#### PewResearchCenter

### **Public Trust in Science and Scientists**

#### **Cary Funk**

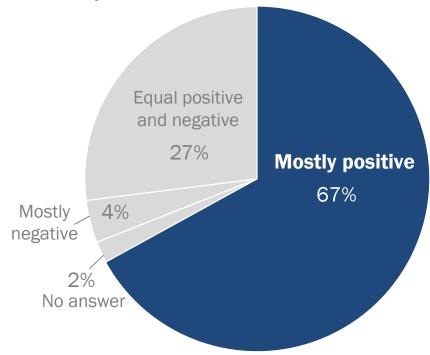
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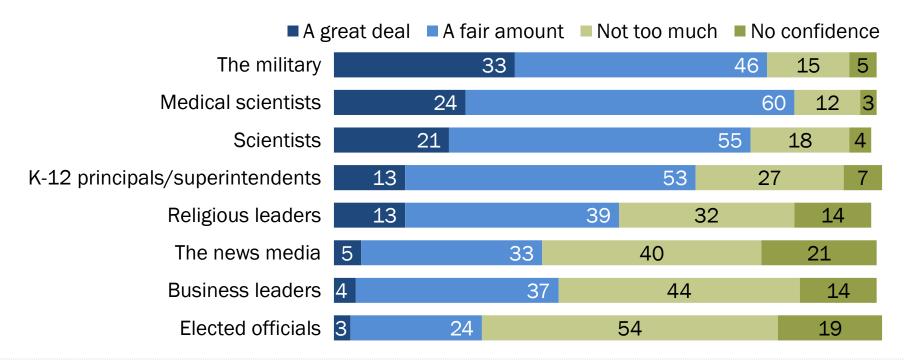
# Majority of Americans say science has had a mostly positive effect on society

Science has had a \_\_\_\_ effect on society

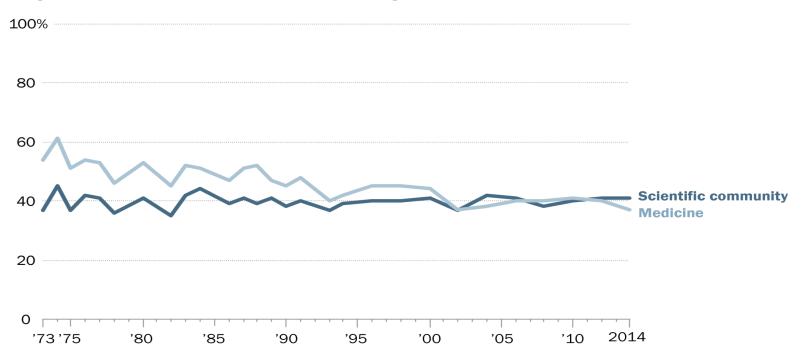


# Public confidence to act in the public interest is highest for military, followed by medical scientists and scientists

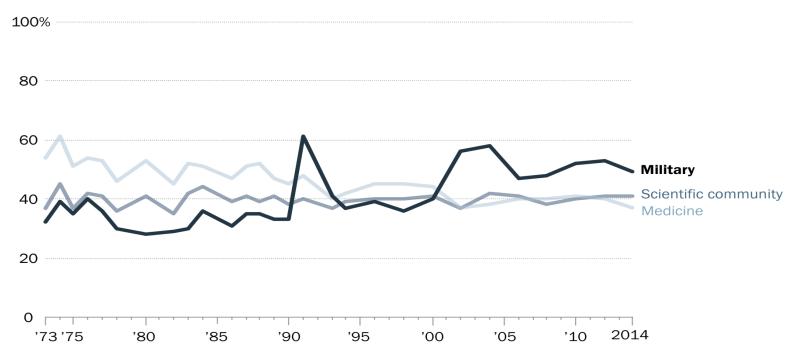
Have \_\_\_\_ of confidence in each of the following groups to act in the best interests of the public



