

**2023-24 RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE STUDY (RLS-III)  
FINAL TOPLINE  
JULY 17, 2023-MARCH 4, 2024  
N=36,908**

This topline displays question wording used in the online English questionnaire. For additional details about question wording, refer to the [English version of the paper questionnaire](#), the [Spanish version of the paper questionnaire](#), or the combined [English/Spanish version of the web and phone questionnaire](#).

Many questions in the 2023-24 Religious Landscape Study (RLS) previously were asked in the 2014 and/or 2007 Religious Landscape Studies. However, the surveys in 2007 and 2014 were administered by live interviewers on the telephone, while most respondents to the 2023-24 survey answered the questionnaire online or on paper. This change in the survey's mode of administration complicates comparisons between the earlier studies and the new survey, because the "mode shift" affects the results of some questions much more than others.

To help determine which questions are comparable with past surveys and which are not comparable, Pew Research Center conducted a "bridge study" entirely by telephone (for testing purposes only) alongside the main 2023-24 RLS survey. Both surveys asked the same questions. The Center's researchers examined the results and used that information, together with other tests and analyses conducted in recent years, to make case-by-case decisions about the comparability of the 2023-24 results with the findings of previous landscape studies on specific questions.

In this topline, every question in the 2023-24 survey that was also asked in a prior (2007 or 2014) landscape study has been assigned a color – green ("go"), red ("stop") or yellow ("proceed with caution"). Questions that were asked for the first time in the 2023-24 RLS are not given any color.

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**The results of green questions can be directly compared with the previous Religious Landscape Studies, despite the mode shift.** On green questions, this topline shows the new survey's results and also the results from all prior landscape studies on which the identical question was asked (the 2007 RLS, the 2014 RLS, or both years).

**The results of red questions cannot be compared with the previous landscape studies because of the mode shift.** The telephone bridge study (and, in some cases, other methodological research) indicates that people tend to answer these questions differently when responding online/on paper than they do when talking with a live person on the telephone, and thus the new results should not be

compared with the earlier findings. On red questions, this topline shows only the new survey’s results; it does not show estimates from either of the earlier Religious Landscape Studies.

**The results of yellow questions can be cautiously compared with the previous landscape studies.** The bridge study and other testing suggest the mode shift has some impact on how people tend to answer these questions, but the impact is relatively modest. On yellow questions, this topline includes both the new survey’s results and the findings of prior landscape studies, with the prior findings displayed as “trends for comparison.”

This topline includes a footnote for each question that was asked in both the 2023-24 RLS and a prior landscape study. The footnote indicates whether the question has been designated as green, red or yellow. Additionally, the footnotes for the yellow questions include brief descriptions of how the mode shift affects results on that particular question. For more details about the telephone bridge study and the way Pew Research Center made decisions about the comparability of the 2023-24 results with the prior studies, refer to [Appendix A](#).

	Sample size	Margin of error at 95% confidence level
U.S. adults	36,908	+/- 0.8 percentage points

**ASK ALL:**

QB2c

Which statement comes closer to your view, even if neither is exactly right?

[NOTE: This question has been coded as **yellow**<sup>1</sup>]

Jul 17, 2023-  
Mar 4, 2024

38	Stricter environmental laws and regulations cost too many jobs and hurt the economy
60	Stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost
2	No answer

<sup>1</sup> The results on this question can be cautiously compared with previous Religious Landscape Studies. The companion bridge study we conducted by telephone (for testing purposes only) shows that the share saying “cost too many jobs and hurt the economy” is slightly higher (by 3 percentage points) in the main survey than in the telephone bridge study, as is the share saying “worth the cost” (by 2 points), while the share who don’t answer the question is lower in the main survey than in the bridge survey (by 6 points). Readers should exercise caution in comparing the absolute value of the substantive responses with those of the prior studies, but the balance of opinion (more support for the “worth the cost” option) is the same in both the main survey and the bridge study. Refer to [Appendix A](#) for details.

**PHONE TREND PRESENTED FOR COMPARISON**

	Stricter environmental laws and regulations cost too many jobs <u>and hurt the economy</u>	Stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost	No <u>answer</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> Neither/ Both <u>equally</u> <sup>2</sup>
Jun 4-Sep 30, 2014	38	57	3	2
May 8-Aug 13, 2007	30	61	6	3

**OTHER QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**


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<sup>2</sup> In the 2014 and 2007 surveys, respondents could volunteer the response "Neither/Both equally." This was not possible in the 2023-24 survey.