

American Climate Perspectives Survey 2026

Volume I Toplines

Trust, Media Habits, and Misperceptions Shape Public Understanding of Climate Change

Americans Underestimate How Much Others Care About Climate Change

American Climate Perspectives Survey 2026, Volume I | Fielded, January 30 – February 3, 2026

	National	Rep	Dem	Indep	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Climate concerned*	Not concerned	High Trust*	Low Trust
N=	1,037	347	364	307	129	191	195	168	165	189	708	329	655	382
How much do you trust the information you see or hear about major national issues today?														
High Trust- A great deal or a fair amount	63%	58%	75%	57%	71%	72%	65%	59%	59%	55%	73%	43%		
Low Trust - Not very much or not at all	37%	42%	25%	43%	29%	28%	35%	41%	41%	46%	27%	57%		
A great deal	18%	20%	21%	12%	26%	20%	27%	16%	10%	7%	21%	9%		
A fair amount	46%	38%	54%	46%	45%	51%	38%	43%	49%	47%	51%	33%		
Not very much	31%	35%	20%	37%	27%	21%	28%	36%	35%	39%	24%	45%		
Not at all	6%	7%	4%	6%	2%	7%	7%	5%	6%	6%	3%	12%		
Which of the following do you rely on most for news or information about major national issues? Select all that apply.														
ABC News, CBS News, NBC News, MSNBC, CNN, NPR	50%	40%	63%	48%	38%	50%	50%	50%	51%	59%	57%	35%	59%	36%
Fox News, Newsmax	28%	44%	16%	24%	25%	24%	29%	27%	27%	33%	24%	36%	29%	25%
The New York Times, The Washington Post, USA Today	22%	19%	27%	22%	34%	29%	27%	20%	12%	13%	28%	9%	27%	14%
Washington Examiner, Daily Wire, WND	6%	6%	8%	5%	5%	12%	11%	6%	2%	2%	8%	3%	9%	2%
BBC, The Guardian, or other international news	14%	10%	17%	14%	15%	14%	18%	15%	10%	10%	17%	5%	16%	9%
Local television or local online news outlets	43%	42%	44%	42%	34%	40%	38%	45%	46%	50%	45%	37%	46%	36%
Facebook, Instagram	34%	34%	37%	33%	54%	48%	44%	35%	16%	13%	38%	27%	40%	25%
X or Truth Social	20%	21%	21%	20%	32%	37%	23%	18%	9%	6%	22%	17%	24%	14%
YouTube or other video-based platforms	32%	30%	35%	34%	51%	47%	38%	33%	17%	12%	35%	26%	37%	25%
Talk radio	11%	12%	9%	12%	12%	12%	11%	13%	13%	5%	11%	11%	11%	11%
Podcasts	17%	18%	17%	17%	19%	28%	22%	16%	12%	6%	19%	13%	18%	16%
I don't follow the news about major national issues very closely.	5%	5%	2%	6%	5%	2%	5%	6%	8%	3%	3%	9%	1%	11%

* Climate concerned: Respondents who say they are personally “very” or “somewhat” concerned about climate change.

* High-Trust: Respondents who say they trust the information they see or hear “a great deal” or “a fair amount”.

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	National	Rep	Dem	Indep	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Climate concerned*	Not concerned	High Trust*	Low Trust
N=	1,037	347	364	307	129	191	195	168	165	189	708	329	655	382
How personally concerned are you about climate change?														
Total concerned - Very or Somewhat	68%	55%	84%	66%	77%	79%	71%	66%	63%	56%			79%	51%
Very concerned	36%	22%	53%	30%	37%	39%	36%	31%	35%	36%			43%	23%
Somewhat concerned	33%	33%	30%	36%	40%	40%	35%	35%	28%	20%			36%	27%
A little concerned	16%	17%	12%	19%	13%	15%	15%	16%	19%	16%			13%	21%
Not at all concerned	16%	28%	5%	15%	10%	7%	14%	18%	18%	28%			9%	28%
How concerned do you think other people around you are about climate change?														
Total concerned - Very or Somewhat	50%	50%	54%	46%	55%	58%	54%	44%	51%	40%	60%	30%	58%	37%
Very concerned	13%	14%	16%	8%	16%	18%	14%	11%	12%	8%	17%	5%	17%	6%
Somewhat concerned	37%	36%	38%	37%	40%	40%	40%	33%	39%	31%	43%	24%	40%	32%
A little concerned	34%	31%	33%	36%	36%	29%	28%	37%	35%	38%	30%	42%	30%	40%
Not at all concerned	16%	18%	13%	18%	9%	13%	18%	19%	14%	22%	11%	28%	12%	23%
In your own words, why do you think other people around you may be more or less concerned about climate change than you are?***														
Answered	1,037													
	National	Rep	Dem	Indep	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Others climate concerned	Other not climate concerned***		
N=	1,037	347	364	307	129	191	195	168	165	189	520	517		
How confident are you that most people in the U.S. can tell the difference between true and false information about climate change?														
Total confident - Very or somewhat	44%	46%	50%	36%	53%	51%	52%	36%	41%	33%	58%	30%		
Total not confident - Not very or not at all	56%	54%	50%	64%	47%	49%	48%	64%	59%	67%	42%	70%		
Very confident	11%	14%	13%	5%	11%	16%	15%	11%	8%	3%	19%	3%		
Somewhat confident	33%	32%	37%	32%	42%	35%	37%	25%	32%	31%	39%	27%		
Not very confident	40%	36%	36%	49%	38%	33%	30%	45%	41%	51%	34%	45%		
Not confident at all	16%	18%	14%	15%	9%	16%	17%	18%	19%	15%	8%	24%		

** To review open-ended responses, contact us at research@ecoAmerica.org.

*** Others not climate concerned: Respondents who say they think others are "a little" or "not at all" concerned about climate change.