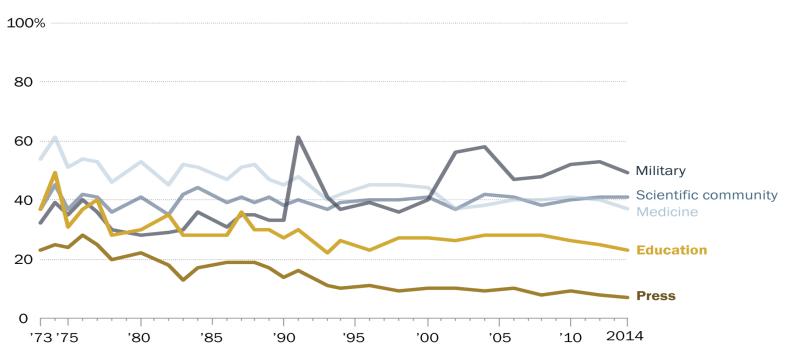
## Confidence in the leaders of the scientific community has been stable since the 1970s



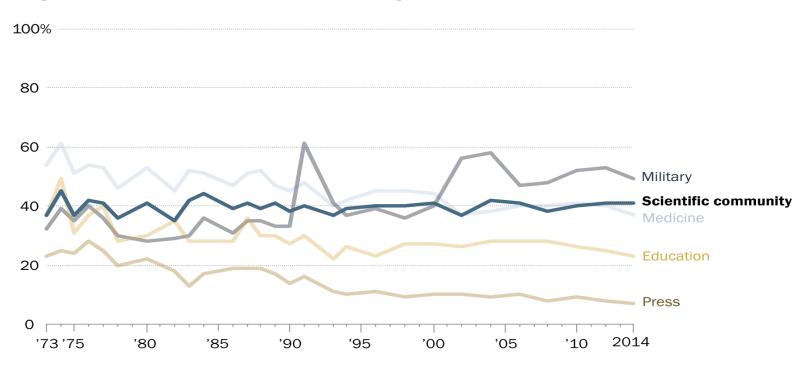
#### Confidence in the leaders of the military has gone up



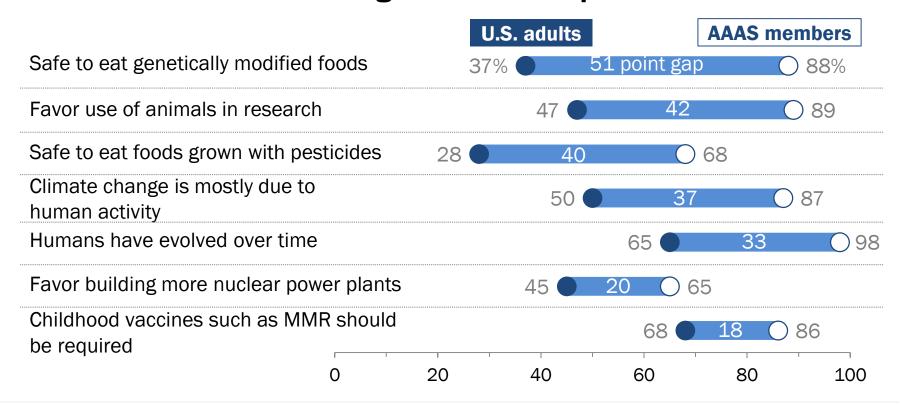
#### **Declining confidence in the leaders of other institutions**



