

COPENHAGEN CLIMATE SUMMIT

Britons Expect Political Compromise or No Agreement at Climate Summit

Most people want countries to commit to reducing greenhouse gases, but think delegates will not reach a deal.

[LONDON – Dec. 2, 2009] – The majority of people in Britain hope to see the upcoming Climate Summit in Copenhagen, Denmark, lead to an international binding agreement to reduce polluting greenhouse gases, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 2,019 British adults, 58 per cent of respondents want delegates at the summit to draft a legally binding document that would force all signatory nations to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

One fifth of British respondents (19%) would prefer delegates at the summit—scheduled to start on Dec. 7 and end on Dec. 18—to draft a non-binding agreement that would allow each country to reduce emissions on a voluntary basis, and 10 per cent would like to see no agreement at all.

But as far as expectations go, only nine per cent of Britons think delegates from the 170 countries attending the meeting will present a legally binding document at the end of the summit. More people (38%) foresee leaders in Copenhagen agreeing to a political compromise allowing nations to reduce emissions voluntarily, or think there will be no pact of any kind (also 38%).

KEY FINDINGS

- **58% want Climate Summit to end with a legally binding agreement to cut emissions**
- **But only 9% expect to see such a document**
- **27% say fighting global warming is more important than fighting terrorism**
- **67% of Britons agree with Gordon Brown's decision to attend the Copenhagen summit.**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From November 25 to November 27, 2009, Angus Reid Strategies conducted an online survey among 2,019 randomly selected British adults who are Springboard UK panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 2.2%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of Great Britain. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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Despite the low expectations, two-thirds of Britons (67%) agree with Prime Minister Gordon Brown's decision to attend the meeting.

Dealing with an Agreement

Countries attending Copenhagen are supposed to draft a new agreement to replace the 1998 Kyoto Protocol for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, which is due to expire in 2012. The United Kingdom ratified the Kyoto Protocol.

If representatives at Copenhagen do draft a legally binding pact, most respondents (55%) think the British government should ratify it, whereas only 14 per cent think the country should abstain from signing it.

A large proportion of Britons (45%) would not like to see an agreement that entails industrialized nations, including the UK, giving financial assistance to developing countries to help fund their curbing of emissions. On the contrary, 39 per cent of Britons would agree with this initiative.

Urgency to Fight Climate Change

In the UK, 47 per cent of respondents think global warming (or climate change) is a fact, and is caused by human activity. A quarter of respondents say this phenomenon is indeed happening, but is rooted in natural causes; a fifth of Britons (21%) think global warming is no more than an unproven theory.

A significant number of people across the UK say fighting climate change is more urgent than fighting terrorism (27%), the global financial crisis (23%), HIV/AIDS (22%), global poverty (20%), and world hunger (20%).

An even larger proportion of respondents say combating climate change is at least just as urgent as fighting global poverty (46%), world hunger (45%), HIV/AIDS (39%), the global financial crisis (39%), and terrorism (35%).

Cap-and-Trade vs. Carbon Tax

A majority of Britons (58%) endorse a cap-and-trade system as a way to deal with climate change, while two-in-five (42%) agree with the concept of a carbon tax.

Britain Compared to Canada and the United States

In similar polls conducted in Canada and the United States by Angus Reid Public Opinion, respondents showed the same level of hope and expectations regarding the Climate Summit. In Canada, most people (58%) want a legally binding agreement to curb emissions, but few (5%) think this will really be the case. In the U.S., 44 per cent of respondents want a legally binding document, but only 11 per cent expect one.

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Copenhagen Climate Summit

Which of the following statements comes closest to your view of global warming (or climate change)?

	Total	Gender		Age		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Global warming is a fact and is mostly caused by emissions from vehicles and industrial facilities	47%	43%	50%	49%	49%	43%
Global warming is a fact and is mostly caused by natural changes	25%	26%	23%	23%	24%	27%
Global warming is a theory that has not yet been proven	21%	24%	18%	17%	21%	25%
Not sure	7%	6%	8%	11%	7%	5%

Copenhagen Climate Summit

As you may know, representatives from 170 countries will meet in Copenhagen, Denmark, next month to participate in a Climate Summit organized by the United Nations. Which of these scenarios would you prefer to see when the Climate Summit is over?

	Total	Gender		Age		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
A legally binding agreement that sets specific targets for all signatories	58%	61%	56%	61%	57%	58%
A political compromise to meet certain milestones on a voluntary basis	19%	19%	19%	16%	20%	20%
No agreement—countries dealing with climate change independently of each other	10%	12%	8%	7%	9%	13%
Not sure	13%	8%	17%	16%	14%	9%

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Copenhagen Climate Summit

And which of these scenarios do you expect will actually happen when the Climate Summit is over?

