

Press contact: Eric Young, young-eric@norc.org, 301-634-9536 or cell: 703-217-6814

NEW SURVEY ON AMERICANS' VIEWS ON PAPAL ENCYCLICAL ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Catholics mirror non-Catholic Americans in key attitudes about global warming

Chicago, IL, and New Haven, CT, August 19, 2015—A new national survey conducted by [The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research](#) and researchers at Yale University found that fewer than 1 in 3 Americans, and 40 percent of Catholics, are aware of Pope Francis's efforts to publicize global warming as a priority issue for the Catholic Church. While there is relatively low awareness of the papal encyclical, a majority of Americans say it is appropriate for the pope to take a public position on the issue of global warming. This is true even though very few Americans consider global warming as an issue of religion, social justice, or poverty. The nationwide poll was collected July 17 to 19, 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 1,030 adults.

"This survey indicates that the Pope's message on global warming has not broken through to a majority of Catholics or Americans," said Trevor Tompson, director of The AP-NORC Center. "The survey found that few people consider the issue a religious or social justice one."

Some of the poll's key findings include:

- Few Americans, just 31 percent, have heard about Pope Francis's encyclical on global warming.
- Most Americans say they think it's appropriate for the pope to take a public stand on global warming despite few viewing it as a religious issue.
- Catholics mirror non-Catholic Americans in their attitudes about whether global warming is happening and their views about the appropriateness of the pope's recent encyclical.
- Over three-quarters of Americans say climate change is an environmental and scientific issue. Few consider it to be an issue relating to social justice, poverty, or religion.

"Even though the Pope's Encyclical is a major theological statement, fewer than 2 in 5 churchgoing Catholics heard about it from their priest in the month after it was released," said Anthony Leiserowitz, a faculty member of the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies. "But this may change when Pope Francis visits the United States in September to bring his message personally."

About the Survey

This survey was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research with input and funding from Yale University. 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 July 17 to 19, 2015, with adults age 18 and over from the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak®, and 1,030 completed the survey—894 via the web and 136 via telephone. The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 4.4 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 Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies

Founded in 1900, FES is the oldest institution of higher learning devoted to conservation and natural resource management in the United States. Now in its second century, the school prepares new leadership and creates new knowledge to sustain and restore the long-term health of the biosphere and the well-being of its people. We educate women and men to guide human activity at the local, national, and global levels with a comprehensive understanding of the environmental, economic, and social effects of their choices. We create new knowledge in the science of sustainability and new methods of applying that knowledge to the challenge of environmental management, the restoration of degraded environments, and the pursuit of sustainable development.

<http://environment.yale.edu/>

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.

www.apnorc.org

The Associated Press is the essential global news network, delivering fast, unbiased news from every corner of the world to all media platforms and formats. Founded in 1846, AP today is the most trusted source of independent news and information. On any given day, more than half the world's population sees news from AP.



The Associated Press-NORC
Center for Public Affairs Research

Yale SCHOOL OF FORESTRY &
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

www.ap.org

NORC at the University of Chicago is an independent research institution that delivers reliable data and rigorous analysis to guide critical programmatic, business, and policy decisions. Since 1941, NORC has conducted groundbreaking studies, created and applied innovative methods and tools, and advanced principles of scientific integrity and collaboration. Today, government, corporate, and nonprofit clients around the world partner with NORC to transform increasingly complex information into useful knowledge.

www.norc.org

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.

###

Contact: For more information, contact Eric Young for NORC at young-eric@norc.org or (703) 217-6814 (cell); Ray Boyer for NORC at boyer-ray@norc.org or (312) 330-6433; or Paul Colford for AP at pcolford@ap.org or info@apnorc.org.