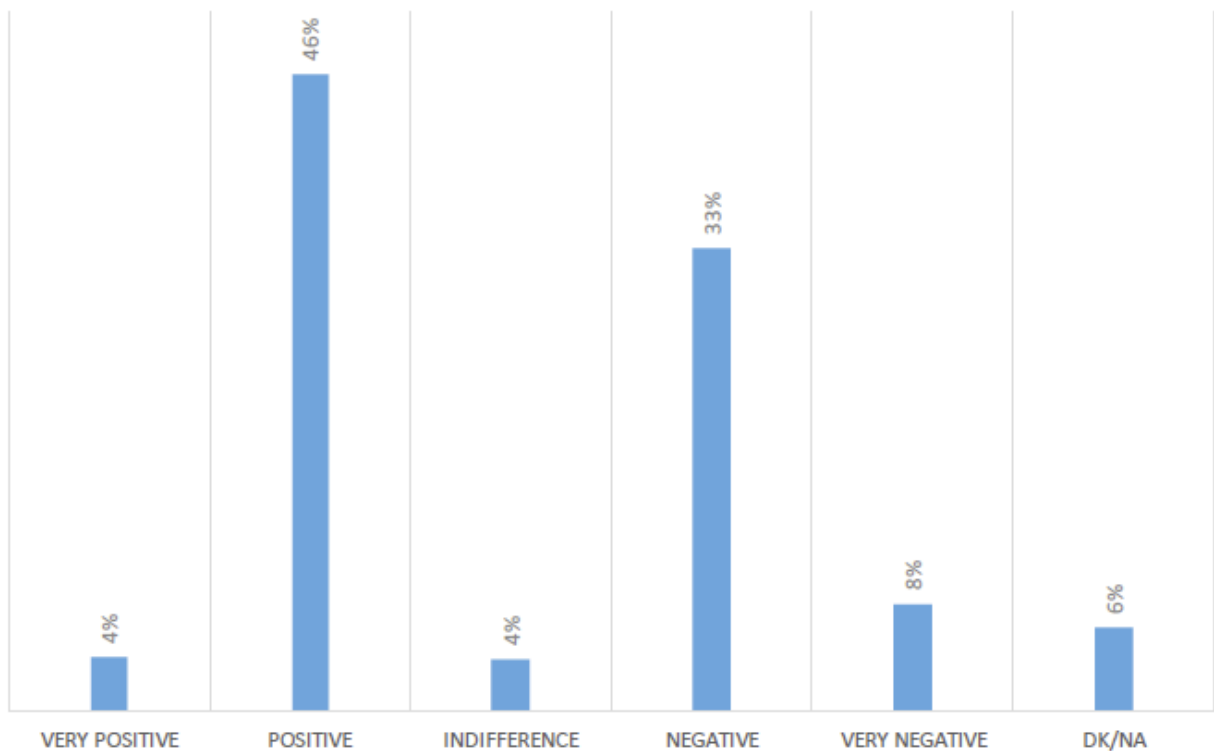
Of the following words, which one best describes your feelings toward China?



