



Special Eurobarometer 538

Climate Change

Summary Report

Fieldwork: May – June 2023

This document does not represent the point of view of the European Commission. The interpretations and opinions contained in it are solely those of the authors.

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INTRODUCTION



With the European Green Deal, the European Union has committed to becoming the first climate-neutral continent. The EU is seeking to secure green economic growth, decoupled from resource use, leaving no person or place behind. The Green Deal was launched in 2020 with the commitment to cut net EU greenhouse emissions by at least 55% compared to 1990 levels by the year 2030, and to net zero by 2050. In June 2021 the European Climate Law was adopted, creating a legal obligation for EU countries to meet both goals.

Key to meeting these objectives is the adoption of a set of climate policy proposals known as the 'Fit for 55 package'. This all-of-society package includes rules on energy, transport, emissions trading and reductions, and land use and forestry. It comprises both new initiatives and revisions of existing legislation. To finance the transition to climate neutrality 30% of total EU expenditure will go towards climate-related projects until 2027.¹

The green transition needed to implement these reforms is critical to the long-term prosperity of the EU. The changing climate is already having a significant impact on the European economy and its citizens. The summer temperature in Europe in 2022 was the highest on record, with significant impacts on health. Across Europe, over 61,000 deaths were attributed heat-related causes that year². On the economic front in the last 40 years climate-related events have caused financial losses of more than €487 billion globally; the economic cost of river flooding and forest fires alone exceeds €7 billion per year on average³. The EU day for the victims of the global climate crisis was established on 15 July 2023 to commemorate those lost in climate-related disasters and raise awareness of the need to bolster our climate resilience against such events.

The green transition will provide wide-ranging benefits to citizens and future generations including, better and more affordable, public transport, a secure supply of cleaner energy, the restoration of biodiversity and cleaner air, and new future-proof jobs and skills training for the transition.⁴

This Special Eurobarometer is the latest in a series focusing on Europeans' attitudes to climate change, the latest being Special Eurobarometer 513 of March-April 2021⁵.

This latest edition of the report covers six main areas:

- Europeans' perceptions of the seriousness of climate change.
- Taking action on climate change: who has primary responsibility for tackling climate change, and the types of personal actions taken to help tackle climate change.
- Attitudes to actions to fight climate change and the transition to clean energy: including attitudes to taking action on climate change, support for reducing fossil fuel imports and providing public financial support for clean energy, cost implications of action vs inaction, and attitudes towards adaption to the adverse impacts of climate change.

- Looking to the future: whether national governments are doing enough to tackle climate change; whether national governments or the European Union should set targets for renewable energy; the importance of national governments and the EU taking action to improve energy efficiency; and support for the EU economy to become climate-neutral by 2050.
- The EU and the energy crisis: should the speed of the green transition be increased in light of the current energy crisis, and how the EU and national governments should respond to relieve the economic pressure caused by the energy crisis.
- Europeans' access to nature and green spaces
- Europeans' exposure to environmental and climate risks and threats

Where possible, results will be compared with those from previous surveys. However, care should be taken when making comparisons to the previous survey in 2021, due to methodological differences as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Specifically, a much higher proportion of respondents were interviewed online -rather than in person- for the 2021 edition due to the lockdown restrictions in place at the time.

This survey was carried out by the Kantar network in the 27 Member States of the European Union between 10 May and 5 June 2023.

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/climate-change/>

⁴ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

² <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-023-02419-z>

⁵ [Climate Change - July 2021 -- Eurobarometer survey \(europa.eu\)](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/climate-change/)

Methodology used for this survey

This Special Eurobarometer 538 on Climate change was part of the Eurobarometer wave 99.3 and was conducted between 10 May and 5 June 2023. The methodology used was that of the Standard Eurobarometer surveys carried out by the Directorate-General for Communication ("Media monitoring and Eurobarometer")⁶. Interviews were conducted through face-to-face interviews, either physically in people's homes or through remote video interaction in the appropriate national language. Interviews with remote video interaction ("online face-to-face" or CAVI, Computer Assisted Video Interviewing) were conducted only in Czechia, Denmark, Malta, and Finland. A technical note concerning the interviews conducted by the member institutes of the Kantar network is annexed to the full report. It also specifies the confidence intervals.

Throughout the report, results are compared to Special Eurobarometer 513 of 2021⁷. However, due to the impact of COVID-19, in some countries the methodology used in 2021 was the Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI). The countries where the methodology differs completely compared to 2021 are Belgium, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Portugal, Finland, Sweden. The countries where the methodology differs partially compared to 2021 are Greece, Malta, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Slovakia. Therefore, evolutions compared to 2021 should be interpreted with caution. When possible, results have been compared to Special Eurobarometer 490 of 2019⁸. The technical note annexed to this report also specifies the differences in methodologies between 2023 and 2021.

In accordance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation⁹ (GDPR), respondents were asked whether they would agree to be asked questions on issues that could be considered "sensitive".

Note: In this report, EU countries are referred to by their official abbreviations. The abbreviations used in this report are:

Belgium	BE	Lithuania	LT
Bulgaria	BG	Luxembourg	LU
Czechia	CZ	Hungary	HU
Denmark	DK	Malta	MT
Germany	DE	The Netherlands	NL
Estonia	EE	Austria	AT
Ireland	IE	Poland	PL
Greece	EL	Portugal	PT
Spain	ES	Romania	RO
France	FR	Slovenia	SI
Croatia	HR	Slovakia	SK
Italy	IT	Finland	FI
Republic of Cyprus	CY *	Sweden	SE
Latvia	LV		

European Union – weighted average for the 27 Member States	EU27
BE, FR, IT, LU, DE, AT, ES, PT, IE, NL, FI, EL, EE, SI, CY, MT, SK, LV, LT	euro area
BG, CZ, DK, HR, HU, PL, RO, SE	Non-euro area

* Cyprus as a whole is one of the 27 European Union Member States. However, the *acquis communautaire* has been suspended in the part of the country not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus. For practical reasons, only the interviews carried out in the part of the country controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus are included in the 'CY' category and in the EU27 average.

We would like to thank the people across the European Union who have offered their time to take part in this survey.

Without their active participation, this study would not have been possible.

⁶ <https://www.europa.eu/eurobarometer>

⁷ [Climate Change - July 2021 - - Eurobarometer survey \(europa.eu\)](https://www.europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys-climate-change-july-2021_en)

⁸ [Climate change - September 2019 - - Eurobarometer survey \(europa.eu\)](https://www.europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys-climate-change-september-2019_en)

⁹ 2016/679

I. EUROPEAN PERCEPTIONS OF CLIMATE CHANGE



1. Perceptions of climate change as a global problem

Climate change ranks third among the single most serious problems facing the world as a whole

Respondents were given a list of 11 problems, and asked which they considered the most serious facing the world today.¹⁰ **Climate change ranks as the third most serious problem**, after ‘poverty, hunger and lack of drinking water’ and ‘armed conflicts’.

One in five (20%) mention **poverty, hunger and lack of drinking water**, an increase of three percentage points since March–April 2021 and an increase in rank from second to first position.

Almost as many respondents mention **armed conflicts** (19%, +15 percentage points). This problem has moved from 8th position in the previous survey to second place in the current wave¹¹. This likely reflects the outbreak of war following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Almost one in five (17%, -1 pp) think **climate change** is the single most serious problem. It now ranks third after ranking first in 2021.

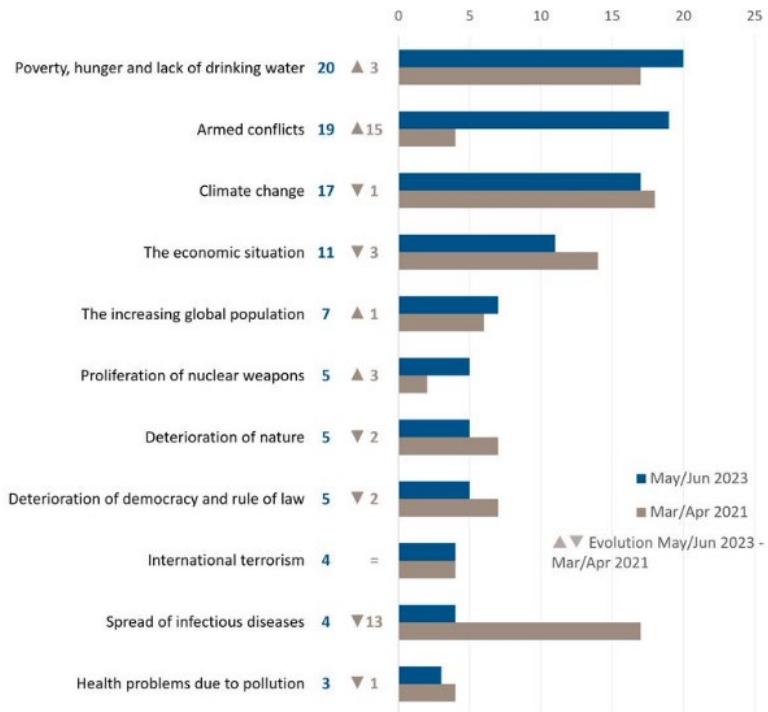
The **economic situation** maintains forth position (11%, -3 pp) and is the only other problem mentioned by at least one in ten respondents. The **increasing global population** has risen from seventh to fifth position (7%, +1 pp).

