



# Press Release

## Climate Change

**Washington, DC, April 20, 2017** -- While a majority of Americans believe climate change is caused by human activity (51%), a significant minority (31%) believe it is caused by natural patterns and a few (6%) do not think climate change is really happening. Yet, demographics don't necessarily define the kinds of people who deny climate change and those who see it as a natural occurrence. Across gender, income levels, region and education levels, a significant contingent believe climate change is natural, or isn't even happening.

Belief in climate change also colors people's understanding of real occurrences of climate change. Among climate change deniers, only 24% say that the Arctic and Antarctic ice sheets have declined over the last 20 years, as opposed to 71% among those who believe climate change is caused by human activity. Similarly, 57% of Americans who believe climate change is a natural occurrence said the average global temperature has increased over the last 20 years compared to 83% of those who believe climate change is caused by humans.

Similarly, belief, or lack thereof, in climate change determines a person's willingness to take environmentally friendly actions. Over 50% of Americans who believe climate change is caused by human activity would trade their current vehicle for an electric vehicle, while only a quarter of those who believe it's caused by natural patterns would (24%). While only a third of those who believe climate change is not happening would pay an additional \$100 in taxes a year, 53% of those who believe climate change is caused by human activity would be willing to pay. Those who believe climate change is caused by human activity are more willing to make sacrifices for the environment than those who completely deny it and those who believe it's a natural occurrence. Compared to ten years ago, do you think the following have become more or less frequent where you live, or has there been no change?

a. Severe thunderstorms

	Total N=1,009	Believe "Climate change is caused by human activity" N=493	Believe "Climate change is caused by natural patterns" N=322	Believe "Climate change is not really happening" N=64
Much more frequent	11%	13%	9%	8%
Somewhat more frequent	29%	35%	27%	9%
No change	45%	40%	50%	60%
Somewhat less frequent	8%	7%	10%	13%
Much less frequent	4%	3%	5%	11%
Don't know	3%	2%	*	*

b. Droughts

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	Total N=1,009	Believe “Climate change is caused by human activity” N=493	Believe “Climate change is caused by natural patterns” N=322	Believe “Climate change is not really happening” N=64
Much more frequent	13%	19%	8%	8%
Somewhat more frequent	28%	33%	26%	10%
No change	37%	32%	43%	46%
Somewhat less frequent	10%	6%	14%	21%
Much less frequent	6%	6%	5%	15%
Don’t know	5%	4%	3%	*

### c. Flooding

	Total N=1,009	Believe “Climate change is caused by human activity” N=493	Believe “Climate change is caused by natural patterns” N=322	Believe “Climate change is not really happening” N=64
Much more frequent	11%	15%	7%	7%
Somewhat more frequent	32%	38%	29%	9%
No change	41%	34%	44%	62%
Somewhat less frequent	8%	6%	14%	12%
Much less frequent	4%	3%	4%	9%
Don’t know	4%	3%	3%	1%

### d. Hurricanes or tropical storms

	Total N=1,009	Believe “Climate change is caused by human activity” N=493	Believe “Climate change is caused by natural patterns” N=322	Believe “Climate change is not really happening” N=64
Much more frequent	9%	12%	6%	5%
Somewhat more frequent	18%	25%	14%	9%
No change	50%	46%	55%	50%
Somewhat less frequent	9%	7%	13%	16%
Much less frequent	8%	6%	9%	19%
Don’t know	6%	4%	3%	1%

### e. Blizzards

	Total N=1,009	Believe “Climate change is caused by human activity”	Believe “Climate change is caused by natural patterns”	Believe “Climate change is not really happening”

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		N=493	N=322	N=64
Much more frequent	7%	10%	3%	1%
Somewhat more frequent	16%	23%	10%	12%
No change	45%	37%	54%	44%
Somewhat less frequent	16%	15%	19%	18%
Much less frequent	12%	12%	11%	23%
Don't know	5%	4%	3%	1%

2. Thinking about the intensity of these weather events, do you think the following have become more or less intense or has there been no change, compared to ten years ago?