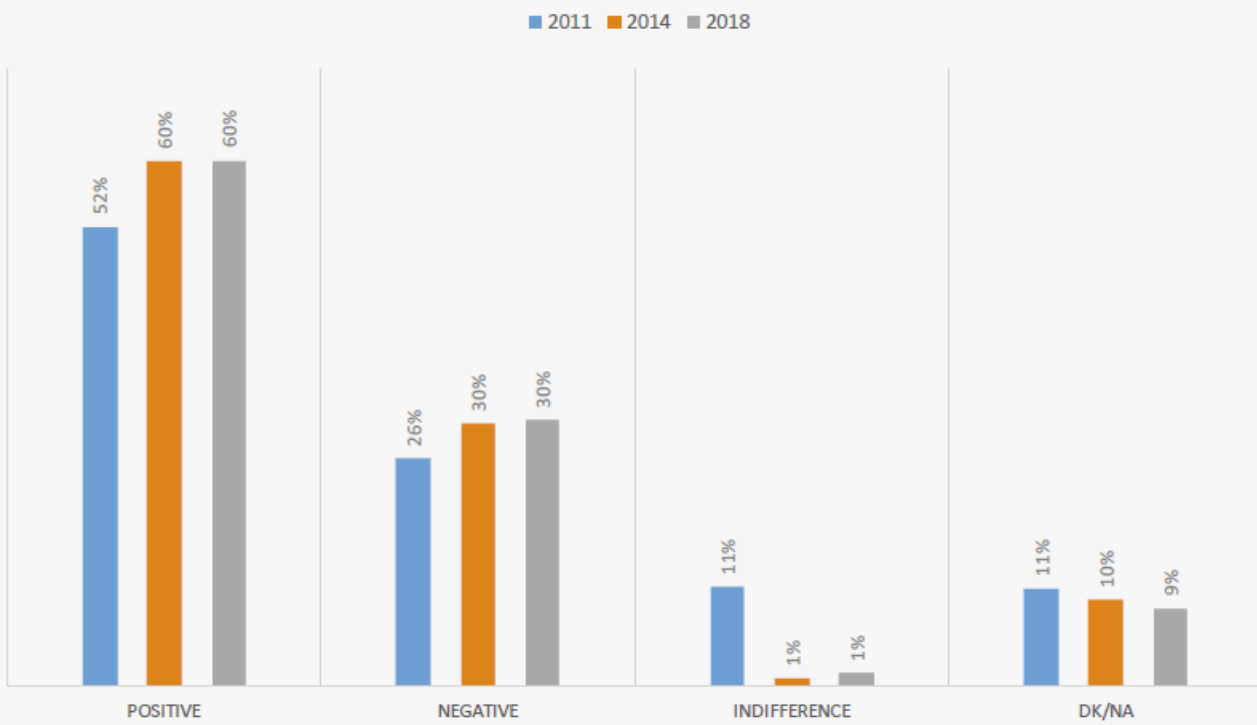
Of the following words, which best describes your feelings toward China?



In general terms, how do you describe China's influence in Brazil? (2023)

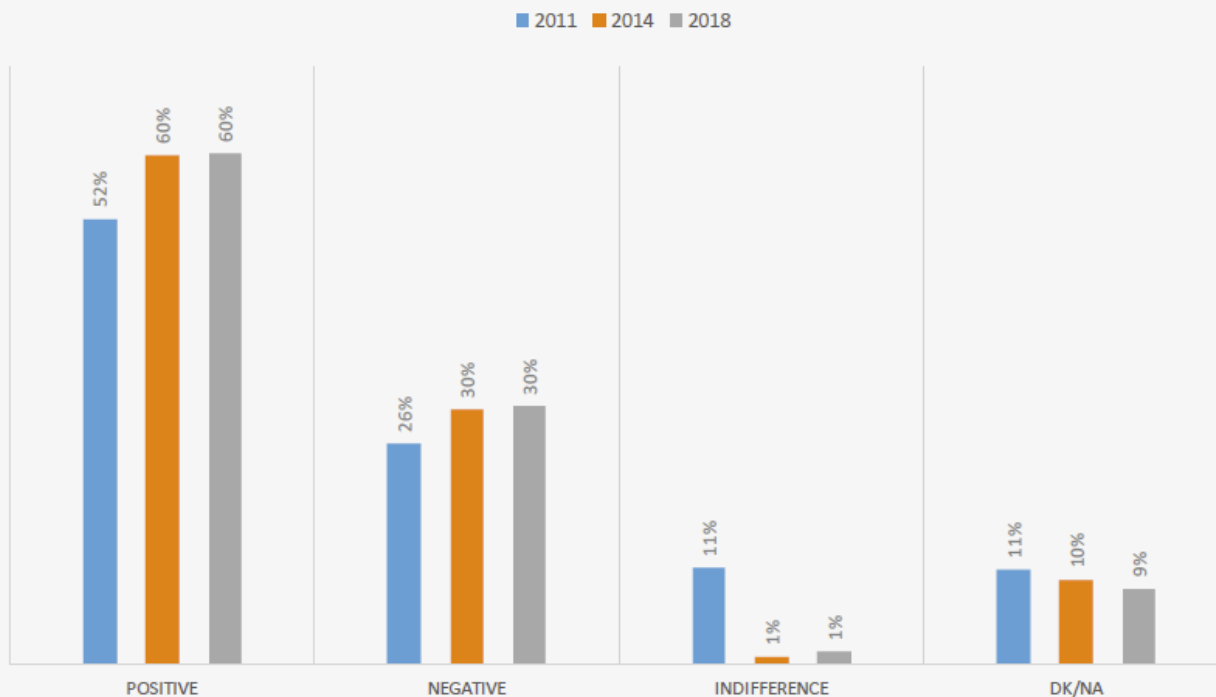


In your opinion, if China's economy grew to be as big as the United States', do you think this would be positive or negative for the world?