Other problems are mentioned by no more than one in twenty: the **proliferation of nuclear weapons** (5%, +3), the **deterioration of nature** (5%, -2pp), the **deterioration of democracy and rule of law** (5%, -2 pp), **international terrorism** (4%, no change), the **spread of infectious diseases** (4%, -13 pp) and **health problems due to pollution** (3%, -1 pp).

It is worth noting a considerable decline in the mentions of the **spread of infectious diseases** (-13 pp), dropping from third to ninth position¹².

Overall, more than one in five (22%) respondents select either **climate change** or the **deterioration of nature** as the single most serious problem facing the world as a whole.

QC1a Which of the following do you consider to be the single most serious problem facing the world as a whole? (% - EU27)



¹⁰ QC1a. Which of the following do you consider to be the single most serious problem facing the world as a whole?

¹¹ On 24 February 2022, in between fieldwork for the 2021 and 2023 waves of this survey, Russia invaded Ukraine, and its war of aggression is ongoing.

¹² The previous survey was conducted approximately one year into the Covid-19 pandemic

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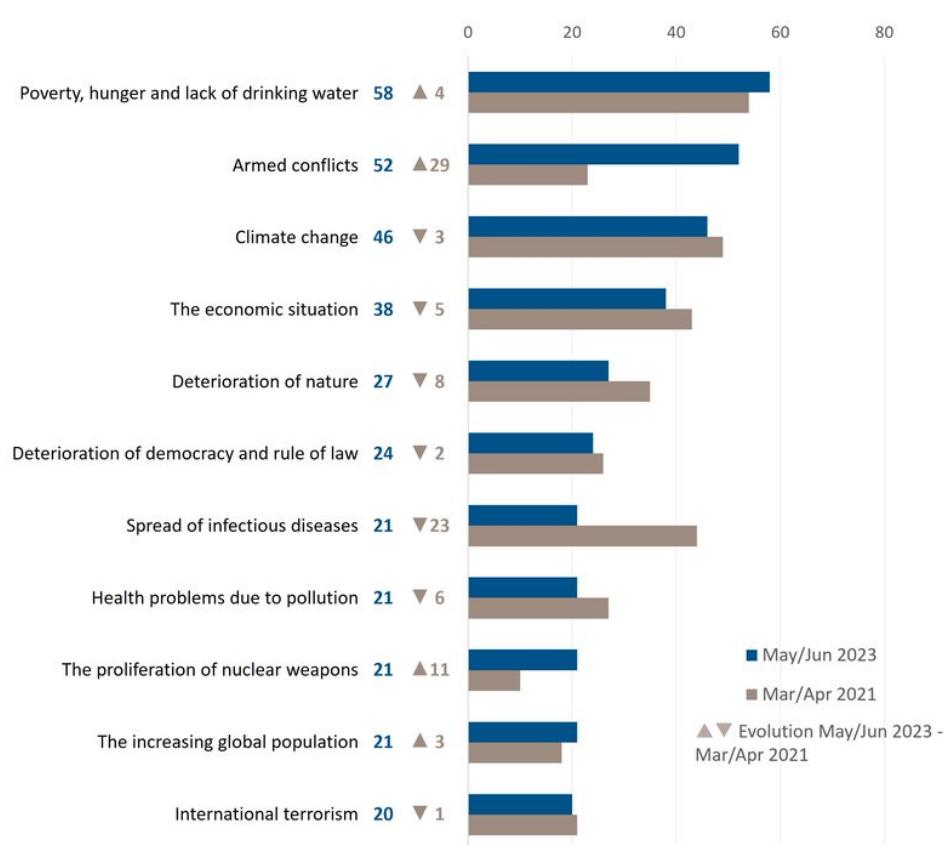
In a subsequent question, respondents were able to nominate up to three additional serious problems from the same list¹³. The result presented below combine the results of both questions. Considering all respondents' answers, the top four ranked problems remain the same. Almost six in ten (58%, +4 percentage points) think **poverty, hunger and lack of drinking water** is one of the most serious problems, while 52% say this about **armed conflicts** – an increase of 29 percentage points since March-April 2021. These are the only problems considered serious by at least half of all respondents.

More than four in ten (46%, -3 pp) say **climate change** is a serious problem, while 38% (-5 pp) mention the **economic situation** and 27% (-8 pp) the **deterioration of nature**.

All the other problems are mentioned by at least one in five: the **deterioration of democracy and rule of law** (24%, -2 pp), the **spread of infectious diseases** (21%, -23 pp), **health problems due to pollution** (21%, -6 pp), the **proliferation of nuclear weapons** (21%, +11 pp), the **increasing world population** (21%, 3 pp) and **international terrorism** (20%, -1 pp).

Compared to March-April 2021, respondents are now much less likely to mention the spread of infectious diseases, but much more likely to mention armed conflicts and the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

QC1T Which of the following do you consider to be the single most serious problem facing the world as a whole?
(% - EU27)



¹³ QC1T. Which of the following do you consider to be the single most serious problem facing the world as a whole?

2. Perceived seriousness of climate change

Almost eight in ten Europeans think climate change is a very serious problem

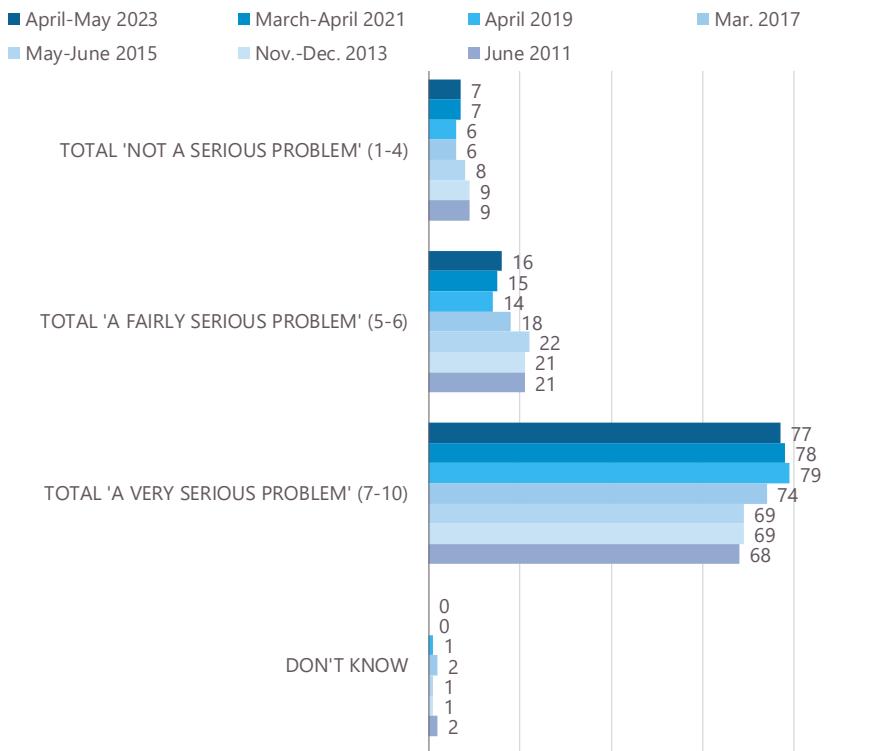
Respondents were asked to say how serious a problem they think climate change is at this moment, using a scale from 1-10. '1' means it is "not at all a serious problem" and '10' meaning it is "an extremely serious problem"¹⁴. Their answers have been divided into three groups: respondents who consider climate change "a very serious problem" (answers 7 to 10), those who think it is "a fairly serious problem" (answers 5 and 6), and those who think it is "not a serious problem" (answers 1 to 4).

More than three quarters of respondents (77%, -1 percentage point since March-April 2021) think climate change is a very serious problem at this moment. In fact, even when considering only answers 8 to 10, more than six in ten respondents consider it a serious problem. Even more, 31% give it the maximum score of 10, indicating they think it is an extremely serious problem.

More than one in ten (16%, +1 pp) think climate change is a fairly serious problem, and 7% (no change) think climate change is not a serious problem.

The proportion of respondents who think climate change is a very serious problem has remained relatively stable since April 2019.

QC2R And how serious a problem do you think climate change is at this moment? Please use a scale from 1 to 10, with '1' meaning it is "not at all a serious problem" and '10' meaning it is "an extremely serious problem".
 (% - EU27)



¹⁴ QC2R. And how serious a problem do you think climate change is at this moment? Please use a scale from 1 to 10, with '1' meaning it is "not at all a serious problem" and '10' meaning it is "an extremely serious problem".