#### **Confidence in the leaders of the scientific community**

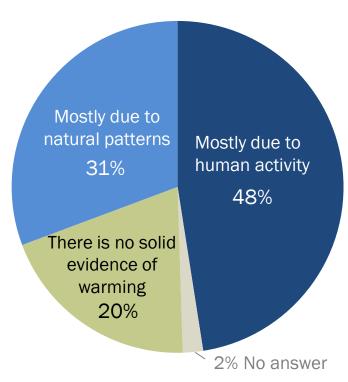


# Gaps between AAAS members and the public on a range of science topics



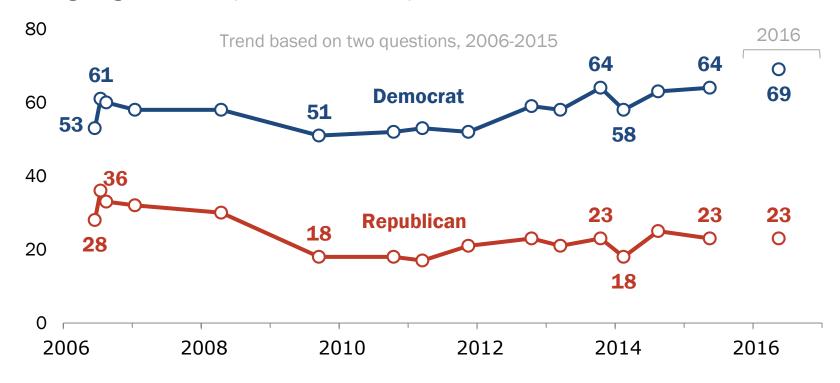
# About half of Americans believe Earth is warming due to human activity

The Earth is getting warmer...



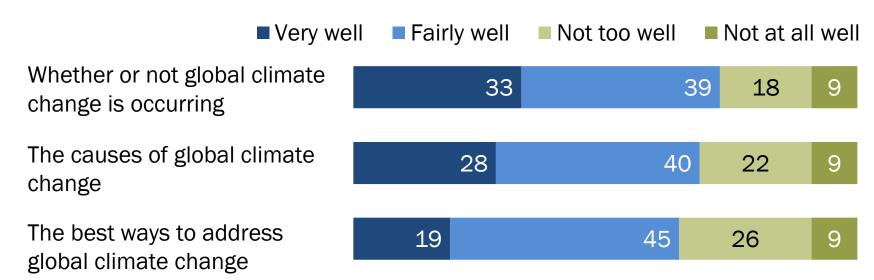
#### A decade of political divides over climate change

Earth is getting warmer mostly due to human activity



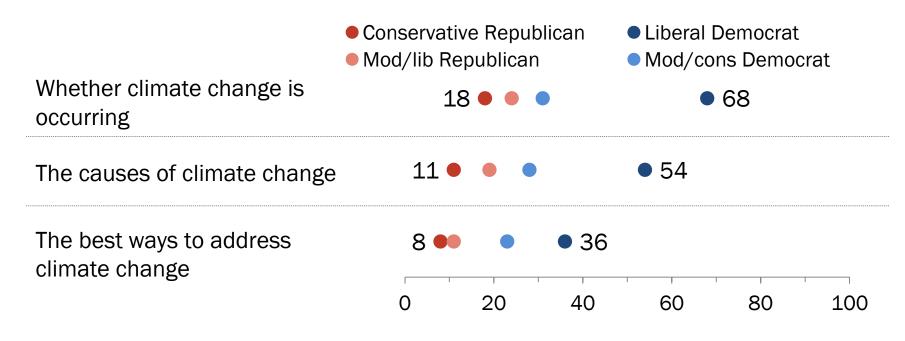
# Few Americans think climate scientists understand these aspects of global climate change very well

Climate scientists understand ...



## Deep political divides over how well climate scientists understand climate-related issues

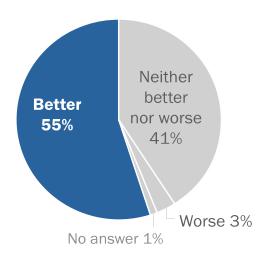
Climate scientists understand very well ...



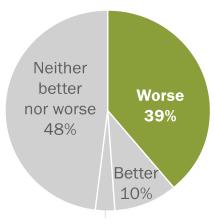
Note: Republicans and Democrats include independents and others who "lean" toward the parties. Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults May 10-June 6, 2016.

