

ITALIANS LESS SENSITIVE TO CLIMATE CHANGE BUT SCIENTIFIC DATA BECOME INCREASINGLY RELEVANT

The new data coming from the [Science and Society Monitor](#) by *Observa* about public perception on climate changes, on the occasion of [the Copenhagen International Conference](#)

Italians' sensitivity towards climate has decreased: over the past two years perception that the Earth climate is becoming warmer has decreased significantly.

In comparison to 2007, the percentage of citizens persuaded that climate is actually changing has decreased from 90% to 71,7%.

Among those, however, the relevance of data and scientific studies increases: in 2007 for two out of three perception on global warming was based on personal experience. Today the data provided by scientists are decisive for 38% - a figure almost doubled compared to 18.7% in 2007. The significance attributed to scientific data is particularly pronounced among graduates, while among the less educated prevails an opinion built upon one's own daily perception. The weights of scientific debate comes out, albeit in a different way, even among the uncertain (9,1%): more than half remains silent believing scientists are in disagreement among themselves.

Remains rather weak the influence of environmental groups: only 13% (a fixed rate) attribute those groups a significant role in their perception on climate change. A judgment that becomes markedly negative among the 'sceptics': almost one in two believes that "the environmentalists exaggerate always".

However, the attention towards the issue keeps high: 63% consider themselves to be informed on climate change.

Opinions on Climate Changes. Comparison Monitor 2007 and 2009 (% , 2007 n=988; 2009 n=1020)

	2007	2009	What makes you think so	2007	2009
Yes, Earth's climate is actually getting warmer	90,0	71,7	The summers are becoming hotter and winters are becoming less cold	67,3	49,4
			Scientific data demonstrate this	18,7	38,0
			Environmentalists have been saying this for years	13,9	12,6
No, Earth's climate is not actually getting warmer	5,9	19,1	A very hot summer does not mean anything (2007) – Last winter has been very cold (2009)	52,1	28,4
			Environmentalists always exaggerate	26,3	48,9
			There is no scientific evidence	21,6	22,6
I don't know	4,1	9,2	I am not well informed on the topic	52,5	37,0
			Scientists are not in agreement among themselves	39,3	51,2
			I am not interested in this	8,2	11,9
Total	100,0 (998)	100,0 (1020)			

Source: *Observa – Science in Society*, www.observa.it

Since 2002 the *Science and Society Monitor* is the first permanent monitor on Italian trends and public opinion orientation towards research and technological innovation. The Monitor is an initiative led by *Observa – Science in Society* and supported by the *Compagnia di San Paolo*.

The survey was conducted by means of CATI-method with a sample of 1020 subjects, stratified by gender, age and geographical area of residence, and representing the Italian population aged 15 and over.

Observa – Science in Society is a no-profit independent research centre aims at promoting reflection and debate on the relations between science and society, fostering the dialogue among researchers, policy makers and citizens.