a. Severe thunderstorms

	Total N=1,009	Believe "Climate change is caused by human activity" N=493	Believe "Climate change is caused by natural patterns" N=322	Believe "Climate change is not really happening" N=64
Much more intense	11%	15%	7%	6%
Somewhat more intense	34%	41%	32%	14%
No change	41%	32%	50%	54%
Somewhat less intense	8%	7%	7%	18%
Much less intense	2%	2%	3%	7%
Don't know	4%	3%	1%	*

b. Droughts

	Total N=1,009	Believe "Climate change is caused by human activity" N=493	Believe "Climate change is caused by natural patterns" N=322	Believe "Climate change is not really happening" N=64
Much more intense	14%	19%	9%	10%
Somewhat more intense	30%	38%	23%	16%
No change	38%	30%	48%	51%
Somewhat less intense	8%	6%	12%	8%
Much less intense	4%	4%	4%	15%
Don't know	6%	3%	3%	*

c. Flooding

	Total N=1,009	Believe "Climate change is caused by human activity" N=493	Believe "Climate change is caused by natural patterns" N=322	Believe "Climate change is not really happening" N=64

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Much more intense	14%	20%	8%	8%
Somewhat more intense	33%	37%	35%	16%
No change	37%	30%	43%	56%
Somewhat less intense	7%	7%	8%	10%
Much less intense	3%	3%	2%	9%
Don't know	6%	4%	4%	*

### d. Hurricanes or tropical storms

	Total N=1,009	Believe "Climate change is caused by human activity" N=493	Believe "Climate change is caused by natural patterns" N=322	Believe "Climate change is not really happening" N=64
Much more intense	12%	17%	7%	4%
Somewhat more intense	24%	30%	20%	14%
No change	44%	38%	52%	53%
Somewhat less intense	7%	3%	11%	14%
Much less intense	6%	5%	5%	12%
Don't know	7%	6%	4%	2%

### e. Blizzards

	Total N=1,009	Believe "Climate change is caused by human activity" N=493	Believe "Climate change is caused by natural patterns" N=322	Believe "Climate change is not really happening" N=64
Much more intense	9%	14%	5%	4%
Somewhat more intense	20%	25%	14%	16%
No change	43%	35%	54%	48%
Somewhat less intense	12%	10%	14%	12%
Much less intense	9%	9%	10%	18%
Don't know	7%	5%	3%	1%

### 3. Which of the following statements comes closest to your opinion?

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Climate change is mostly caused by human activity	51%	69%	30%	47%
Climate change is mostly caused by natural patterns	31%	17%	47%	38%
Climate change is not really happening	6%	3%	12%	4%
Other	3%	2%	3%	3%
Don't know	10%	8%	8%	9%

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4. How much, if anything do you know about each of the following issues:  
 a. The stability or change in temperature of the Arctic and Antarctic ice caps

	Total N=1,009	Believe “Climate change is caused by human activity” N=493	Believe “Climate change is caused by natural patterns” N=322	Believe “Climate change is not really happening” N=64
Very familiar	16%	20%	12%	24%
Somewhat familiar	45%	53%	44%	37%
Not very familiar	30%	21%	37%	32%
Never heard of it before	1%	1%	2%	4%
Don’t know	8%	5%	5%	4%

- b. Average global temperature over the last 100 year

	Total N=1,009	Believe “Climate change is caused by human activity” N=493	Believe “Climate change is caused by natural patterns” N=322	Believe “Climate change is not really happening” N=64
Very familiar	13%	18%	10%	8%
Somewhat familiar	41%	46%	39%	48%
Not very familiar	36%	29%	43%	36%
Never heard of it before	1%	1%	1%	3%
Don’t know	8%	5%	7%	5%

- c. The levels of carbon dioxide in the Earth’s atmosphere

	Total N=1,009	Believe “Climate change is caused by human activity” N=493	Believe “Climate change is caused by natural patterns” N=322	Believe “Climate change is not really happening” N=64
Very familiar	15%	20%	12%	18%
Somewhat familiar	37%	43%	37%	32%
Not very familiar	38%	32%	43%	39%
Never heard of it before	2%	1%	2%	6%
Don’t know	7%	4%	6%	5%

- d. The amount of U.S. energy produced by renewable energy sources

	Total N=1,009	Believe “Climate change is caused by human activity”	Believe “Climate change is caused by natural patterns”	Believe “Climate change is not really happening”

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		N=493	N=322	N=64
Very familiar	14%	17%	11%	16%
Somewhat familiar	39%	46%	37%	38%
Not very familiar	38%	32%	44%	36%
Never heard of it before	1%	1%	1%	5%
Don't know	7%	4%	6%	4%

e. The amount of oil and gas currently produced in the U.S.

