

Europeans' attitudes towards climate change

Report

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a survey on Europeans' attitudes towards climate change which was carried out in January and February 2009.

Over the past years, climate change has gained top priority on international political agendas. The European Union is committed to working constructively towards a global agreement to control climate change, and is leading the way by taking ambitious action of its own.¹ In December 2008, the EU adopted an integrated package of legislative measures on energy and climate to implement ambitious targets for 2020 set by EU leaders in March 2007. The targets are aimed at building a sustainable future through cutting greenhouse gases, reducing energy consumption through increased energy efficiency and meeting more of our energy needs from renewable sources.

The issue of climate change has not only raised concern at the political top levels. Intense (international) media attention has fostered a lively public debate. It is in this light that this Eurobarometer survey has been conducted, with the overarching aim of exploring European citizens' attitudes towards climate change.

The survey focuses on:

- ✓ Citizens' perceptions of *climate change* in relation to other world problems.
- ✓ Citizens' perceptions of the seriousness of *climate change*.
- ✓ The extent to which citizens feel informed about *climate change* – its causes, consequences and ways of fighting it.
- ✓ Citizens' attitudes towards alternative fuels and CO² emissions.
- ✓ Whether citizens feel that *climate change* is stoppable or has been exaggerated, and what impact it has on the European economy.
- ✓ Whether citizens have taken personal action to fight *climate change*.

This Eurobarometer survey was commissioned by the Directorate General for Communication of the European Commission, on behalf of the European Parliament and the European Commission. It was carried out by TNS Opinion & Social network between 16 January and 22 February 2009. The interviews were conducted among 26,718 citizens in the 27 Member States of the European Union, the three candidate countries for accession to the European Union (Croatia, Turkey and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and in the Turkish Cypriot Community.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/home_en.htm

The methodology used is that of Eurobarometer surveys as carried out by the Directorate General for Communication ("Research and Political Analysis" Unit)² of the European Commission. A technical note on the manner in which interviews were conducted by the Institutes within the TNS Opinion & Social network is appended as an annex to this report. This note indicates the interview methods and the confidence intervals³.

The findings of this survey are in the first place analysed at EU level and secondly by country. Where applicable, different socio-demographic variables - such as respondents' gender, age, education, occupation and political orientation - have been used to take the analysis further. In addition, the following key variables were used in the analysis to gain deeper insight in citizens' views on climate change:

- ✓ Respondents' **subjective level of information** about the *causes* and *consequences* of climate change and the *ways of fighting it*: QE3: "Personally, do you think that you are well informed or not about...? The different causes of climate change; the different consequences of climate change; Ways in which we can fight climate change."
- ✓ Their **perception of the seriousness of climate change**: QE2: "How serious a problem do you think climate change is at this moment? Please use a scale from 1 to 10, 1 would mean that it is not a serious problem at all and 10 would mean that it is extremely serious."

² http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

³ The results tables are included in the annex. It should be noted that the total of the percentages in the tables of this report may exceed 100% when the respondent can give several answers to the same question.

In this report, the countries are represented by their official abbreviations. The abbreviations used in this report correspond to:

ABBREVIATIONS

EU27	European Union – 27 Member States
DK/NA	Don't know / No answer
BE	Belgium
BG	Bulgaria
CZ	Czech Republic
DK	Denmark
D-E	East Germany
DE	Germany
D-W	West Germany
EE	Estonia
EL	Greece
ES	Spain
FR	France
IE	Ireland
IT	Italy
CY	Republic of Cyprus*
CY (tcc)	Area not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus
LT	Lithuania
LV	Latvia
LU	Luxembourg
HU	Hungary
MT	Malta
NL	The Netherlands
AT	Austria
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia
FI	Finland
SE	Sweden
UK	The United Kingdom
HR	Croatia
TR	Turkey
MK	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

* Cyprus as a whole is one of the 27 European Union Member States. However, the "*acquis communautaire*" is suspended in the part of the country that is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus. For practical reasons, only the interviews conducted in the part of the country controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus are recorded in the category "CY" and included in the EU27 average. The interviews conducted in the part of the country not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus are recorded in the category "CY(tcc)" [tcc: *Turkish Cypriot Community*].

** Provisional code which does not prejudice in any way the definitive nomenclature for this country, which will be agreed following the conclusion of negotiations currently taking place at the United Nations.