II. TAKING ACTION TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE



1. Responsibility for tackling climate change

Most Europeans think that within the EU it is the European Union, national governments and business and industry that are responsible for tackling climate change

Respondents were asked which actors within the EU (from a list of six) they think are responsible for tackling climate change. Multiple responses were possible.¹⁵

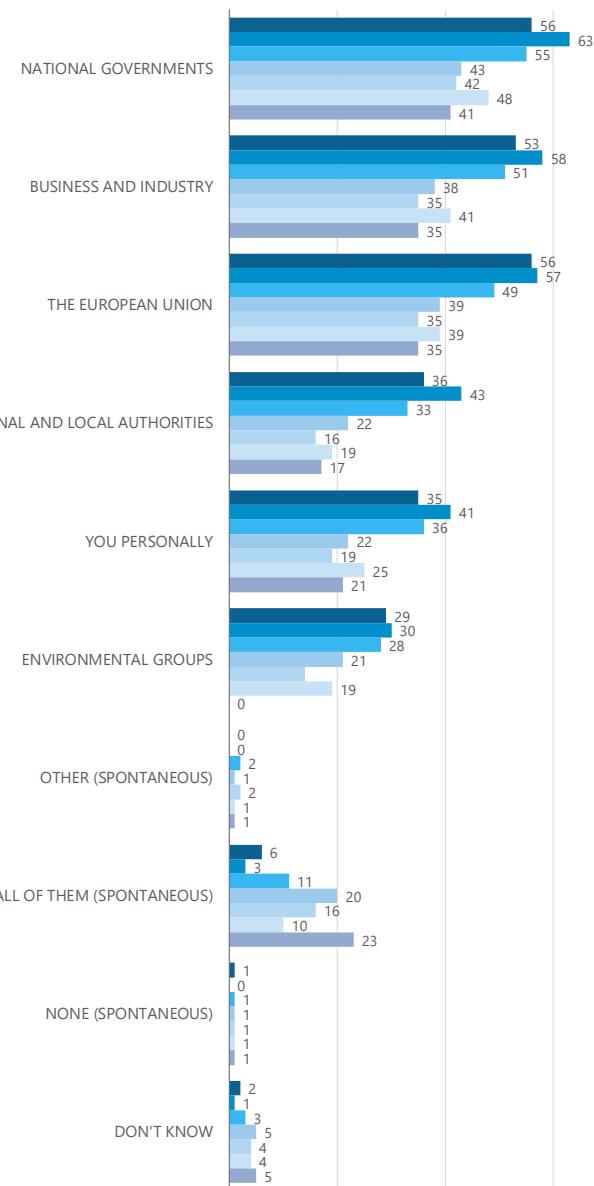
The **European Union** (56%, -1 percentage points since March-April 2021), and **national governments** (56%, -6 pp) are the most mentioned, followed by **business and industry** (53%, -5 pp). All of these are less likely to be mentioned than they were in March-April 2021, but they remain the only actors mentioned by at least four in ten respondents. Taking a longer view, respondents are now much more likely to place responsibility for tackling climate change with each of these than in the period 2013- 2017.

More than one third of respondents say **regional and local authorities** (36%, -7 pp) or **themselves personally** (35%, -6 pp) are responsible, while 29% (-1 pp) think **environmental groups** are responsible.

Just over one in twenty (6%, +3 pp) spontaneously say all of the actors listed are responsible within the EU for tackling climate change.

QC3 In your opinion, who within the EU is responsible for tackling climate change? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)
(% - EU27)

■ April-May 2023 ■ March-April 2021 ■ April 2019
■ Mar. 2017 ■ May-June 2015 ■ Nov.-Dec. 2013
■ June 2011



¹⁵ QC3. In your opinion, who within the EU is responsible for tackling climate change?

2. Personal action to tackle climate change

More than six in ten Europeans have personally taken action to fight climate change in the last six months

Since March-April 2021 there has been little change in the proportion of respondents who say they have taken personal action to fight climate change in the past 6 months (63%, -1 percentage point)¹⁶. More than one third (36%, +1 pp) say they have taken no action, while 1% (no change) say they don't know.

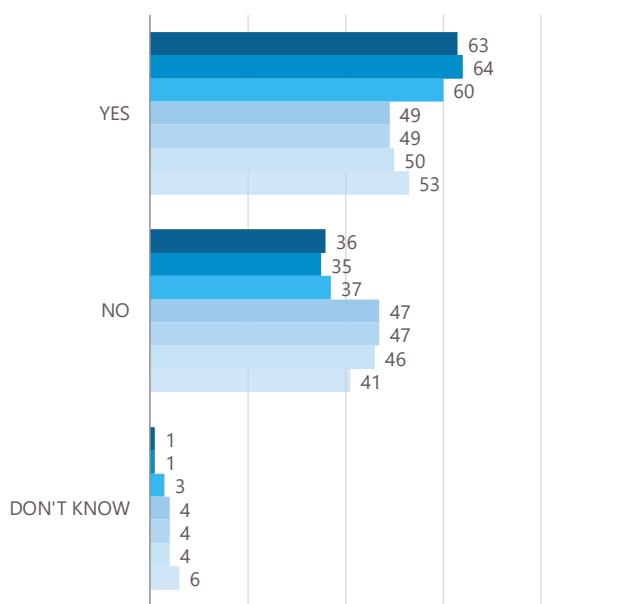
Over the longer term, the proportion taking action has remained relatively stable since April 2019, but considerably higher than the period 2011-2017.

QCS Have you personally taken any action to fight climate change over the past six months?

(% - EU27)

■ April-May 2023
 ■ Mar. 2017
 ■ June 2011

■ March-April 2021
 ■ May-June 2015
 ■ Nov.-Dec. 2013



¹⁶ QCS. Have you personally taken any action to fight climate change over the past six months?

3. Types of individual action

More than nine in ten Europeans have taken at least one action to help tackle climate change

Respondents were given a list of 15 actions and asked which ones they had personally taken to fight climate change¹⁷. More than nine in ten (93%, -3 percentage points since March-April 2021) had taken at least one action.

By far the most common action mentioned is **trying to reduce waste and regularly separating it for recycling** (70%, -5 percentage points). This and **trying to cut down on consumption of disposable items** (53%, -6 pp) are the only actions mentioned by at least half of all respondents. In both cases, however, respondents are now less likely to say they take each action than they were in 2021.

Almost four in ten (37%) say that **when buying a new household appliance, lower energy consumption is an important factor in their choice** a decline of five percentage points since 2021 and the second consecutive decline since 2019.

Just over three in ten (31%, no change) **buy and eat less meat**.

More than one quarter of respondents say they **regularly use environmentally friendly alternatives to their private car such as walking, cycling, taking public transport or car-sharing** (28%, -2 pp) or that they **buy and eat more organic food** (28%, -4 pp).

Other actions have been taken by fewer than one in five respondents, and there has been little change since 2021.

More than one in ten say they have **insulated their home better to reduce their energy consumption** (17%, -1 pp), **they consider the carbon footprint of their food purchases and sometimes adapt their shopping accordingly** (15%, -1 pp),

Around one in ten have **installed equipment in their home to control and reduce their energy consumption** (11%, +1 pp), **consider the carbon footprint of their transport when planning their holiday and other longer distance travel and sometimes adapt their plans accordingly** (11%, no change) or have **switched to an energy supplier which offers a greater share of energy from renewable sources than their previous one** (10%, no change).

Fewer than one in ten have **installed solar panels in their home** (9%, +1 pp), **have bought a new car and its low fuel consumption was an important factor in their choice** (7%, -1 pp), **have bought a low-energy home** (4%, no change) or **have bought an electric car** (3%, +1 pp).

Looking at the longer-term trends shows the numbers of people trying to reduce their waste or cut down on their consumption of disposable items are at their lowest levels since 2013.