# Most Americans see health benefits in organics, a sizable minority sees GM foods as a health risk

**Organic produce** is \_\_\_ for health than conventionally grown produce

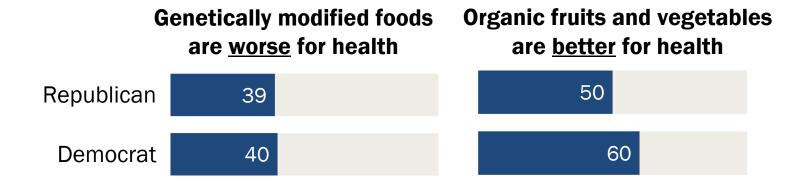


**GM foods** are \_\_\_ for health than non-GM foods

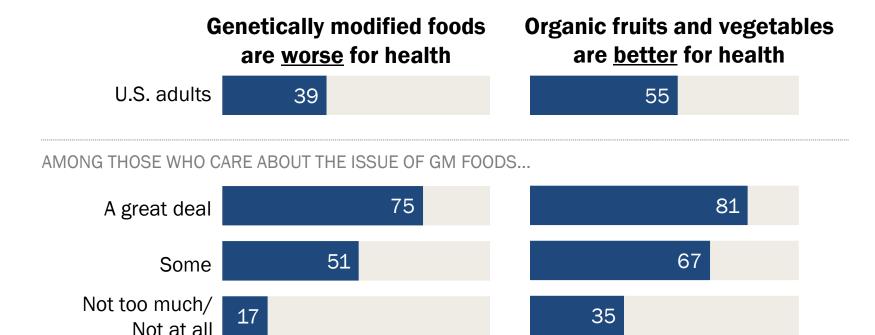


No answer 3%

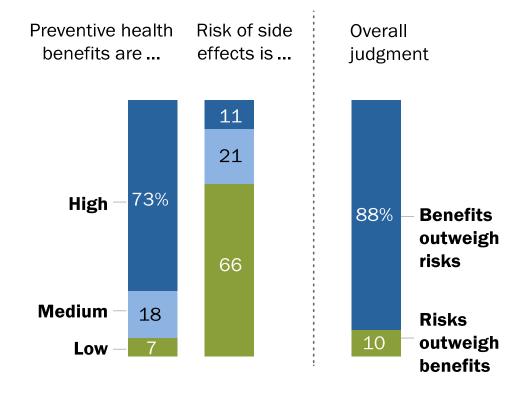
# Democrats and Republicans hold largely similar views about genetically modified, organic foods



# Mirroring perspectives on the health effects of GM foods and organic produce

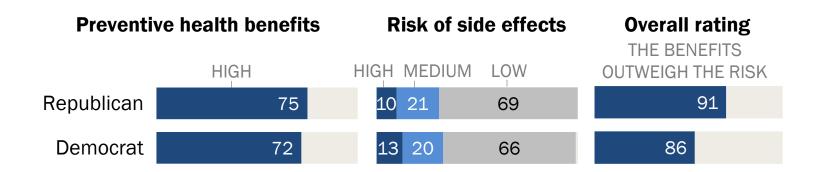


# Most Americans rate MMR vaccine's preventive health benefits as high, risk of side effects as low

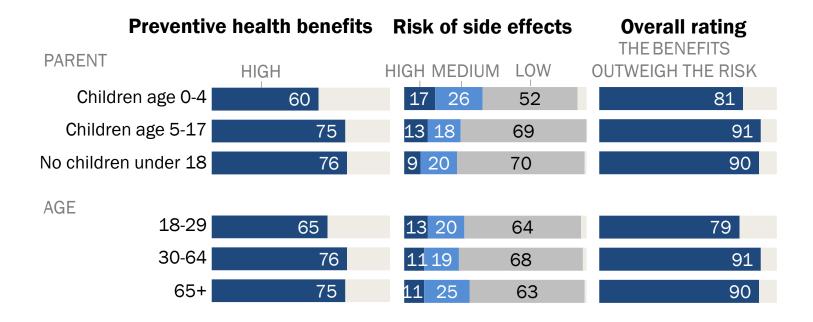


Note: Responses of low/very low and high/very high are combined. Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults May 10-June 6, 2016.

# Majorities of Republicans and Democrats say the MMR vaccine has high preventive health benefits, low risk of side effects