1. Perceptions of climate change and global warming

1.1 The three most serious problems facing the world

- Poverty, a global economic downturn and climate change are considered the most serious problems in the world-

When looking at the total aggregate of respondents' answers⁴ to what they consider to be the most serious problems⁵, 66% think that "poverty, the lack of food and drinking water" is one of the most serious problems our world faces now. Ranking second is "a major global economic downturn" which more than doubled in mentions (from 24% in spring 2008 to 52% in January-February 2009). The increased mentions for "a major global economic downturn" have resulted in lower mentions for "climate change" which received 62% of mentions in spring 2008. Now "**climate change**", with 50% feeling that it is amongst the most serious problems our world faces, **ranks third**. While the economic crisis dominates over "climate change" and the latter receives lower mentions compared to previous levels, it is important to note that these three problems (poverty, the economy and climate change) receive the highest mentions by at least half the sample.

After these three problems, respondents consider "**international terrorism**" as a serious problem (42%), though in this instance the mentions have also decreased (from 53% in spring 2008). Ranking fifth is "armed conflicts", mentioned by 39% of respondents.

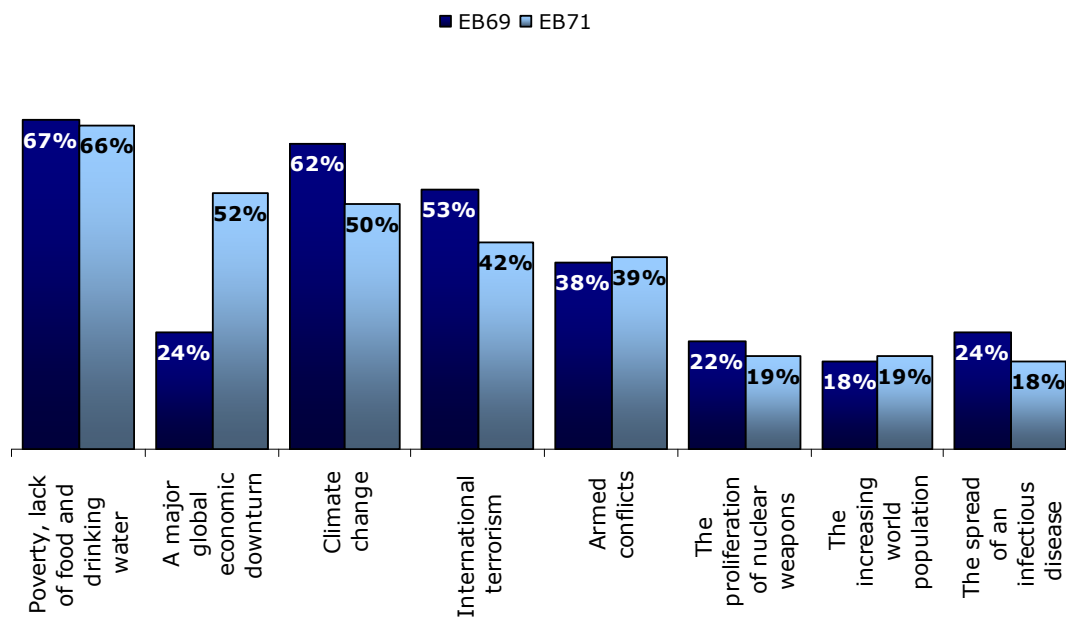
Around a fifth of respondents consider "**the proliferation of nuclear weapons**" (19%, down from 23% in spring 2008), "**the increasing world population**" (19%, stable from spring 2008) and "**the spread of infectious disease**" (18%, down from 23% in spring 2008) as the most serious problems facing the world. Again, it is noted that the increased mentions regarding the seriousness of the economic downturn has resulted in lower mentions for other world problems.

The graph overleaf shows the overview:

⁴ This analysis is based on all answers given by the respondents (i.e. first *and* other answers)