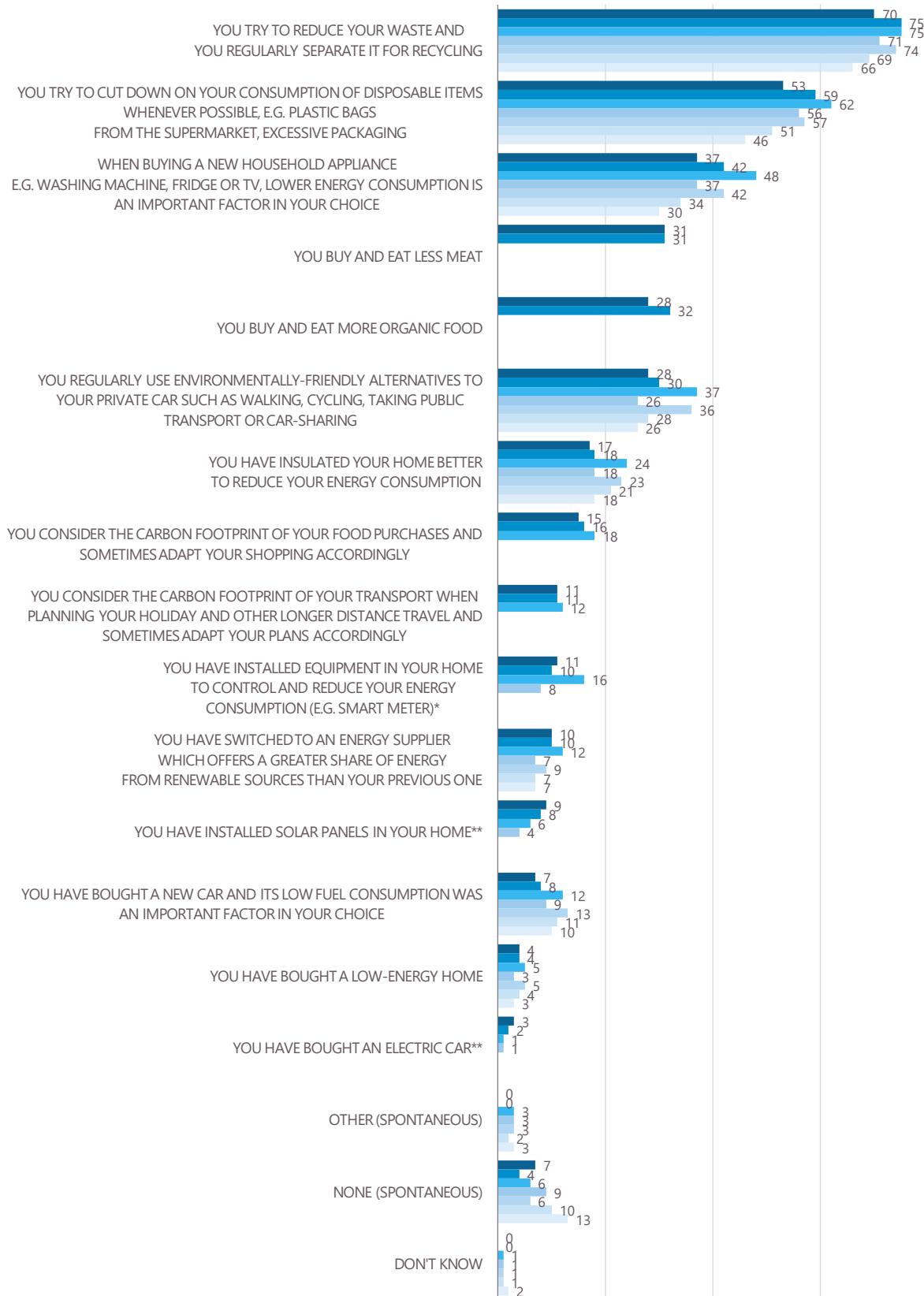
The proportion of respondents who say lower energy consumption is an important factor when buying a new household appliance has declined to the same level as 2017, while the proportion of respondents who have better insulated their home or bought new cars with low fuel consumption an important factor are now at their lowest ever levels.

¹⁷ QC6. Which of the following actions, if any, apply to you? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

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QC6 Which of the following actions, if any, apply to you? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)
(% - EU27)

■ April-May 2023 ■ March-April 2021 ■ April 2019 ■ Mar. 2017 ■ May-June 2015 ■ Nov.-Dec. 2013 ■ June 2011



III. ATTITUDES TO FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE TRANSITION TO CLEAN ENERGIES



More than eight in ten Europeans think tackling climate change and environmental issues should be a priority to improve public health

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with six statements relating to fighting climate change and the transition to clean energy¹⁸. More than six in ten agree with each statement.

More than eight in ten respondents (84%, -3 percentage points since March-April 2021) agree that **tackling climate change and environmental issues should be a priority to improve public health**, with 41% saying they “totally agree”.

Almost eight in ten (78%, -3 pp) agree that **more public financial support should be given to the transition to clean energies even if it means subsidies to fossil fuels should be reduced**, with 36% totally agreeing with this statement.

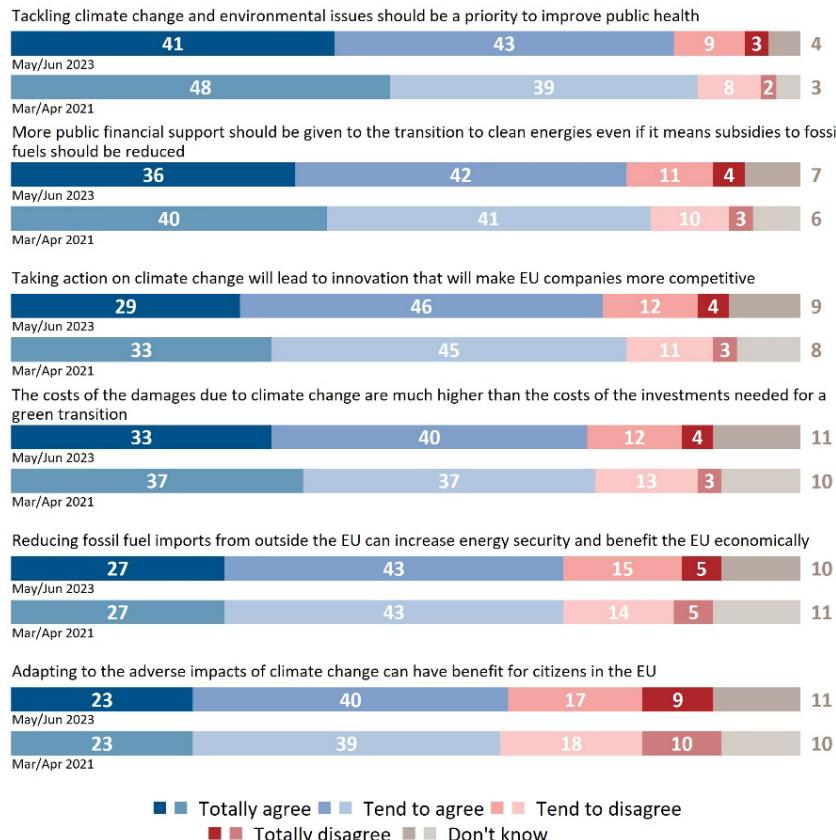
Three quarters (75%, -3 pp) agree that **taking action on climate change will lead to innovation that will make EU companies more competitive**, including 29% who “totally agree”. Almost as

many (73%, -1 pp) agree that **the costs of the damages due to climate change are much higher than the costs of the investments needed for a green transition**, including 33% who “totally agree”.

Seven in ten respondents (70%, no change) agree that **reducing fossil fuel imports from outside the EU can increase energy security and benefit the EU economically**, with 27% totally agreeing.

Finally, 63% (-1 pp) of respondents agree that **adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change can have benefit for citizens in the EU**, including 23% who “totally agree”.

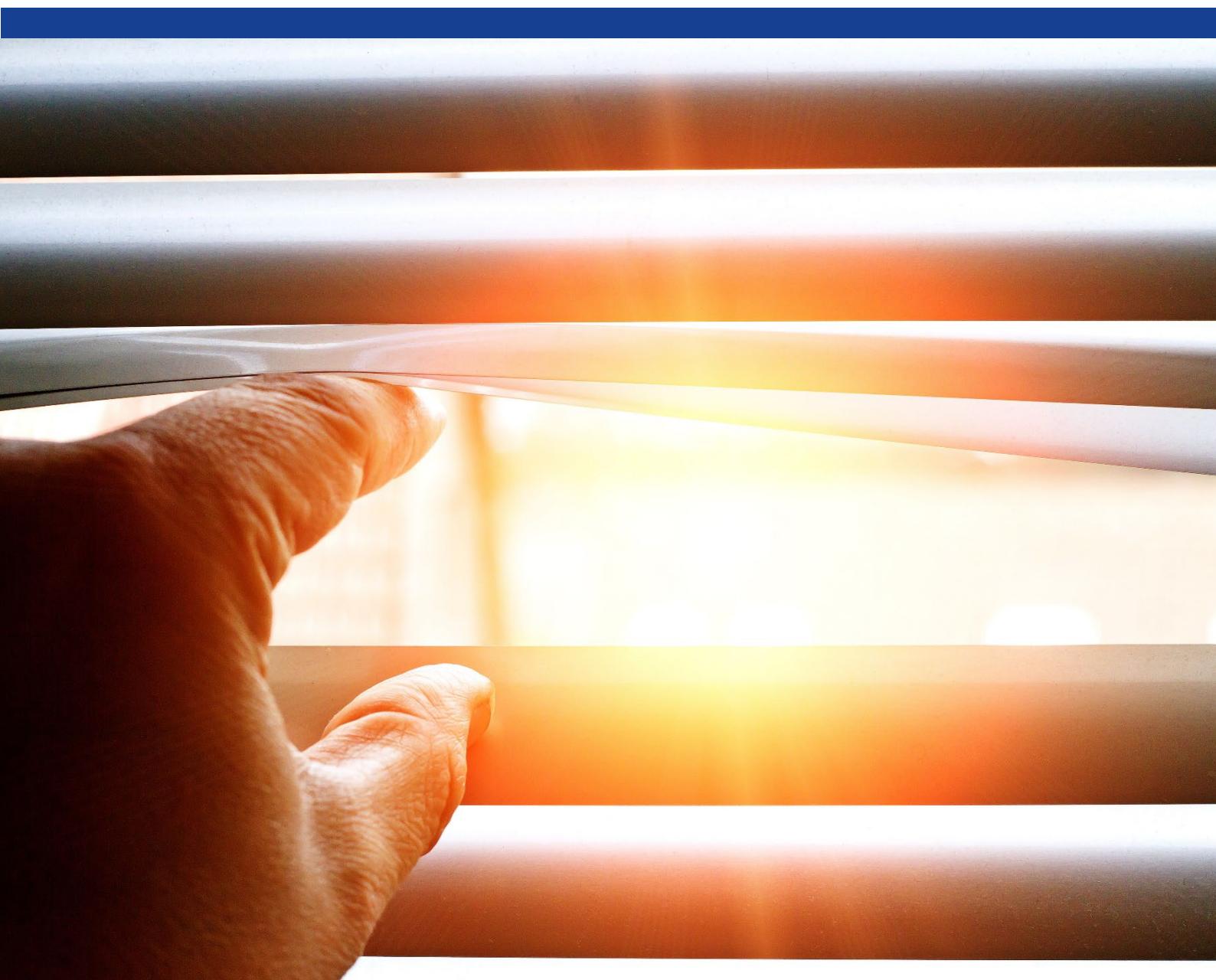
QC4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?
(% - EU27)