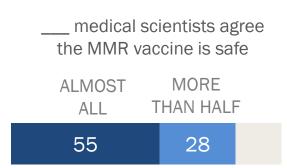


## Parents of younger children see lower benefits and a higher risk of side effects from the MMR vaccine



# TRUST AND MISTRUST OF SCIENTISTS AND THEIR RESEARCH March 1, 2016

# Public sees limited scientific consensus, especially on the causes of climate change and GM food safety



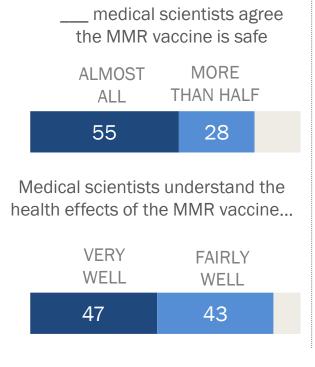


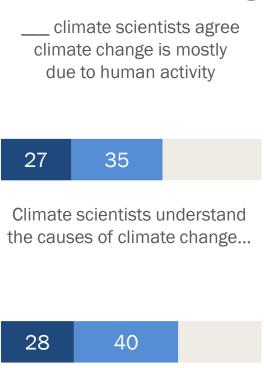


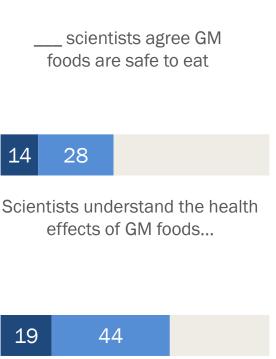
\_\_ scientists agree GM

foods are safe to eat

# Many Americans are skeptical of scientific understanding, especially on causes of climate change, GM food safety

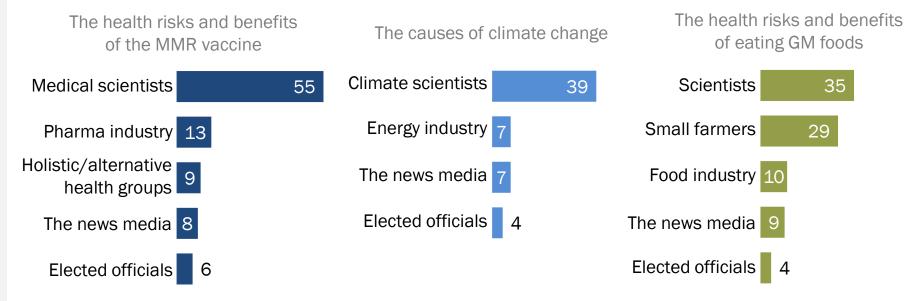






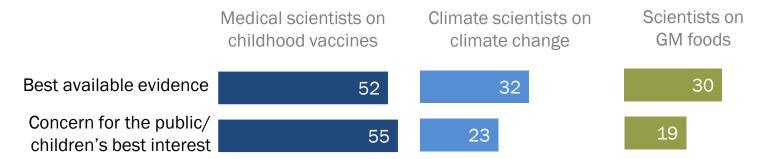
# Americans are more likely to trust scientists than other groups for information about the MMR vaccine, climate change, GM foods

Trust each of these groups a lot to give full and accurate information on...



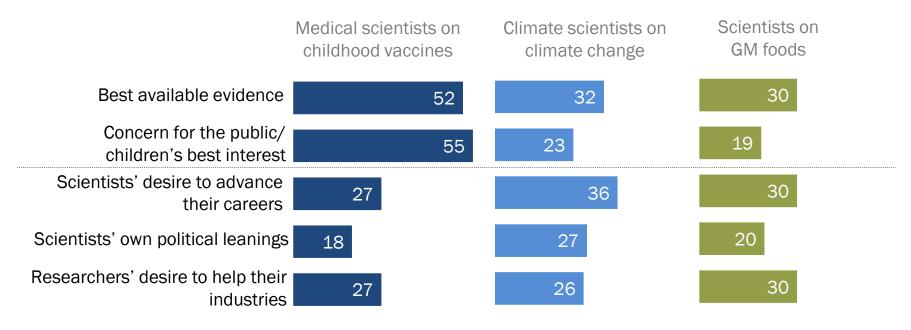
## About half of Americans or fewer say the best available scientific evidence influences research most of the time