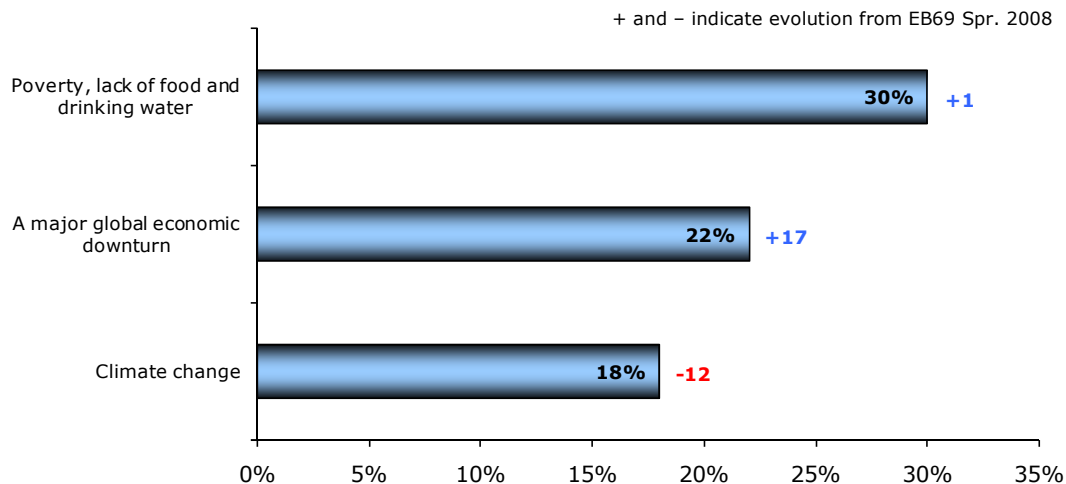
⁵ QE1 In your opinion, which of the following do you consider to be the most serious problem currently facing the world as a whole? Firstly? Any others?

**In your opinion, which of the following do you consider to be the most serious problem currently facing the world as a whole?
Firstly? Any others? - % EU**



Considering only respondents' *first* answer makes "**poverty, lack of food and drinking water**" **top the list of serious problems** in the world. This is in line with the previous measurement. However, there is a significant increase in respondents feeling "**a major global economic downturn**" is the *most* important problem the world currently faces, up from 5% in spring 2008 to 22% in January-February 2009. This has led to a decrease in the *first* mention of "**climate change**" though the issue is still mentioned by close to one in five respondents.

QE1a In your opinion, which of the following do you consider to be the most serious problem currently facing the world as a whole? Firstly?
% EU


































Portuguese and Croat respondents are particularly likely to think that “poverty, lack of food and drinking water” is *the most* important problem that our world currently faces. “**Climate change**” is mentioned as *the most* important problem (first mention) by two countries – Austria and Sweden, with the Swedes again confirming their high sensitivity to environmental topics.

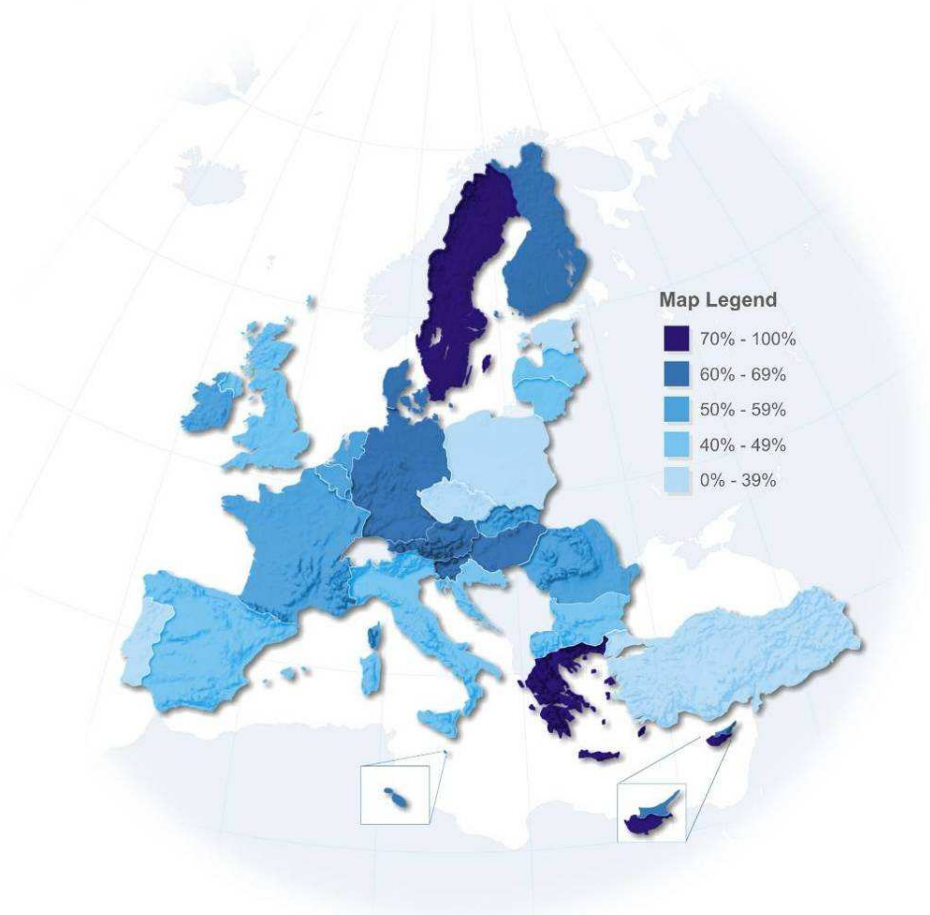
At a country level “**climate change**” is seen as a serious problem especially by citizens of Sweden (82%), Cyprus (76%) and Greece (71%). In addition, those in Sweden, Malta and the Cypriot Community mention “climate change” as being the **most serious** problem facing the world today. This issue receives lower mentions in Poland (33%), the Czech Republic (33%), Turkey (32%) and Portugal (30%).