¹⁸ QC4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? QC4.1 Tackling climate change and environmental issues should be a priority to improve public health; QC4.2 The costs of the damages due to climate change are much higher than the costs of the investments needed for a green transition; QC4.3 Reducing fossil fuel imports from outside the EU can increase

energy security and benefit the EU economically; QC 4.4 Taking action on climate change will lead to innovation that will make EU companies more competitive; QC4.5 More public financial support should be given to the transition to clean energies even if it means subsidies to fossil fuels should be reduced; QC4.6 Adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change can have benefit for citizens in the EU.

IV. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

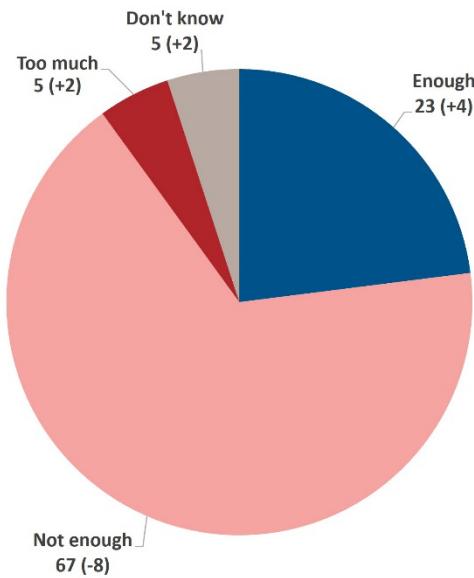


1. Current national governments action to tackle climate change

Almost seven in ten Europeans think their national government is not doing enough to tackle climate change

When asked, 67% of respondents think that their national government is not doing enough to tackle climate change. This represents a decline of eight percentage points since March-April 2021.¹⁹ Almost one quarter (23%, +4 pp) think their national government is doing enough while 5% (+2 pp) say too much is being done. One in twenty (5%, +2 pp) say they don't know.

QC7 Do you think that the (NATIONALITY) government is doing enough, not enough or too much to tackle climate change?
(% - EU27)



(May/June 2023 – Mar/Apr 2021)

¹⁹ QC7. Do you think that the (NATIONALITY) government is doing enough, not enough or too much to tackle climate change?

2. Targets for renewable energy

Almost nine in ten Europeans think it is important that their national government and the European Union set ambitious targets to increase the amount of renewable energy used by 2030

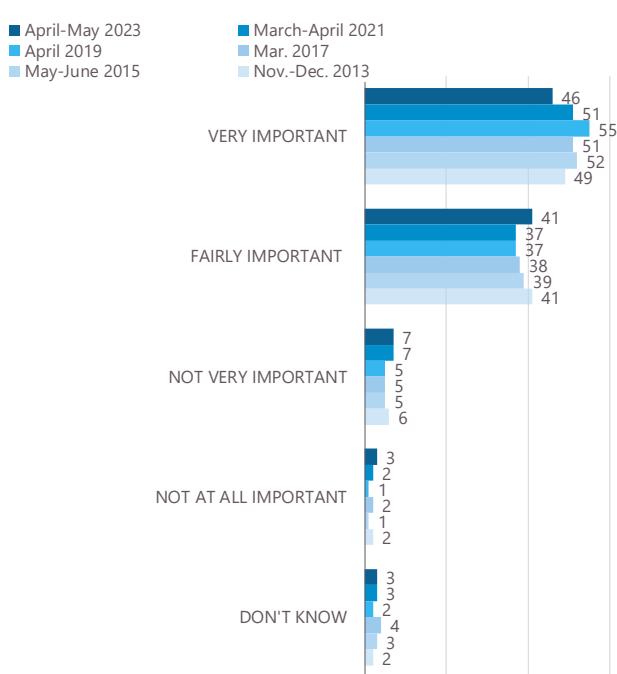
Respondents were asked how important they think it is their national government and the European Union set ambitious targets to increase the amount of renewable energy used, such as wind or solar power, by 2030.²⁰

Almost nine in ten (87%, -1 percentage point since March-April 2021) think it is important their national government sets ambitious targets in this area, with 46% (-5 pp) thinking this is "very important". In contrast 10% (+1 pp) think this is not important, while 3% (no change) say they don't know.

The long-term trend shows overall agreement is now at its lowest-ever level. In addition, the proportion of respondents who think ambitious targets are "very important" is also at its lowest ever level, three points below the previous low of 2013.

QC8.1 How important do you think it is that the following authorities set ambitious targets to increase the amount of renewable energy used, such as wind or solar power, by 2030?

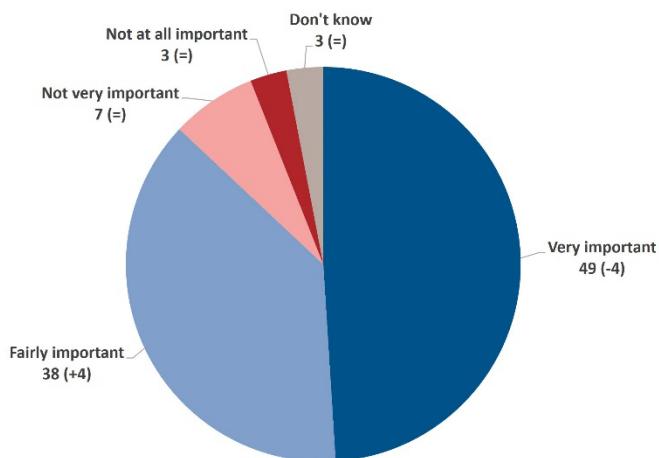
The (NATIONALITY) government (% - EU27)



Almost nine in ten respondents (87%, no change since March-April 2021) agree it is important for the European Union to set ambitious targets to increase the amount of renewable energy used by 2030, with 49% (-4 pp) thinking this is "very important". In contrast 10% (no change) say this is not important, while 3% (no change) say they "don't know".

QC8.2 How important do you think it is that the following authorities take action and increase the amount of renewable energy used, such as wind or solar power, by 2030?

The European Union (% - EU27)



(May/June 2023 – Mar/Apr 2021)

²⁰ QC8. How important do you think it is that the following authorities take action and increase the amount of renewable energy used, such as wind or solar power, by 2030? QC8.1 The (NATIONALITY) Government; QC8.2 The European Union.

3. Energy efficiency targets

More than eight in ten Europeans think it is important that their national government and the European Union take action to improve energy efficiency by 2030

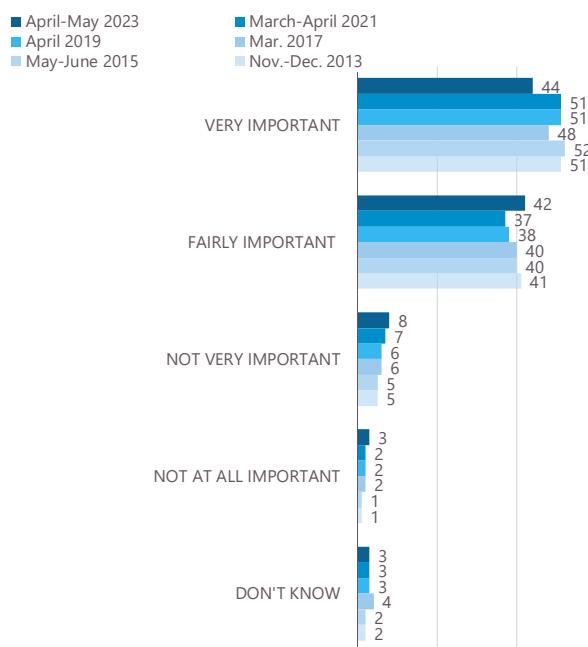
Respondents were asked how important it was that their national government and the European Union take action to improve energy efficiency by 2030 (e.g., by encouraging people to insulate their home, install solar panels, or buy electric cars).^{21,22}

A substantial majority (86%, -2 percentage points since March-April 2021) think it is important for their national government to take action to improve energy efficiency by 2030, with 44% (-7 pp) saying this is “very important”. On the other hand, 11% (+2 pp) think this is not important, while 3% (=) say they don’t know.