	Total N=1,009	Believe "Climate change is caused by human activity" N=493	Believe "Climate change is caused by natural patterns" N=322	Believe "Climate change is not really happening" N=64
Very familiar	13%	15%	13%	14%
Somewhat familiar	41%	46%	40%	33%
Not very familiar	38%	33%	40%	48%
Never heard of it before	*	*	1%	2%
Don't know	7%	5%	7%	3%

5. To the best of your knowledge, have the following increased, decreased or stayed the same over the last 20 years?

a. The amount of ice in the Arctic and Antarctic ice caps

	Total N=1,009	Believe "Climate change is caused by human activity" N=493	Believe "Climate change is caused by natural patterns" N=322	Believe "Climate change is not really happening" N=64
Increased	13%	14%	15%	15%
Stayed the same	15%	9%	21%	44%
Decreased	58%	71%	50%	24%
Don't know	14%	7%	14%	18%

b. Average global temperature

	Total N=1,009	Believe "Climate change is caused by human activity" N=493	Believe "Climate change is caused by natural patterns" N=322	Believe "Climate change is not really happening" N=64
Increased	66%	83%	57%	38%
Stayed the same	17%	9%	26%	37%
Decreased	4%	2%	6%	7%
Don't know	13%	6%	12%	18%

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c. The amount of carbon dioxide in the Earth’s atmosphere

	Total N=1,009	Believe “Climate change is caused by human activity” N=493	Believe “Climate change is caused by natural patterns” N=322	Believe “Climate change is not really happening” N=64
Increased	59%	76%	48%	26%
Stayed the same	16%	9%	26%	35%
Decreased	4%	4%	3%	11%
Don’t know	21%	11%	22%	28%

d. The amount of energy produced in the U.S. by renewable sources

	Total N=1,009	Believe “Climate change is caused by human activity” N=493	Believe “Climate change is caused by natural patterns” N=322	Believe “Climate change is not really happening” N=64
Increased	57%	67%	58%	35%
Stayed the same	18%	15%	19%	33%
Decreased	5%	6%	4%	6%
Don’t know	20%	12%	20%	26%

e. The amount of oil and gas currently produced in the U.S.

	Total N=1,009	Believe “Climate change is caused by human activity” N=493	Believe “Climate change is caused by natural patterns” N=322	Believe “Climate change is not really happening” N=64
Increased	48%	53%	50%	47%
Stayed the same	21%	21%	23%	26%
Decreased	12%	12%	13%	10%
Don’t know	19%	14%	14%	17%

6. As you may know, most climate experts believe that global average temperatures will climb rapidly in the next few decades. Furthermore, to prevent the worst effects of climate change, the world should work to limit this change in global average temperature to an increase of no more than 2 degrees.

How familiar are you, if at all, with the position of climate scientists just described?

	Total N=1,009	Believe “Climate change is caused by human activity” N=493	Believe “Climate change is caused by natural patterns” N=322	Believe “Climate change is not really happening” N=64
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Very familiar	20%	28%	13%	20%
Somewhat familiar	44%	50%	43%	48%
Not very familiar	24%	17%	33%	20%
Never heard of it before	7%	4%	6%	7%
Don't know	5%	1%	5%	5%

7. Here are some actions that have been suggested as ways regular people can help limit climate change. How likely would you be to do the following in the next year?

a. Trade in your current vehicle for an electric vehicle

	Total N=1,009	Believe "Climate change is caused by human activity" N=493	Believe "Climate change is caused by natural patterns" N=322	Believe "Climate change is not really happening" N=64
Very likely	13%	20%	7%	13%
Somewhat likely	26%	33%	17%	14%
Not very likely	34%	31%	37%	35%
Not at all likely	27%	16%	40%	38%

b. Put solar panels on your home

	Total N=1,009	Believe "Climate change is caused by human activity" N=493	Believe "Climate change is caused by natural patterns" N=322	Believe "Climate change is not really happening" N=64
Very likely	16%	21%	11%	14%
Somewhat likely	33%	36%	31%	27%
Not very likely	32%	31%	33%	32%
Not at all likely	19%	12%	25%	27%

c. Pay an additional \$100 a year in taxes

	Total N=1,009	Believe "Climate change is caused by human activity" N=493	Believe "Climate change is caused by natural patterns" N=322	Believe "Climate change is not really happening" N=64
Very likely	10%	14%	6%	13%
Somewhat likely	29%	39%	20%	22%
Not very likely	30%	30%	31%	22%
Not at all likely	30%	17%	43%	44%

d. Pay an additional \$100 a year in electricity bills

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	Total N=1,009	Believe “Climate change is caused by human activity” N=493	Believe “Climate change is caused by natural patterns” N=322	Believe “Climate change is not really happening” N=64
Very likely	9%	13%	4%	12%
Somewhat likely	25%	29%	23%	18%
Not very likely	36%	39%	31%	32%
Not at all likely	30%	19%	42%	38%

