



# Global Highlights

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## Christmas Edition

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Just over half a century ago the British Prime Minister, Anthony Eden, appointed one of his colleagues, Selywn Lloyd, as his new Foreign Secretary. “Surely not me” complained Lloyd “I find travel most disagreeable, don’t know much about other countries - and to be honest I don’t really like foreigners.” “But that” -replied the urbane Eden- “is exactly why I am making you the Foreign Secretary!” Or so goes the story according to Westminster legend.

Here in the Global Trends Unit we take the reverse view to Lloyd - we are endlessly curious about the rest of the world, its people and its future. Our only problem is that we always want to know more. We suspect that most GH readers feel the same and so for our Christmas edition we have put together a quick quiz to test your knowledge. We hope that you have fun with it ... and from all of us that you have a very merry Christmas.

- Which was the ranking by income per capita of China (Ch), Mexico (Mx), Spain (Sp) and the United States (Us) in 1500:  
 (i) Us, Sp, Mx, Ch; (ii) Sp, Mx, Us, Ch; (iii) Sp, Ch, Mx, Us
- Which were the largest 5 economies in terms of total GDP in 1500:  
 (i) China, India, France, the UK and Mexico; (ii) China, India, Italy, France and Germany; (iii) France, Italy, China, UK and Spain
- Which is the median portfolio at risk for microcredit in the world? (i.e. the percentage of loans overdue more than 90 days over the gross loan portfolio)  
 (i) 1%; (ii) 5%; (iii) 10%
- What is the additional life expectancy at 45 years of age for a Spanish man? And for a female of the same age?  
 (i) 35 years for males and 30 for females; (ii) 34 years for males and 40 for females; (iii) 30 years for both males and females
- What do you think is the difference in average temperature between our present climate and that of the last Ice Age (20000 years ago)?  
 (i) 15°C; (ii) 5°C; (iii) 2°C
- What do you think is the efficiency of a standard incandescent light bulb?  
 (i) 95%; (ii) 50%; (iii) 5%
- Which three countries insisted on the Lisbon Treaty including a clause which promises that the spelling of the word Euro on notes and coins will have no effect on “the existing rules of their language”?  
 (i) UK, Ireland and Sweden; (ii) UK, Poland and Hungary; (iii) Latvia, Hungary and Malta
- The British government minister for pensions recently claimed that the first person who will live to 150:  
 (i) May be born by the end of this century; (ii) May be born by 2050; (iii) May already have been born

## ANSWERS

Q1. (iii) According to Angus Maddison, the first place in per capita income in international US dollars of 1990, was Spain with 698, China, 600, Mexico 425 and the US just 400. The wheel of fortune keeps turning, albeit at a slow pace

Q.2. (ii) According to Maddison, the total GDP, in billion of international dollars of 1990, of China was 61.8, followed closely by India with 60.5, and far behind we have Italy (11.5), France (10.9) and Germany (8.1). GDP in the UK was just 2.8, well behind Spain (4.7), but still much higher than the US (0.8). Mexico was a substantial 3.2.

Q.3. (i) According to the latest data from the Microfinance Information eXchange, which corresponds to the 2005, the portfolio at risk was 0.9%. By regions, Middle East & North Africa had the lowest delinquency (0.6%) whereas Sub-Saharan Africa had the highest (2.9%). During the same period, portfolio at risk in the Spanish financial system was 0.9%. Who said that poor people couldn't pay back?

Q.4 (ii) The latest data published by the INE shows that the life expectancy for a 45 years old Spanish male is, on average, 34 (33.92) years and for a Spanish female is around 40 (39.57) years.

Q.5 (ii). During the last glaciation, the total volume of ice on Earth was 3 times as big as today. As a consequence, sea levels were 100 meters lower. If man made greenhouse gas emissions continue to increase at their current pace, it is estimated (IPCC of the United Nations) that global mean temperatures will increase by more than 5°C by the end of the century.

Q.6 (iii) Traditional incandescent light bulbs radiate 95% of the energy consumed as heat rather than light. Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL) and Light Emitting Diodes (LED) use up to 80% less energy than an incandescent bulb to produce the same amount of light – and they last 10 to 130 times longer respectively. The Australian government has already taken the lead ruling that traditional bulbs will be phased out in the country by 2010.

Q.7 (iii) Declaration 58 of the Treaty says the use of the word Euro “as displayed on the banknotes and on the coins, Latvia, Hungary and Malta declare the spelling of the name of the single currency including its derivatives...has no effect on the rules of the Latvian, Hungarian or Maltese languages.” Unfortunately the Global Trends team does not have any linguists in these languages and we remain frankly baffled as to why they should need protecting from the word Euro.

Q.8 (iii) In a speech on 7 March 2007 Minister James Purnell said "Some scientists have gone so far as to say that the first person to live to 150 may already have been born. I know that seems extreme – but perhaps not when you consider that the first 120-year old person in the UK is expected in 2068. That means that she is about 59 now – and so only a year away from receiving her first State Pension cheque, which she will continue to receive for 60 years!"