The longer-term trend shows the proportion who think this is important is now at its lowest ever level, two points below the previous low of March-April 2021 and six points lower than the highs of 2013-2015. The proportion who think it is “very important” for the national government to take action is also at its lowest ever level.

QC9.1 How important do you think it is that the following authorities take action to improve energy efficiency by 2030 (e.g. by encouraging people to insulate their home, install solar panels or buy electric cars)?

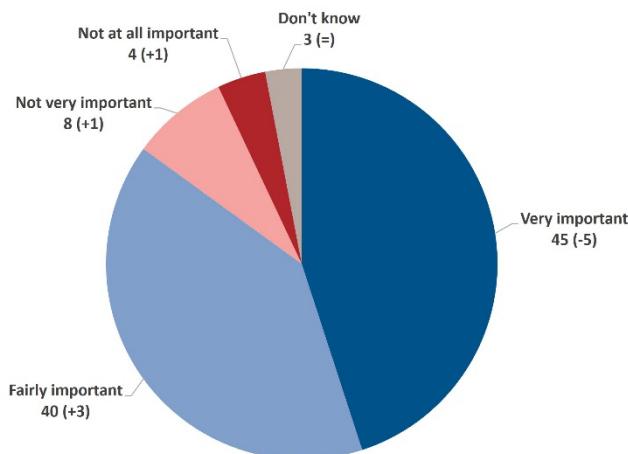
The (NATIONALITY) government (% - EU27)



More than eight in ten respondents (85%, -2 percentage points since March-April 2021) think it is important for the European Union to take action to improve energy efficiency by 2030, with 45% (-5 pp) saying this is “very important”. Just over one in ten (12%, +2 pp) think it is not important the EU acts, and 3% (no change) say they don’t know.

QC9.2 How important do you think it is that the following authorities take action to improve energy efficiency by 2030 (e.g. by encouraging people to insulate their home, install solar panels or buy electric cars)?

The European Union (% - EU27)



(May/June 2023 – Mar/Apr 2021)

²¹ QC9. How important do you think it is that the following authorities take action to improve energy efficiency by 2030 (e.g. by encouraging people to insulate their home, install solar panels or buy electric cars)? QC9.1 The (NATIONALITY) Government; QC9.2 The European Union.

²² The wording of the question has changed since 2021 when it was How important do you think it is that the following authorities provide support for improving energy efficiency by 2030 (e.g. by encouraging people to insulate their home, install solar panels, or buy electric cars). As a result trend results should be interpreted with caution.

4. A climate-neutral Europe by 2050

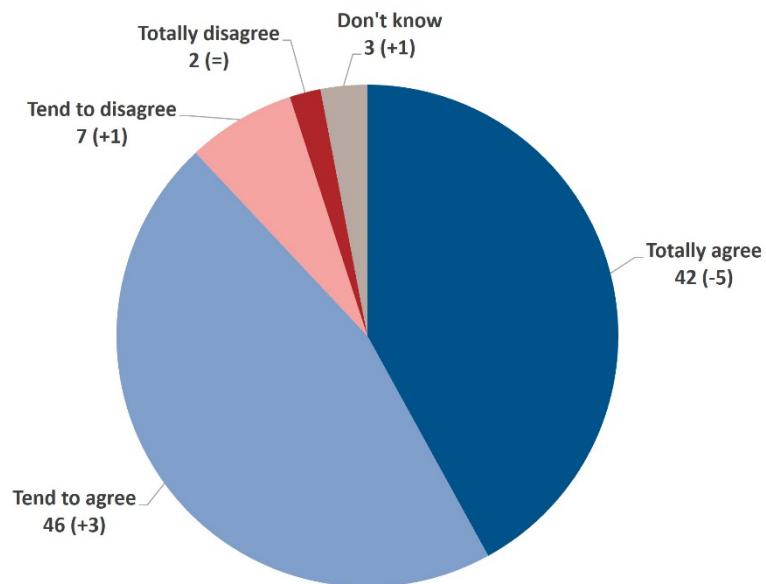
Almost nine in ten Europeans think that greenhouse gas emissions should be reduced to a minimum while offsetting the remaining emissions to make the EU economy climate neutral by 2050

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: "We should reduce greenhouse gas emissions to a minimum while offsetting the remaining emissions, for instance by increasing forested areas, to make the EU economy climate neutral by 2050".²³

Almost nine in ten (88%, -2 percentage points since March-April 2021) agree with this statement, with 42% (-5 pp) saying they "totally agree". Almost one in ten respondents (9%, +1 pp) disagree, while 3% (+1 pp) say they don't know.

QC10 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: We should reduce greenhouse gas emissions to a minimum while offsetting the remaining emissions, for instance by increasing forested areas, to make the EU economy climate-neutral by 2050.

(% - EU27)



(May/June 2023 – Mar/Apr 2021)

²³ QC10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: We should reduce greenhouse gas emissions to a minimum while offsetting the

remaining emissions, for instance by increasing forested areas, to make the EU economy climate neutral by 2050.

V. THE EU AND THE ENERGY CRISIS



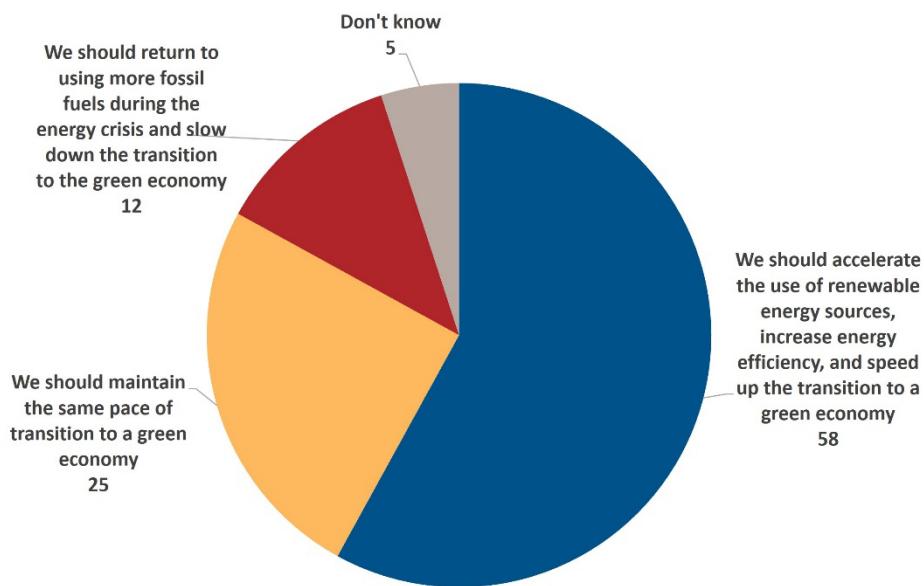
1. EU's and Member States' response to the energy crisis in terms of green energy policy

The majority of Europeans think that the transition to a green economy should be sped up

Respondents were asked to consider energy price spikes and restrictions on gas supply due to the actions of Russia, and say how they thought the EU and Member States should respond in terms of green energy policy²⁴.

Almost six in ten (58%) think **the use of renewable energy sources should be accelerated, energy efficiency increased, and the transition to a green economy sped up**. One quarter (25%) think the **pace of transition should be maintained**, while 12% think that **more fossil fuels should be used during the energy crisis and the transition to the green economy slowed down**.

QC11 With energy price spikes and restrictions on gas supply due to the actions of Russia, how should the EU and its Member States respond in terms of green energy policy?
(% - EU27)



(May/June 2023)

²⁴ QC11. With energy price spikes and restrictions on gas supply due to the actions of Russia, how should the EU and its Member States respond in terms of green energy policy?

2. EU's and Member States' actions to relieve the economic pressure

Accelerating the roll-out of renewable energy sources in the EU, and taking economic measures to limit the price of energy bills for households are Europeans' preferred measures to relieve the economic pressure caused by the energy crisis