8. Do you consider yourself a Democrat, a Republican an Independent or none of these? (Select one)

	Total
Strong Democrat	14%
Moderate Democrat	16%
Lean Democrat	8%
Lean Republican	7%
Moderate Republican	13%
Strong Republican	10%
Independent	20%
None of these	7%
Don't know / Refused	5%

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### About the Study

*These are findings from an Ipsos poll conducted April 19-20, 2017 on behalf Thomson Reuters. For the survey, a sample of roughly 1,009 adults age 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska and Hawaii was interviewed online in English. The sample includes 350 Democrats, 339 Republicans, and 194 Independents. The sample also includes 493 respondents who answered “Climate change is caused by human activity,” 322 respondents who answered “Climate change is caused by natural patterns,” and 64 respondents who answered “Climate change is not really happening.”*

*The sample for this study was randomly drawn from Ipsos’s online panel (see link below for more info on “Access Panels and Recruitment”), partner online panel sources, and “river” sampling (see link below for more info on the Ipsos “Ampario Overview” sample method) and does not rely on a population frame in the traditional sense. Ipsos uses fixed sample targets, unique to each study, in drawing sample. After a sample has been obtained from the Ipsos panel, Ipsos calibrates respondent characteristics to be representative of the U.S. Population using standard procedures such as raking-ratio adjustments. The source of these population targets is U.S. Census 2013 American Community Survey data. The sample drawn for this study reflects fixed sample targets on demographics. Post-hoc weights were made to the population characteristics on gender, age, race/ethnicity, region, and education.*

*Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points for all respondents. Ipsos calculates a design effect (DEFF) for each study based on the variation of the weights, following the formula of Kish (1965). This study had a credibility interval adjusted for design effect of the following ( $n=1,009$ ,  $DEFF=1.5$ , adjusted Confidence Interval=5).*

*The poll also has a credibility interval plus or minus 6.0 percentage points for Democrats, plus or minus 6.1 percentage points for Republicans, and plus or minus 8.0 percentage points for Independents. The poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 5.0 percentage points for respondents who answered “Climate change is caused by human activity,” plus or minus 6.2 percentage points for respondents who answered “Climate change is caused by natural patterns,” and plus or minus 14 percentage points for respondents who answered “Climate change is not really happening.”*

*For more information about conducting research intended for public release or Ipsos’ online polling methodology, please visit our [Public Opinion Polling and Communication](#) page where you can download our brochure, see our public release protocol, or contact us.*

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### About Ipsos Public Affairs

Ipsos Public Affairs is a non-partisan, objective, survey-based research practice made up of seasoned professionals. We conduct strategic research initiatives for a diverse number of American and international organizations, based not only on public opinion research, but elite stakeholder, corporate, and media opinion research.

Ipsos has media partnerships with the most prestigious news organizations around the world. In Canada, the U.S., UK, and internationally, Ipsos Public Affairs is the media polling supplier to Reuters News, the world's leading source of intelligent information for businesses and professionals. Ipsos Public Affairs is a member of the Ipsos Group, a leading global survey-based market research company. We provide boutique-style customer service and work closely with our clients, while also undertaking global research.

### About Ipsos

Ipsos is an independent market research company controlled and managed by research professionals. Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos has grown into a worldwide research group with a strong presence in all key markets. Ipsos ranks third in the global research industry.

With offices in 88 countries, Ipsos delivers insightful expertise across five research specializations: brand, advertising and media, customer loyalty, marketing, public affairs research, and survey management.

Ipsos researchers assess market potential and interpret market trends. They develop and build brands. They help clients build long-term relationships with their customers. They test advertising and study audience responses to various media and they measure public opinion around the globe.

Ipsos has been listed on the Paris Stock Exchange since 1999 and generated global revenues of €1,785.3 million (\$1,981 million) in 2015.

#### GAME CHANGERS

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We make our changing world easier and faster to navigate and inspire clients to make smarter decisions.  
We deliver with security, speed, simplicity and substance. We are Game Changers.

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The company is part of the SBF 120 and the Mid-60 index  
and is eligible for the Deferred Settlement Service (SRD).

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