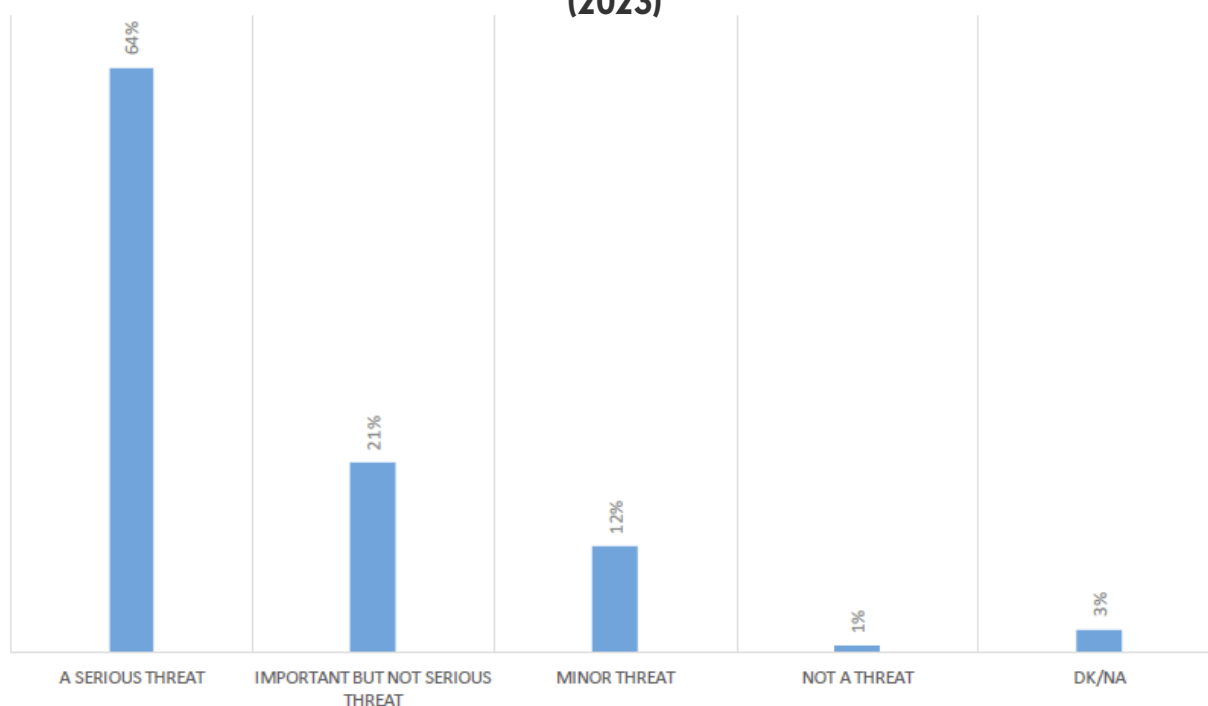


3. Opinions about the rivalry between China and the United States

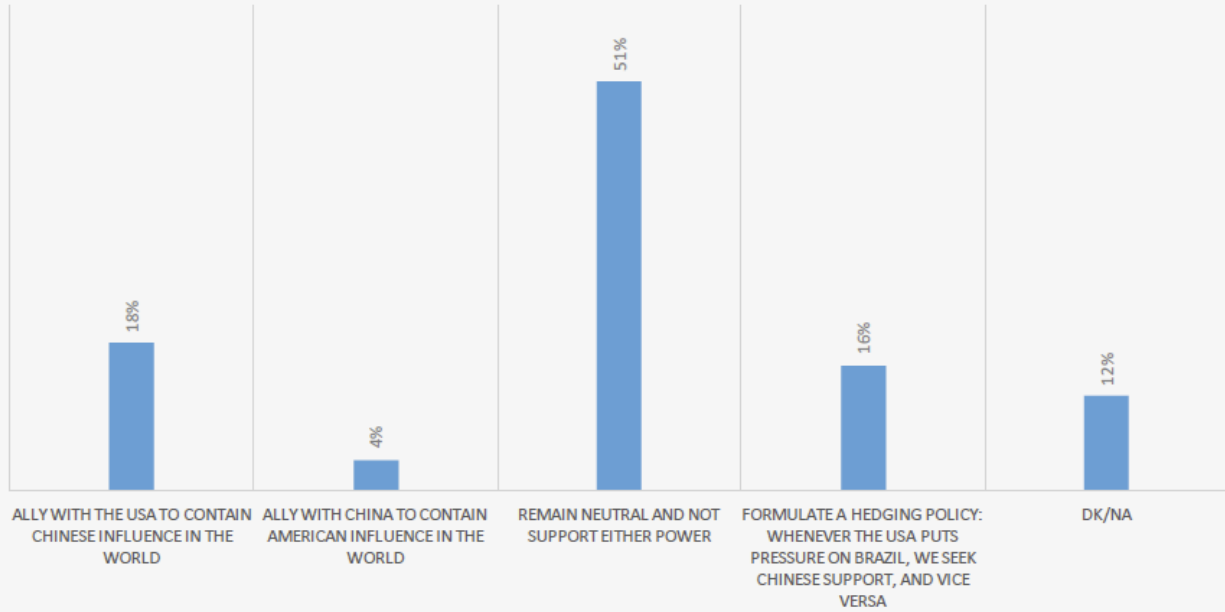
In your opinion, if China's economy grew to be as big as the United States', do you think this would be positive or negative for the world?