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	National	Rep	Dem	Indep	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
N=	1,037	347	364	307	129	191	195	168	165	189

Which of the following statements about energy do you believe are accurate? Select all that apply.

Clean energy, like wind and solar, helps lower energy costs over time.	51%	38%	65%	49%	50%	51%	55%	47%	53%	48%
Clean energy like wind and solar can reliably provide electricity in the U.S.	49%	34%	62%	52%	47%	52%	52%	49%	46%	47%
Expanding clean energy creates jobs and strengthens the U.S. economy.	47%	37%	55%	48%	50%	46%	44%	50%	45%	49%
Pollution from coal, oil, and gas harms our health.	51%	42%	57%	52%	53%	53%	44%	48%	50%	56%
Coal, oil, and gas are cheaper sources of energy in the U.S.	28%	40%	19%	24%	28%	26%	23%	22%	29%	38%
Energy from coal, oil, and gas is more reliable than wind or solar energy.	31%	46%	20%	28%	33%	25%	27%	24%	37%	43%
Not sure	7%	7%	6%	8%	5%	4%	11%	11%	7%	4%

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	National	ABC News, CBS News, NBC News, MSNBC, CNN, NPR	Fox News, Newsmax	The New York Times, The Washington Post, USA Today	Washington Examiner, Daily Wire, WND	BBC, The Guardian, or other international news	Local television or local online news outlets	Facebook, Instagram	X (formerly Twitter) or Truth Social	YouTube or other video-based platforms	Talk radio	Podcasts
N=	1,037	521	286	231	66	141	441	356	212	336	112	179
Which of the following statements about energy do you believe are accurate? Select all that apply.****												
Clean energy, like wind and solar, helps lower energy costs over time.	51%	61%	48%	70%	58%	67%	59%	54%	50%	57%	57%	56%
Clean energy like wind and solar can reliably provide electricity in the U.S.	49%	57%	42%	65%	67%	72%	56%	55%	51%	57%	53%	58%
Expanding clean energy creates jobs and strengthens the U.S. economy.	47%	54%	44%	62%	61%	67%	56%	46%	49%	54%	44%	54%
Pollution from coal, oil, and gas harms our health.	51%	60%	46%	64%	59%	68%	59%	50%	48%	56%	43%	61%
Coal, oil, and gas are cheaper sources of energy in the U.S.	28%	25%	37%	23%	35%	27%	28%	28%	34%	33%	32%	36%
Energy from coal, oil, and gas is more reliable than wind or solar energy.	31%	28%	47%	28%	44%	33%	32%	34%	44%	35%	42%	42%
Not sure	7%	5%	5%	2%	3%	1%	5%	6%	3%	2%	4%	2%

**** Beliefs in the accuracy of statements vary across all news sources polled.

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Demographics

National
N= 1,037

Do you consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or something else?

Republican	33%
Democrat	35%
Independent	30%
Other (please specify)	2%

What is your age?

18-24	12%
25-34	18%
35-44	19%
45-54	16%
55-64	16%
65+	18%

What is your gender?

Female	50%
Male	50%
Other (specify)	0%

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National
N= 1,037

What is your ethnicity? (Please select all that apply.)

American Indian or Alaskan Native	3%
Asian or Pacific Islander	6%
Black or African American	19%
Hispanic, Latino/a, or of Spanish origin	19%
White / Caucasian	61%
Prefer not to answer	0%
Other (please specify)	0%

What is your total household income?

Less than \$20,000	15%
\$20,000 to \$34,999	18%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	12%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	21%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	13%
\$150,000 or More	8%

In which region of the United States do you live?

New England (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut)	4%
Middle Atlantic (New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania)	14%
East North Central (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin)	14%
West North Central (Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas)	4%
South Atlantic (Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida)	22%
East South Central (Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi)	7%
West South Central (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas)	16%
Mountain (Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada)	7%
Pacific (Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska, Hawaii)	13%

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Methodology

ecoAmerica designed and administered this online survey, conducted from January 30 to February 3, 2026, using SurveyMonkey. The survey yielded a total of 1,037 complete adult responses and used the Census Bureau's American Community Survey to weigh the national general population and reflect the demographic composition of the US. The sample was drawn from an online panel, and respondents were screened to ensure they were 18 or older. The margin of error for the sample is +/-3%. When interpreting survey results, it is important to note that all sample surveys are subject to sampling error. Thus, the results of a survey may differ from those obtained if the entire population were interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends upon both the total number of respondents in the survey and the percentage distribution of the responses to a particular question. For example, if 50% of the respondents in a sample of 1,037 answered "Yes" to a particular question, we can be 95% confident that the true percentage lies within 3 points, ranging from 47% to 53%.

ecoAmerica conducted a qualitative thematic analysis of open-ended responses from a subset of respondents who reported that other people around them are less concerned about climate change than they are. Their responses were systematically coded into subthemes and then grouped into six overarching drivers that explain this perception gap.

Suggested Citation

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