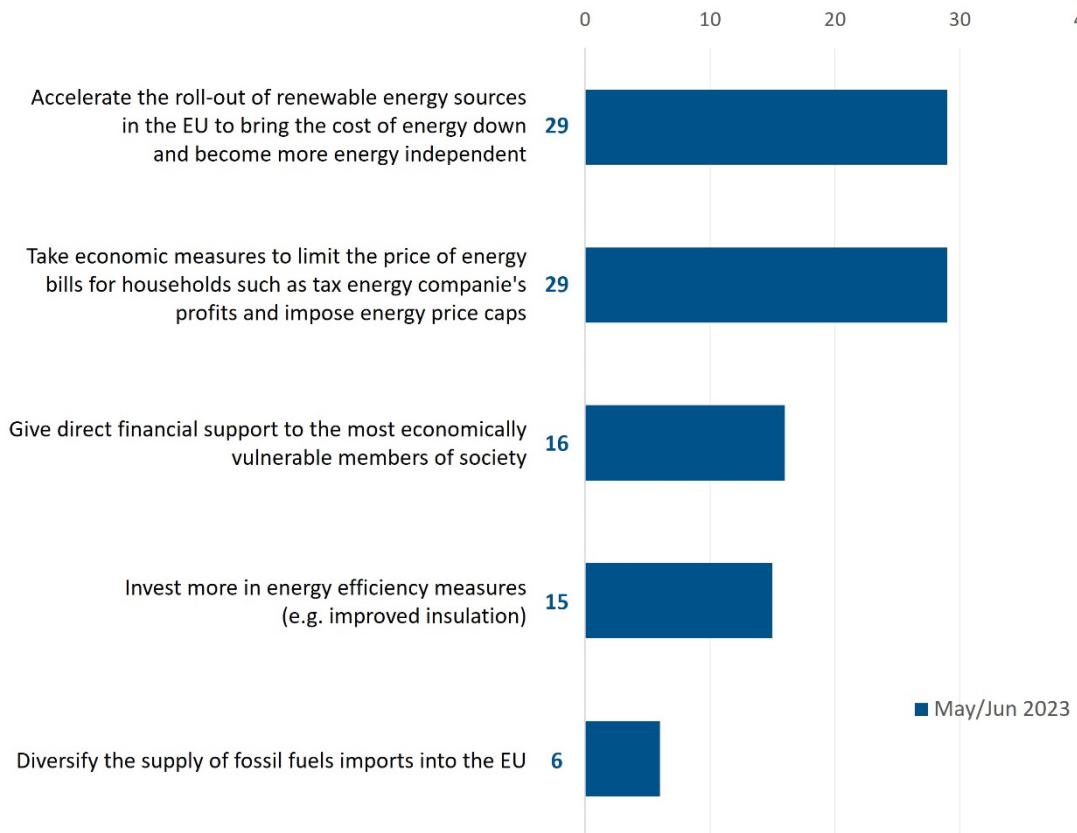
Respondents were given a list of five options and asked how they thought the EU and the Member State governments should respond to relieve the economic pressure caused by the energy crisis²⁵. The results below present their first response.

Almost three in ten (29%) say the EU and Member States should **accelerate the roll-out of renewable energy sources in the EU to bring the cost of energy down and become more energy independent**, and the same proportion say these bodies should **take economic measures to limit the price of energy bills for households such as taxing energy companies' profits and imposing energy price caps**.

More than one in ten are in favour of **giving direct financial support to the most economically vulnerable members of society** (16%) or **investing more in energy efficiency measures (e.g. improved insulation)** (15%).

Just over one in twenty (6%) think the EU and Member States should **diversify the supply of fossil fuels imports into the EU**.

QC12a In which of the following ways should the EU and the Member State governments respond to relieve the economic pressure caused by the energy crisis? Firstly?
(% - EU27)



²⁵ QC12a. In which of the following ways should the EU and the Member State governments respond to relieve the economic pressure caused by the energy crisis? Firstly?

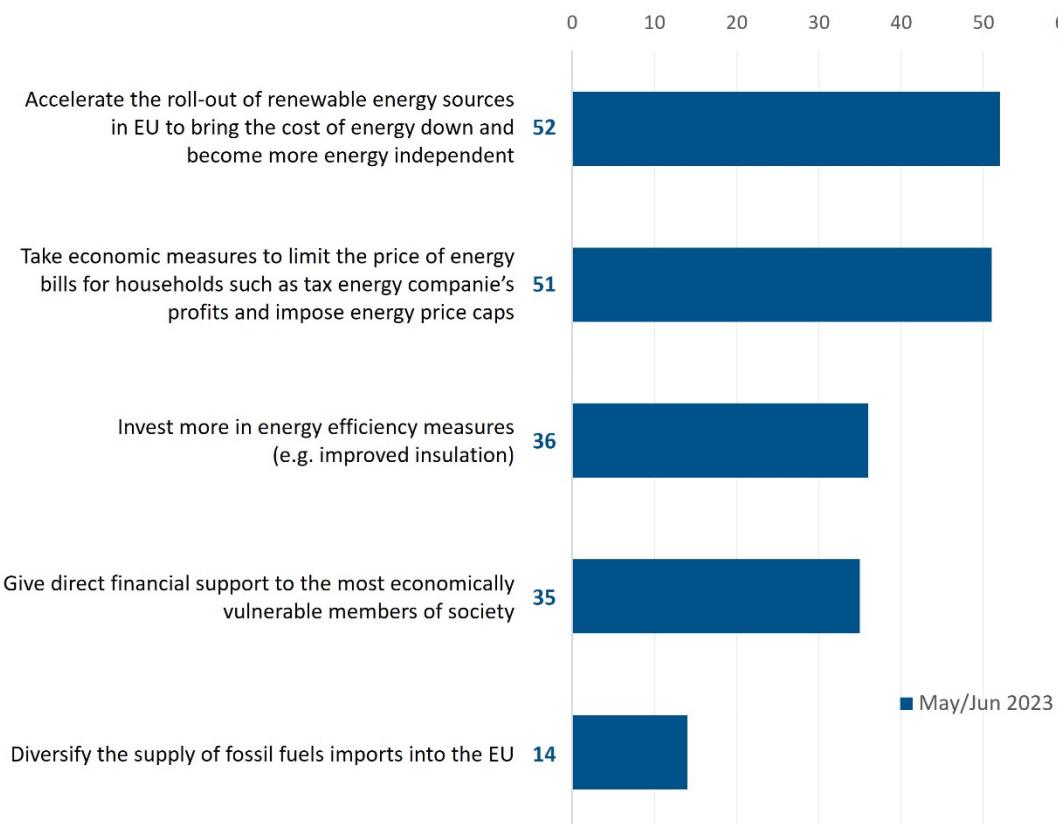
In a follow-up question, respondents were given the option to give additional answers. The results presented below detail the overall response to this question (first and subsequent answers).

Just over half of all respondents think the EU and Member States should **accelerate the roll-out of renewable energy sources in EU to bring the cost of energy down and become more energy independent** (52%) or **take economic measures to limit the price of energy bills for households such as tax energy companies' profits and impose energy price caps** (51%).

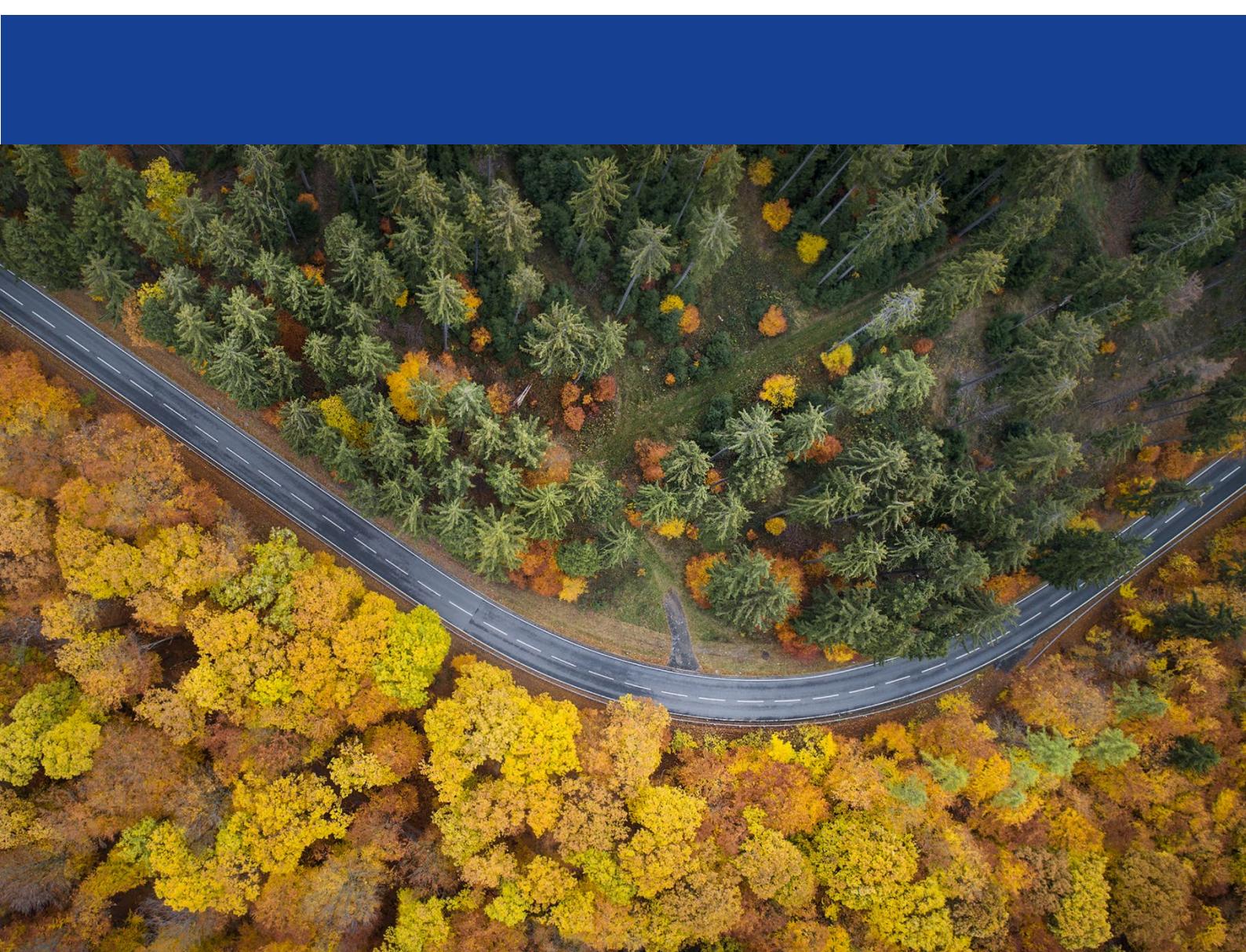
More than one third are in favour of **investing more in energy efficiency measures** (36%) or of **giving direct financial support to the most economically vulnerable members of society** (35%).