The graph overleaf illustrates the respective country results.

Question: QE1. In your opinion, which of the following do you consider to be the most serious problem currently facing the world as a whole?

Answers: Climate change

 SE	82%
 CY*	76%
 EL	71%
 FI	67%
 DE	65%
 DK	64%
 AT	63%
 HU	61%
 MT	61%
 SI	61%
 IE	58%
 NL	57%
 BE	54%
 LU	54%
 SK	53%
 FR	51%
 RO	51%
 EU27	50%
 LT	47%
 UK	46%
 ES	44%
 LV	43%
 BG	43%
 IT	41%
 EE	37%
 CZ	33%
 PL	33%
 PT	30%
* CY(tot) = 61%	
 HR	46%
 MK	42%
 TR	32%



"Poverty and the lack of food and drinking water" is considered the most serious problem facing the world in most of the countries polled, especially by the French, Cypriots, Swedes and Croats.

Many of the remaining countries cited **"a major economic downturn"** as the most serious issue facing the world today, with particularly higher mentions in Lithuania, Bulgaria, Slovenia and Slovakia.

"International terrorism" receives the highest mentions in Bulgaria and Malta, while **"armed conflicts"** is also being mentioned by more than half of Bulgarians, Estonians, Spanish and Cypriots.

"The proliferation of nuclear weapons" is mainly mentioned by citizens of Greece and Cyprus, **"the increasing world population"** especially by Finland and the Netherlands and **"the spread of infectious diseases"** by respondents from Ireland and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

QE1T Which do you consider to be the most serious problems currently facing the world as a whole? Firstly? Any others?

	Poverty, lack of food and drinking water	A major global economic downturn	Climate change	International terrorism	Armed conflicts	The proliferation of nuclear weapons	The increasing world population	The spread of an infectious disease
EU27	66%	52%	50%	42%	39%	19%	19%	18%
BE	69%	54%	54%	37%	34%	21%	22%	15%
BG	62%	71%	43%	50%	52%	18%	9%	14%
CZ	45%	69%	33%	42%	38%	19%	11%	24%
DK	71%	61%	64%	45%	43%	16%	22%	15%
DE	75%	54%	65%	46%	39%	23%	31%	19%
EE	56%	65%	37%	33%	54%	13%	20%	22%
EL	72%	68%	71%	39%	42%	32%	12%	12%
ES	73%	50%	44%	49%	51%	19%	9%	11%
FR	80%	44%	51%	34%	35%	24%	26%	18%
IE	59%	67%	58%	36%	28%	19%	21%	28%
IT	56%	43%	41%	48%	34%	21%	8%	23%
CY	81%	55%	76%	33%	51%	30%	25%	19%
LV	60%	69%	43%	29%	46%	9%	9%	25%
LT	51%	76%	47%	35%	44%	20%	8%	18%
LU	76%	45%	54%	42%	33%	25%	30%	21%
HU	73%	67%	61%	27%	30%	16%	28%	27%
MT	52%	53%	61%	50%	22%	15%	9%	26%
NL	75%	58%	57%	31%	42%	14%	32%	16%
AT	67%	41%	63%	47%	42%	29%	28%	22%
PL	58%	42%	33%	42%	43%	15%	5%	19%
PT	77%	52%	30%	32%	41%	13%	10%	22%
RO	57%	66%	51%	41%	39%	14%	7%	21%
SI	76%	73%	61%	34%	34%	15%	18%	16%
SK	61%	70%	53%	47%	49%	16%	17%	22%
FI	70%	57%	67%	29%	35%	19%	33%	22%
SE	82%	33%	82%	25%	41%	21%	40%	26%
UK	49%	55%	46%	45%	33%	13%	27%	14%
CY (tcc)	42%	51%	61%	36%	30%	20%	17%	11%
HR	81%	50%	46%	39%	43%	14%	6%	17%
TR	51%	41%	32%	40%	30%	21%	15%	7%
MK	69%	47%	42%	38%	35%	14%	3%	28%