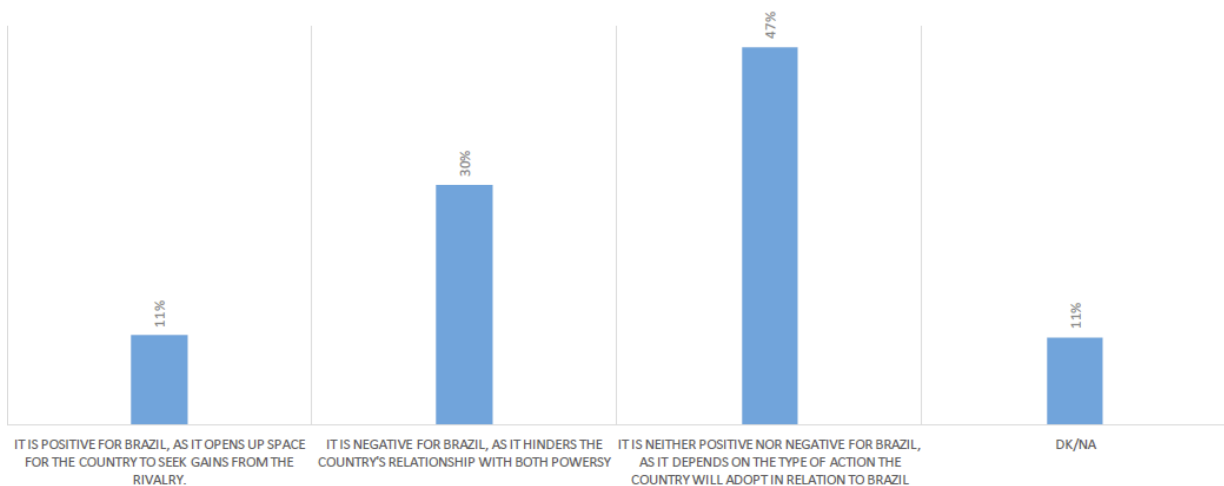
Do you consider the rivalry between China and the United States to be:
(2023)



The growing geopolitical rivalry between the US and China affects Brazilian foreign policy in countless ways. Which of the following proposals do you think is best for Brazil? (2023)

