



The Associated Press-NORC
Center for Public Affairs Research

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New Survey on Americans' Attitudes Toward the Pope Following his Visit to the United States

Chicago, IL, February 18, 2016—The American people paid scant attention to the Pope's remarks on several important and controversial topics such as global warming, immigration and poverty, according to a new national survey conducted by the [Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research](#).

Although the views of Americans about the pope remain favorable, the survey results indicate that the Pope's efforts to address key topics made very little impact on the public, despite national news coverage. Overall, a majority of Americans, 57 percent, paid little or no attention to the coverage of the papal visit. Only fourteen percent of all respondents indicated they had followed the coverage closely. The nationwide poll was collected October 15 to 18, 2015, using the [AmeriSpeak Omnibus](#), the probability-based panel of NORC at the University of Chicago. Online and telephone interviews using landlines and cell phones were conducted with 1,058 adults.

"This survey shows that the general public has still not heard the Pope's message on global warming, as set forth in the Papal encyclical earlier this year. Half of American Catholics still have not heard about the Pope's message" said Trevor Tompson, director of The AP-NORC Center. "People generally seem to approve of the Pope and that hasn't changed since our survey in July, but his recommendations on how to address climate change and other important key issues aren't reaching the majority of Americans. In fact, among Catholics, only a third paid a lot of attention to the news coverage of his visit."

Some of the poll's key findings include:

- American Catholics have a more favorable response to the Pope's attempts to address many of the country's more controversial issues than do non-Catholics. Among American Catholics, 59 percent have a favorable view of the Pope.
- Despite the media coverage, there has been no appreciable change in the number of people who have heard about Pope Francis's encyclical on global warming. Only about one third of Americans are aware that the Pope has issued the encyclical at all.
- Generally, Americans have a neutral response to the Pope's approach to the specific issues he addressed while visiting the United States in September 2015. The Pope's call to action on climate change had little impact on attitudes toward global warming. Two-thirds agree that global warming is happening and half say it is mostly or entirely caused by human actions, results similar to an AP-NORC poll in July.



About the Survey

This survey was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research with funding from NORC at the University of Chicago. Data were collected using AmeriSpeak®, which is a probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. household population. Interviews for this survey were conducted October 15 to 18, 2015, with adults age 18 and over from the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak®, and 1,058 completed the survey—753 via the web and 305 via telephone. The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 3.7 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect. The margin of sampling error may be higher for subgroups.

About AmeriSpeak Omnibus

AmeriSpeak Omnibus is a once-a-month, multi-client survey using a probability sample of at least 1,000 nationally representative adults age 18 and older. Respondents are interviewed online and by phone from NORC's AmeriSpeak panel—the most scientifically rigorous multi-client household panel in the United States. AmeriSpeak households are selected randomly from NORC's National Sample Frame, the industry leader in sample coverage. The National Frame is representative of over 99 percent of U.S. households and includes additional coverage of hard-to-survey population segments, such as rural and low-income households, that are underrepresented in other sample frames. More information about AmeriSpeak is available at AmeriSpeak.NORC.org.

About The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research

The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research taps into the power of social science research and the highest-quality journalism to bring key information to people across the nation and throughout the world.

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The two organizations have established The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research to conduct, analyze, and distribute social science research in the public interest on newsworthy topics, and to use the power of journalism to tell the stories that research reveals.



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