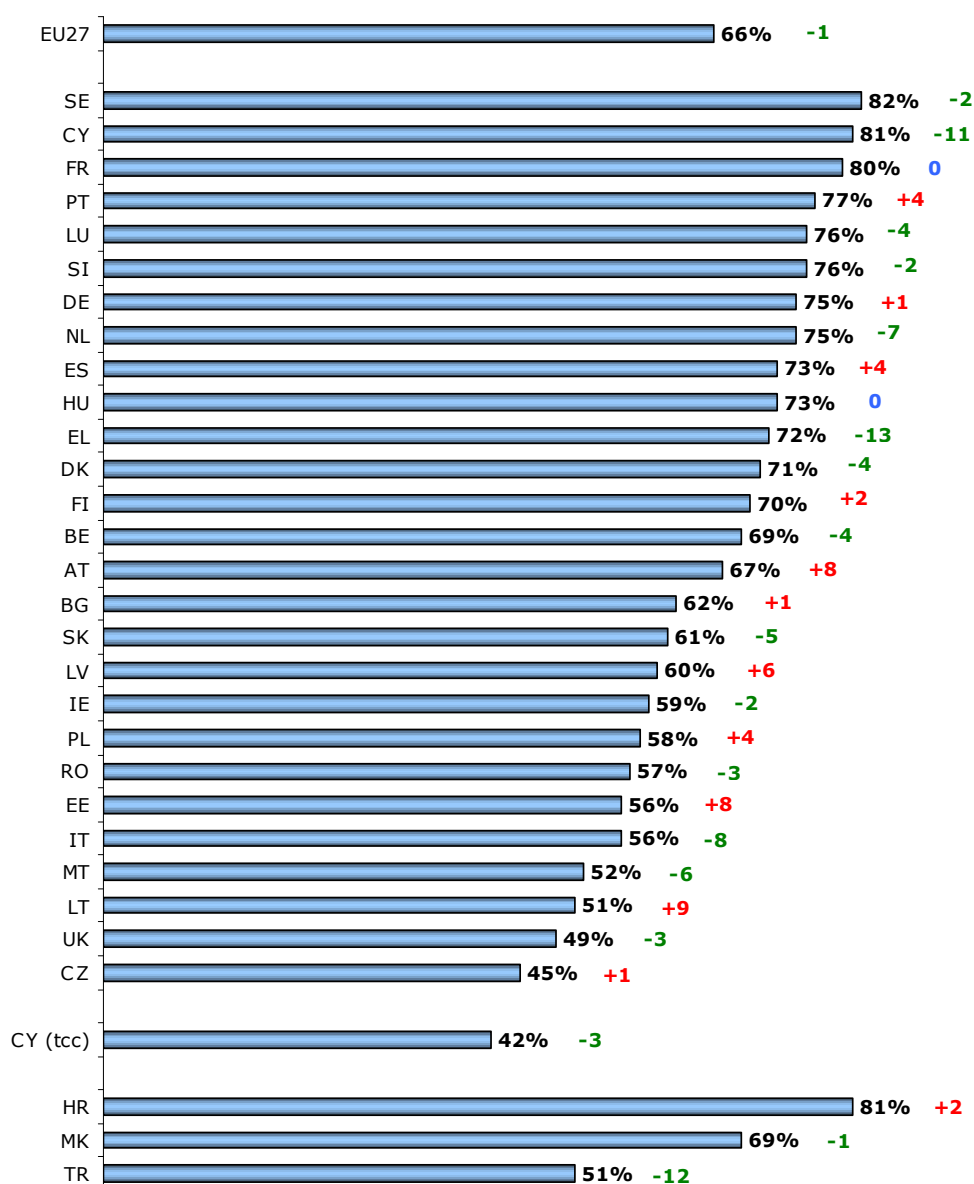
Highest percentage by country

Highest percentage by item

We turn our analysis now to a comparison of the results on a country level in January – February 2009, with that recorded in spring 2008. Countries showing the largest increase in mentions for “poverty, lack of food and drinking water” compared to spring 2008 are Latvia (51% to 60%) and Lithuania (42% to 51%). In contrast, Greece and Turkey show the greatest decreases in mentions for this problem (Greece: 86% down to 72% and Turkey: 63% to 51%).