More than one in ten (14%) think the EU and Member States should **diversify the supply of fossil fuels imports into the EU**.

QC12T In which of the following ways should the EU and the Member State governments respond to relieve the economic pressure caused by the energy crisis? Firstly? And then?
(% - EU27)



VI. EUROPEANS AND THEIR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

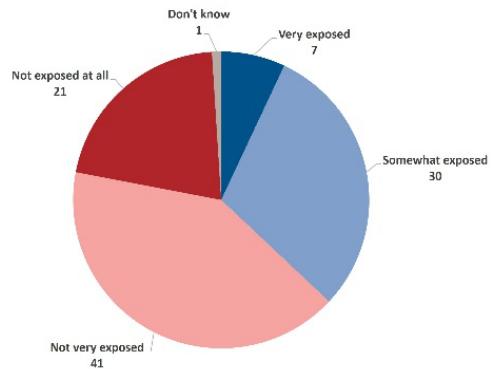


1. Europeans' exposure to environmental and climate risks and threats

Almost four in ten Europeans feel personally exposed to environmental and climate-related risks and threats

Respondents were asked: "how personally exposed they are to environmental and climate-related risks and threats (e.g. fires, floods, pollution, extreme weather conditions, etc.)?"²⁶ Almost four in ten (37%) say they are exposed, with 7% saying they are "very exposed". On the other hand, the majority (62%) say they are not exposed to these risks and threats, with just over one in five (21%) saying they are "not exposed at all".

QC14 How exposed are you personally to environmental and climate related risks, and threats (e.g. fires, floods, pollution, extreme weather conditions, etc.)?
(% - EU27)



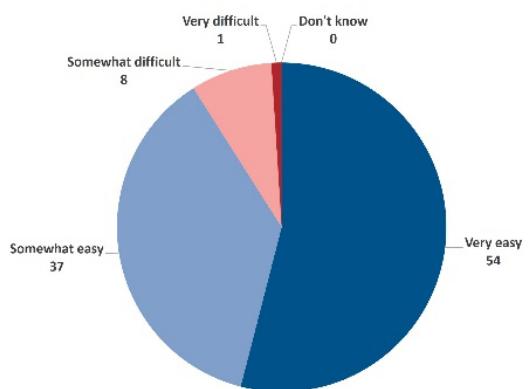
(May/June 2023)

2. Europeans' access to nature and green spaces

More than eight in ten Europeans say it is easy for them to access nature and green spaces

Respondents were asked how easy or difficult it is for them to access nature and green spaces.²⁷ The large majority (91%) say it is easy to do this, with 54% stating that it is "very easy". Almost one in ten (9%) say it is difficult for them to access nature and green spaces.

QC13 How easy or difficult is it for you to access nature and green spaces?
(% - EU27)



(May/June 2023)

²⁶ QC14. How exposed are you personally to environmental and climate related risks, and threats (e.g. fires, floods, pollution, extreme weather conditions, etc.)?

²⁷ QC13. How easy or difficult is it for you to access nature and green spaces?

CONCLUSION



While Climate Change is still considered a very serious global issue, the results of this Eurobarometer show that Europeans' opinions on climate change have undergone some shift in the past two years. Climate change no longer ranks as the most serious problem facing the world. It now sits third behind poverty, hunger and lack of drinking water and armed conflicts. While poverty, hunger and lack of drinking water has historically ranked as the most serious problem facing the world, the significant increase in mentions of armed conflict may be attributed to the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, which started in February 2022, in the period between the previous survey in 2021 and the current one.

However, Europeans do still consider climate change to be a serious problem in its own right. Almost eight in ten respondents think climate change is a serious problem, and this result has remained relatively stable since 2019. This is true for the majority across every EU Member State.

When it comes to tackling climate change, more than half think the European Union, national governments and business and industry are responsible for tackling climate change. Respondents are less likely to mention national governments and business and industry than they were in 2021, but more likely to mention them than they were in 2019.

At an individual level, just over one third think they are personally responsible for tackling climate change. In spite of this, almost two thirds say they have taken action in the past six months to fight climate change – a level that has remained relatively stable since 2019. This result does, however, mask considerable national variation – from more than eight in ten respondents in Luxembourg to just under three in ten in Romania.

Although the majority of Europeans are taking personal action to fight climate change, some common actions have become less widespread. Seven in ten Europeans are trying to reduce waste and regularly separate it for recycling, down by 5 percentage points compared to 2021 and 2019, while just over half are trying to cut down on the consumption of disposable items (53%, -6 pp compared to 2021 and -9 pp compared to 2019). In fact, the current results for these two actions are the lowest since 2013. Almost four in ten say that, when buying a new household appliance, lower energy consumption is an important factor in their choice, but this represents the second consecutive decline since 2019.

Europeans' attitudes to fighting climate change and the transition to clean energy have remained relatively stable since 2021. More than eight in ten respondents agree that tackling climate change and environmental issues should be a priority to improve public health. Three quarters agree that taking action on climate change will lead to innovation that will make EU companies more competitive, while just over six in ten agree that adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change can benefit citizens in the EU.

When it comes to energy, almost eight in ten agree that more public financial support should be given to the transition to clean energies even if it means subsidies to fossil fuels should be reduced, while seven in ten agree reducing fossil fuel imports from outside the EU could increase energy security and benefit the EU economically. On the economic front, almost three quarters agree

that the cost of damage caused by climate change is much higher than the cost of the investment needed for a green transition.

Turning to government actions to fight climate change, over two thirds of Europeans think their national government is not doing enough to tackle climate change, although this represents an eight percentage point decline since 2021. With the exception of Finland, a majority in each country thinks their national government is not doing enough.

There is strong support for renewable energy targets and improved energy efficiency. Almost nine in ten think it is important that the EU sets ambitious targets to increase the amount of renewable energy used by 2030, and this result has remained stable since 2021. More than seven in ten in each Member State think it is important the EU sets ambitious targets in this area. Almost nine in ten think it is important that their national government sets ambitious targets to increase the amount of renewable energy used by 2030. However, although this is only a one point decline since 2021, the current result is the lowest ever level of support.

As well as large majorities being in favour of ambitious renewable energy targets, more than eight in ten respondents think it is important that the European Union takes action to improve energy efficiency by 2030. More than eight in ten also think it is important for their national government to take action to improve energy efficiency by 2030. Although this is a substantial majority, it does represent the lowest ever level of support, two points below the previous low of March-April 2021 and six points lower than the highs of 2013-2015.

A climate-neutral Europe has strong support across all Member States. Almost nine in ten respondents agree greenhouse gas emissions should be reduced to a minimum while offsetting the remaining emissions to make the EU economy climate neutral by 2050, a two-point decline since 2021 and a four-point decline since 2019, with at least seven in ten in each Member State also agreeing.

Respondents were asked to consider energy price spikes and restrictions on gas supply due to the actions of Russia, and say how they thought the EU and Member States should respond in terms of green energy policy. Almost six in ten think the use of renewable energy sources should be accelerated, energy efficiency increased, and the transition to a green economy sped up. One quarter think the pace of transition should be maintained, while just over one in ten think that more fossil fuels should be used during the energy crisis and the transition to the green economy slowed down.

Europeans' preferred measures to relieve the economic pressure caused by the energy crisis are to accelerate the roll-out of renewable energy sources in the EU, and to take economic measures to limit the price of energy bills for households such as taxing energy companies' profits and imposing energy price caps.

Considering broader environmental issues, just over nine in ten Europeans say it is easy for them to access nature and green spaces, and with the exception of Malta more than three quarters in each country agree. Almost four in ten Europeans feel personally exposed to environmental and climate-related risks and threats but this masks considerable national variation. Almost two thirds

feel this way in Portugal, compared to just under one in ten in Finland.

An overview of the socio-demographic results reveals some patterns. Respondents aged 15-24, those who completed education aged 20 or older, those who rarely or never have difficulties paying bills and those who consider they are part of a higher category in the social ladder are consistently among the most likely to think climate change is a serious problem. These groups are also more likely to support actions and policies that address the issue and are more likely to think more needs to be done. Perceptions of climate change are also influential. Those who think climate change is the most or one of the most serious problems facing the world and those who think climate change is a very serious problem in its own right are more likely to support actions and policies that address climate change and its impacts.