Research findings are influenced by each of the following most of the time

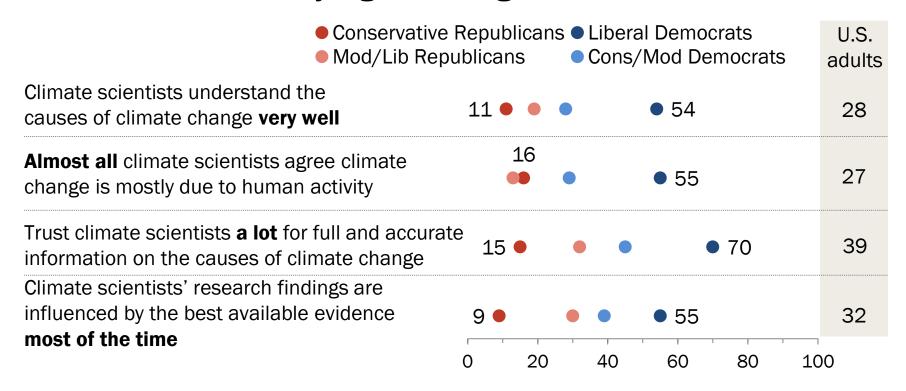


## Americans most inclined to say best available scientific evidence influences research on childhood vaccines

Research findings are influenced by each of the following most of the time

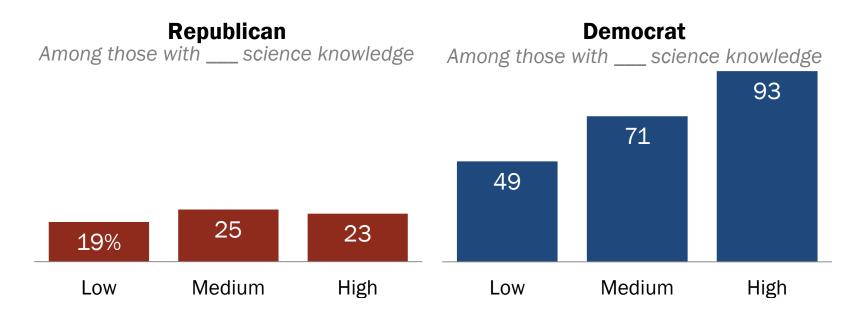


# Trust in climate scientists is low among Republicans; considerably higher among liberal Democrats



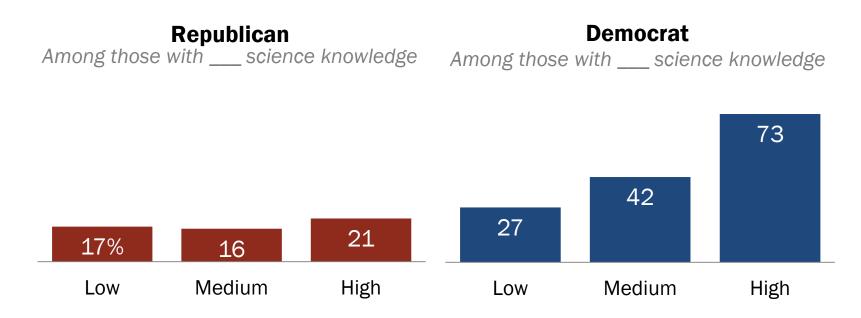
# Most Democrats with high science knowledge believe climate change is due to human activity

The Earth is getting warmer mostly due to human activity



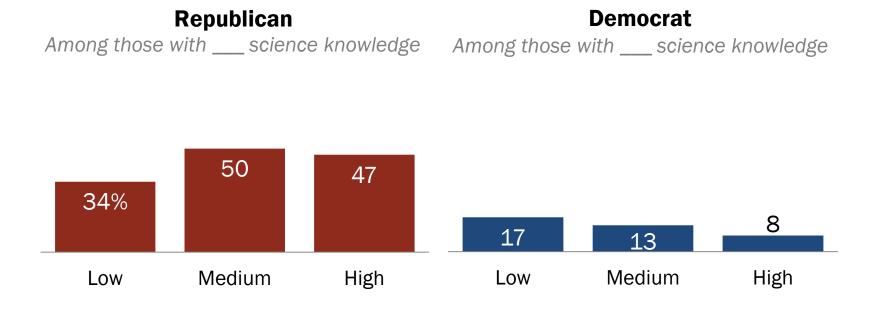
# Role of science knowledge in perceptions of climate research depends on one's political views

Climate scientists' research findings are influenced by the best available scientific evidence most of the time

