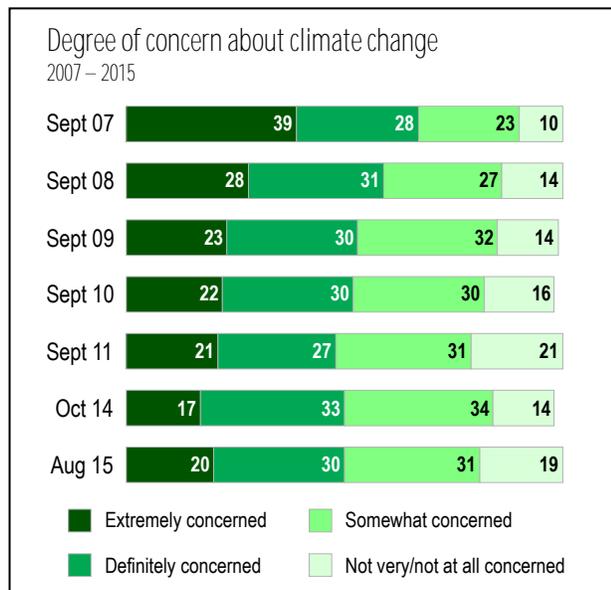


Public concern about climate change

Half of Canadians continue to express clear concern about climate change, with the intensity of worry up marginally over the past year. Strong concerns are most widespread in British Columbia and among NDP supporters, and least evident in Alberta and among Conservative Party supporters.

How personally concerned are Canadians about the changes to our climate due to global warming? Most are concerned at some level, with half saying they are extremely (20%) or definitely (30%) concerned. This overall proportion is unchanged from 2014, but there has been a three point shift from “definitely” to “extremely” concerned, indicating a small increase in the intensity of feeling about this issue over the past year.

Another three in ten (31%, down 3) are somewhat concerned about climate change, while one in five say they are not very (12%) or not at all (7%) concerned (up 5). Overall, the degree of public concern about climate change has changed relatively little since 2009, and remains well below the level recorded in 2007 when climate change had a much higher profile.



Across the country, public concern about climate change is now most widespread in British Columbia (61% are extremely or definitely concerned; up 5 points since 2014), and especially in Vancouver (72%, up 20 points). This view is least apt to be shared in Alberta (40%, down 6), Manitoba and Saskatchewan (45%, down 1), as well as in Quebec (44%) although overall concern there is up seven points in the past year (and extreme concern up 13 points). Over the past year the gap in concern among urban and rural Canadians has largely disappeared (reversing a previous trend), while the gap across education levels has increased.

Concern about climate change continues divide along politically partisan lines. Extreme or definite concern is expressed by majorities in each of the Federal Opposition parties, while only one-third (32%) of Conservative supporters share this view (with a comparable number (31%) saying they are not very or not at all concerned about climate change). The one notable change in the past year is a drop in concern among Green Party supporters (to 58%, down 13 points). NDP supporters (63%) are now the most likely to be extremely or definitely concerned about the issue, followed by Liberal Party supporters (53%) and those who remain undecided (49%).

Level of concern is tied to perceptions about the reality of climate change, but most strongly in terms of perceptions of local area impacts: Extreme concern is more than twice as evident among Canadians who are definite about local changes (42%) than among those who say such changes are likely (19%) or possible (10%).