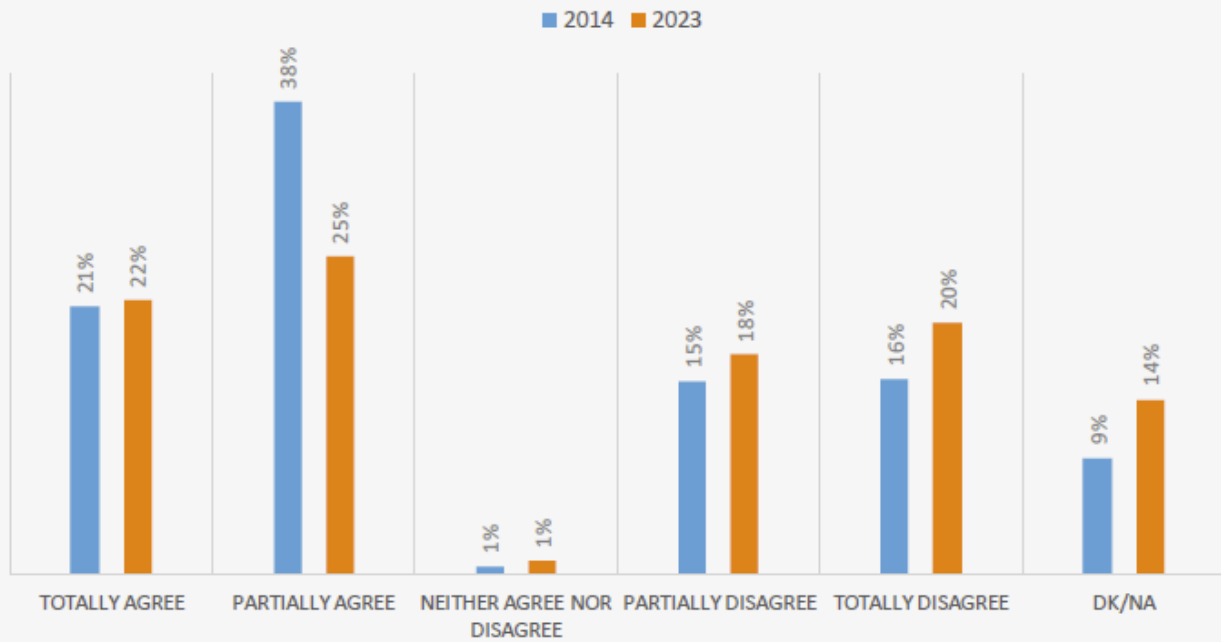


In the context of the growing geopolitical rivalry between the US and China, do you think that, in relation to Brazil, the rivalry between the US and China is: (2023)