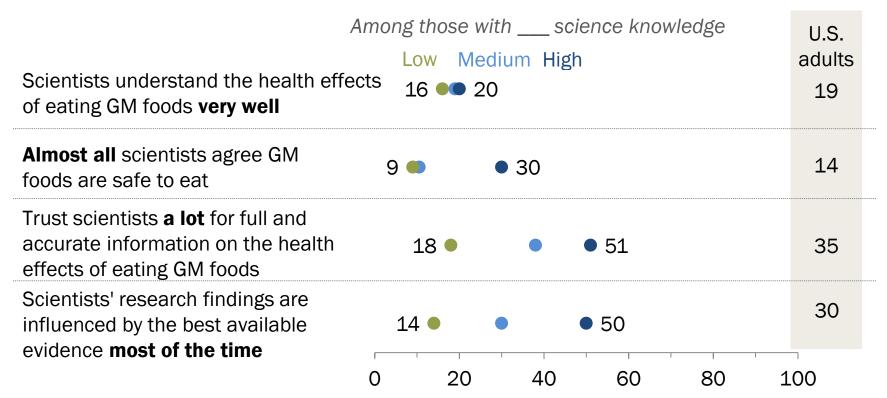


# Republicans with at least medium science knowledge more inclined to see climate research as influenced by scientists' political leanings

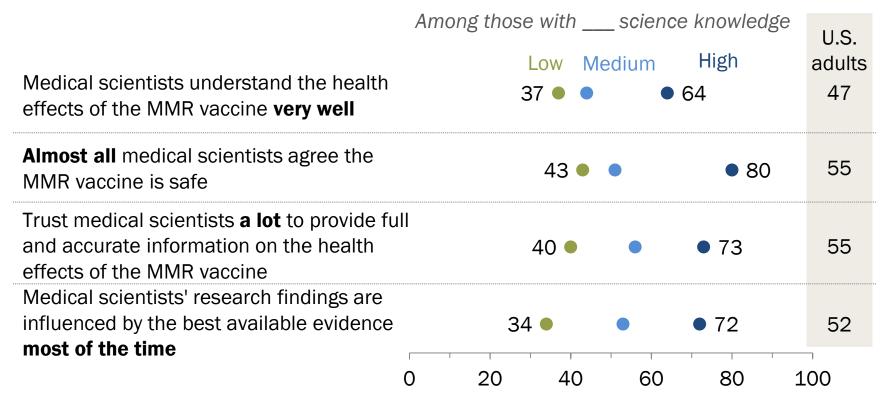
Climate scientists' research findings are influenced by scientists' own political leanings most of the time



## Americans with high science knowledge are more trusting of scientists and their research on GM foods



## High science knowledge Americans have more positive views of medical scientists and their research on the MMR vaccine

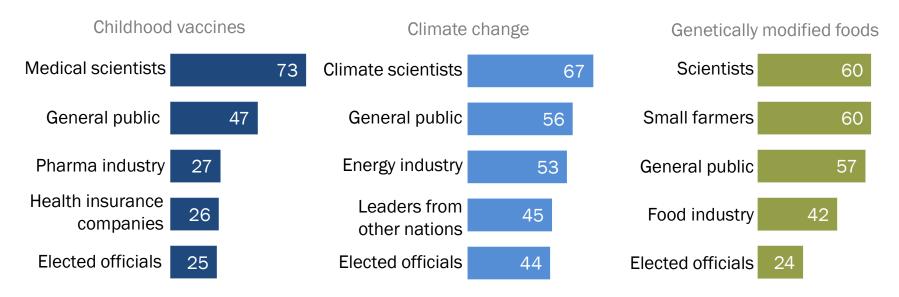


## Younger Americans are more skeptical of medical scientists and their research on childhood vaccines

Medical scientists understand the health effects of the MMR vaccine <b>very well</b>	18-29 30-64 65+ 39 • • 51	U.S. adults 47
<b>Almost all</b> medical scientists agree the MMR vaccine is safe	44 ● ● 66	55
Trust medical scientists <b>a lot</b> to provide full and accurate information on the health effects of the MMR vaccine	54 ●● 59	55
Medical scientists' research findings are influenced by the best available evidence <b>most of the time</b>	47 ●● ● 60	52
0	20 40 60 80 10	00

# Most Americans say scientists should have a major role in science-related policy decisions

Each of these groups should have a major role in making policy decisions about ...



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