	Gender			Age		
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
A legally binding agreement that sets specific targets for all signatories	9%	9%	10%	12%	8%	8%
A political compromise to meet certain milestones on a voluntary basis	38%	44%	33%	44%	37%	36%
No agreement—countries dealing with climate change independently of each other	38%	38%	38%	27%	39%	45%
Not sure	15%	9%	20%	17%	16%	12%

Copenhagen Climate Summit

One of the main discussions at the Copenhagen Climate Summit will revolve around whether industrialized nations should help developing nations combat climate change by providing financial assistance. Would you agree or disagree with a decision to implement a system in which United Kingdom gave financial assistance to developing nations to help them combat climate change?

	Gender			Age		
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Strongly agree	9%	11%	7%	13%	8%	7%
Moderately agree	30%	34%	26%	32%	32%	27%
Moderately disagree	19%	18%	21%	18%	18%	22%
Strongly disagree	26%	26%	25%	17%	26%	32%
Not sure	16%	10%	21%	20%	15%	12%
Agree – net	39%	46%	34%	45%	41%	34%
Disagree – net	45%	44%	46%	35%	44%	54%

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Copenhagen Climate Summit				
Do you think that dealing with climate change is more urgent, just as urgent, or less urgent than dealing with each one of the following issues?				
Total				
	More urgent	Just as urgent	Less urgent	Not sure
Terrorism	27%	35%	34%	3%
The global financial crisis	23%	39%	34%	4%
Global poverty	20%	46%	31%	4%
AIDS	22%	39%	33%	6%
World hunger	20%	45%	30%	4%

Copenhagen Climate Summit						
In 1998, several countries signed the Kyoto Protocol, an agreement that commits nations to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The United Kingdom ratified the treaty, which is due to expire in 2012. If the Copenhagen Climate Summit results in a new binding agreement, do you think the United Kingdom should ratify it?						
	Gender			Age		
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Yes	55%	60%	50%	53%	54%	55%
No	14%	18%	10%	11%	14%	16%
Not sure	32%	22%	40%	35%	32%	28%

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Copenhagen Climate Summit

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown will attend the Copenhagen Climate Summit. Do you think Prime Minister Brown should go to Copenhagen?

		Gender		Age		
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Yes	67%	66%	68%	66%	69%	67%
No	19%	24%	15%	18%	18%	21%
Not sure	13%	10%	17%	16%	13%	11%

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Copenhagen Climate Summit

There are different approaches to encourage a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Here are two examples of what some countries are doing. Would you support or oppose implementing each one of these ideas in the United Kingdom?

A Cap-and-Trade System: a carbon emissions trading system that aims to reduce pollution by giving businesses a permit to release up to a certain amount of greenhouse gas emissions. The mechanism will apply to stationary energy, transport, fugitive emissions, industrial processes, and the waste and forestry sectors.

		Gender		Age		
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Strongly support	15%	17%	14%	18%	16%	12%
Moderately support	43%	40%	44%	40%	42%	45%
Moderately oppose	11%	13%	10%	13%	11%	10%
Strongly oppose	10%	14%	6%	5%	10%	14%
Not sure	21%	16%	26%	23%	21%	20%
Support – net	58%	57%	58%	59%	58%	56%
Oppose – net	21%	27%	16%	18%	21%	24%

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Copenhagen Climate Summit

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A Carbon Tax: a tax on each ton of emitted carbon dioxide aimed at discouraging the use of polluting sources of energy, such as oil, gas, and coal. The mechanism will apply to households and enterprises.

	Gender		Age			
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Strongly support	11%	13%	10%	10%	12%	11%
Moderately support	30%	31%	29%	30%	31%	30%
Moderately oppose	18%	19%	17%	22%	16%	17%
Strongly oppose	24%	26%	22%	17%	26%	26%
Not sure	17%	12%	21%	20%	15%	15%
Support – net	42%	44%	39%	40%	43%	41%
Oppose – net	42%	44%	40%	40%	42%	43%

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Angus Reid Public Opinion is the public affairs practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specializing in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Public Opinion team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995

Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum (www.angusreidforum.com), Springboard America (www.springboardamerica.com) and Springboard UK (www.springboarduk.com) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.

Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election.

<http://bit.ly/4zxf1S>

Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes.

More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at

<http://bit.ly/3z0u1l>

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

Copies of this poll are available on our website:

<http://www.visioncritical.com/category/global-opinions-and-trends>

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