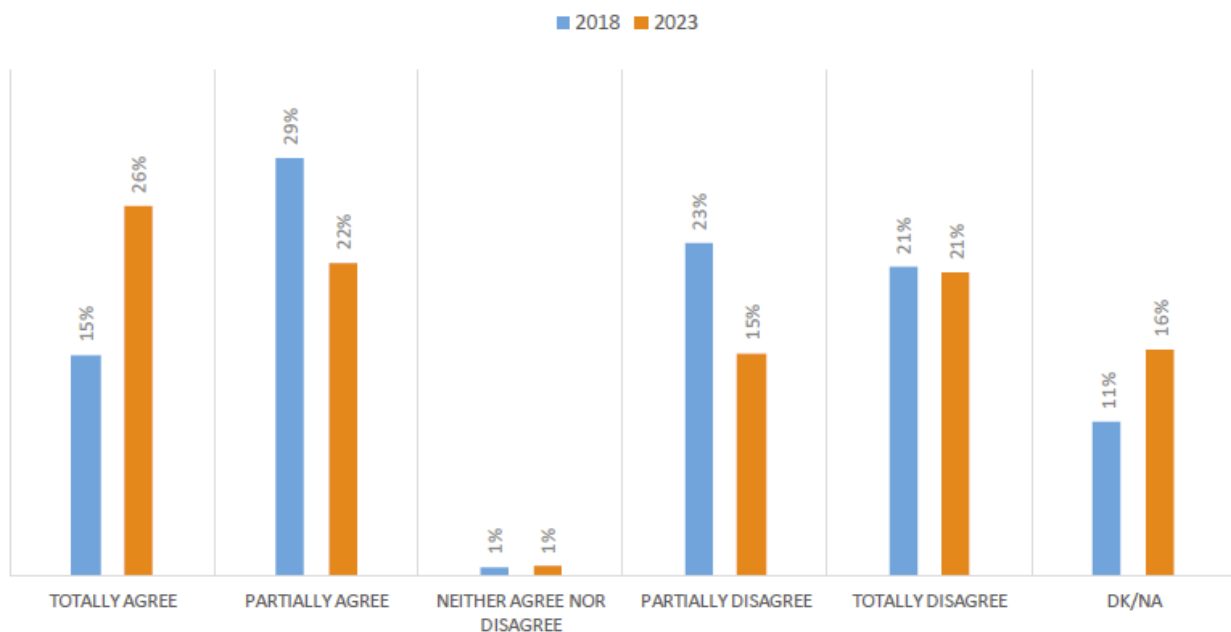


4. Opinions about BRICS:

I'm going to read a sentence, and I'd like to know if you agree or disagree: *The BRICS are a force capable of balancing global power in the face of traditional powers such as the USA, Germany, and Japan*

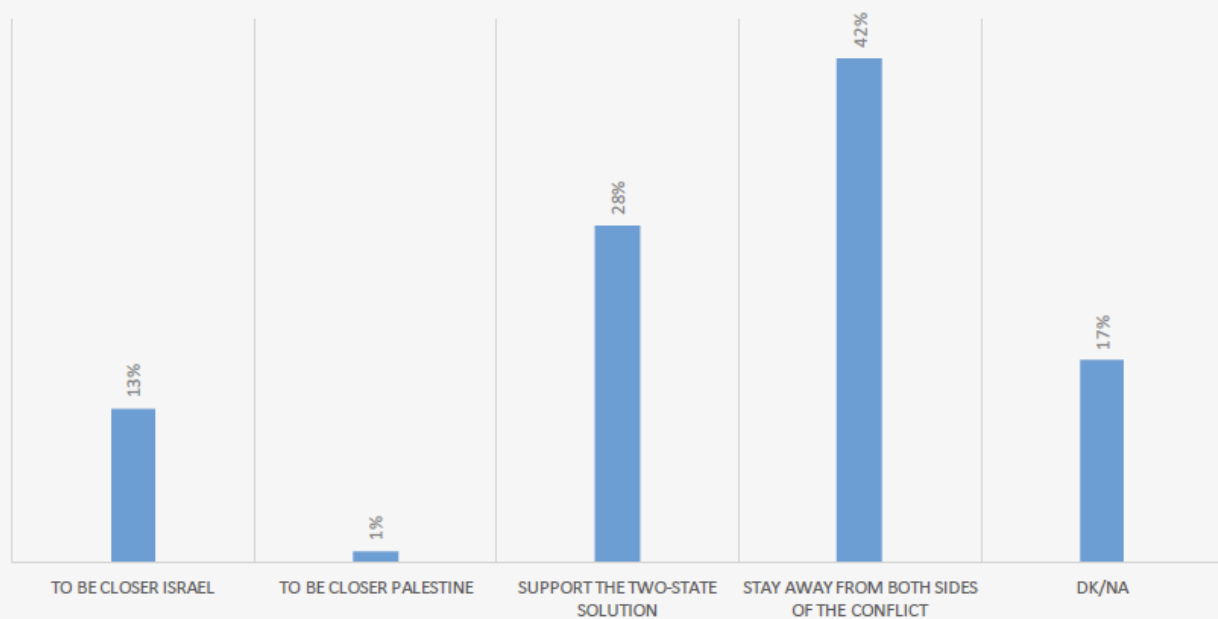


I'm going to read a sentence, and I'd like to know if you agree or disagree: *The BRICS are an embarrassing alliance, with authoritarian countries like Russia and China, or with high levels of social exclusion like India and South Africa*

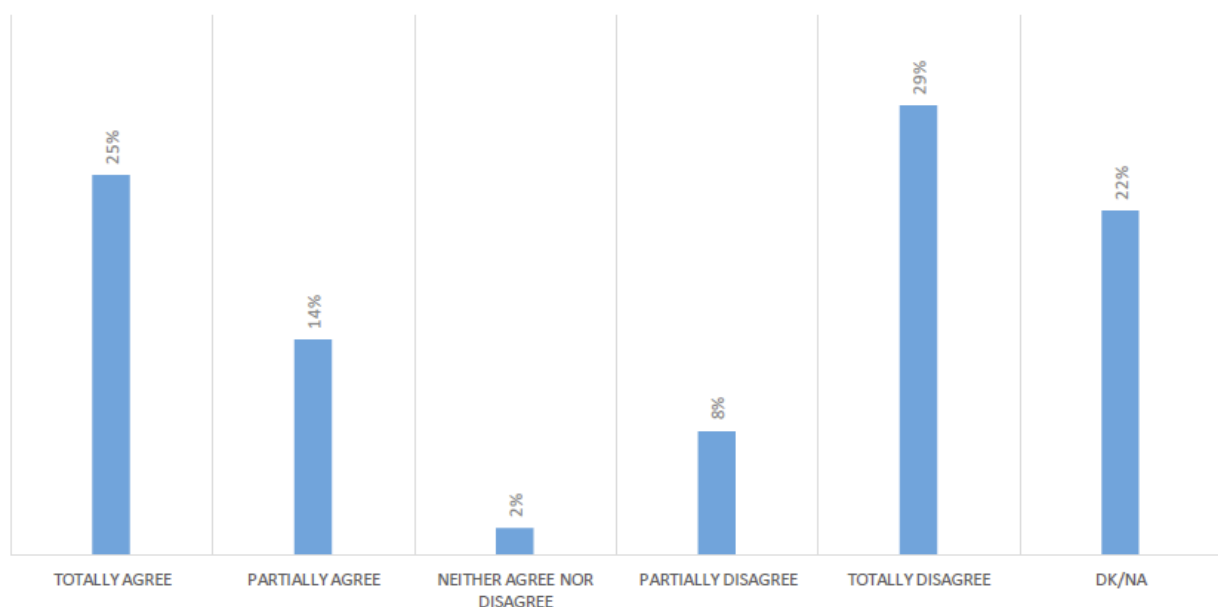


5. Perceptions about the conflict between Israel and Palestine (data collected before the current conflict in Gaza):

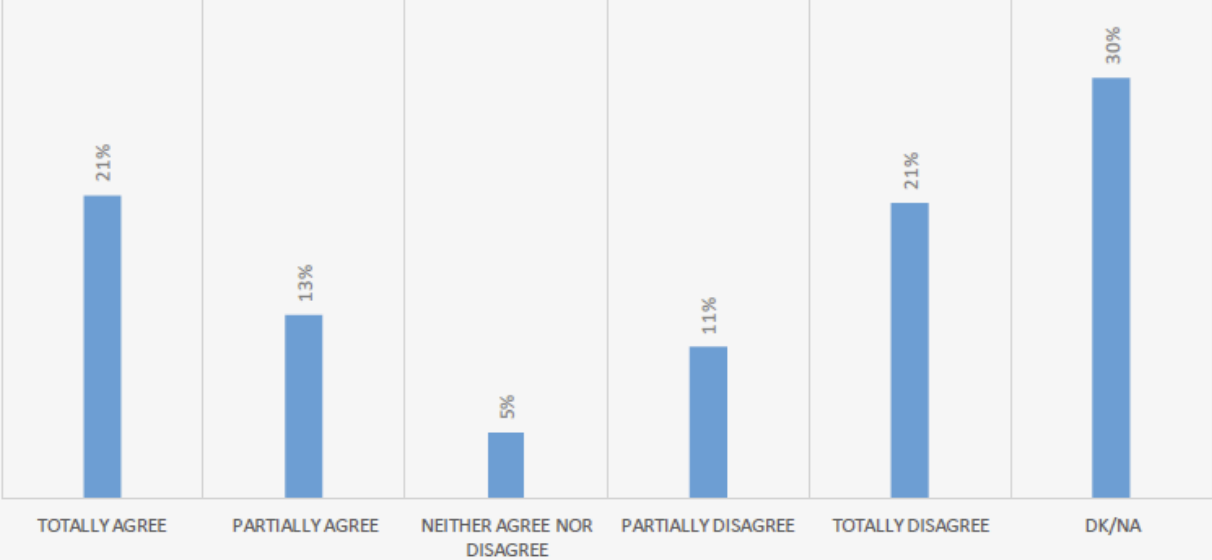
In your opinion, given the scenario of conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, what position do you believe Brazil should adopt? (2023)



Brazil currently recognizes that Jerusalem should be administered by the UN, and not controlled by Israel. Do you agree with Brazil maintaining this position? (2023)



Brazil currently maintains the Brazilian Embassy in Israel in the city of Tel Aviv. Do you agree that the Embassy be transferred to Jerusalem? (2023)



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