In your opinion, which of the following do you consider to be the most serious problem currently facing the world as a whole - % EU

■ Poverty, lack of food and drinking water

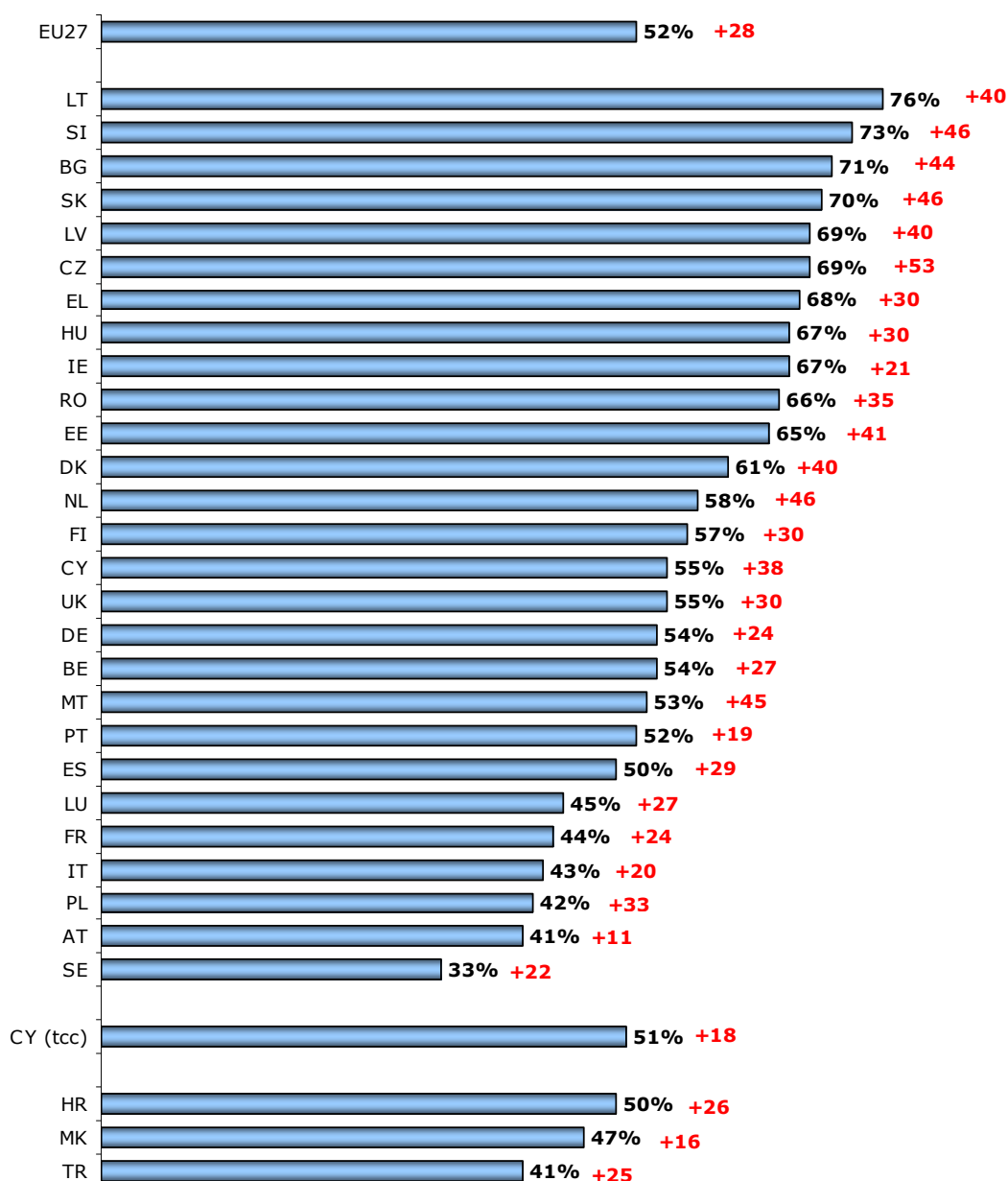


+and – indicate evolution from EB69 Spr. 2008

On the aspect of "a major global economic downturn" being the most serious problem facing the world, **all European countries show an increase in mentions for this problem.** Overall, 52% of European citizens mention this aspect, an increase of 28% from the last measurement. In particular, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, the Netherlands and Slovenia show increases of at least 46% since the previous measurement.

In your opinion, which of the following do you consider to be the most serious problem currently facing the world as a whole - % EU

■ A major global economic downturn

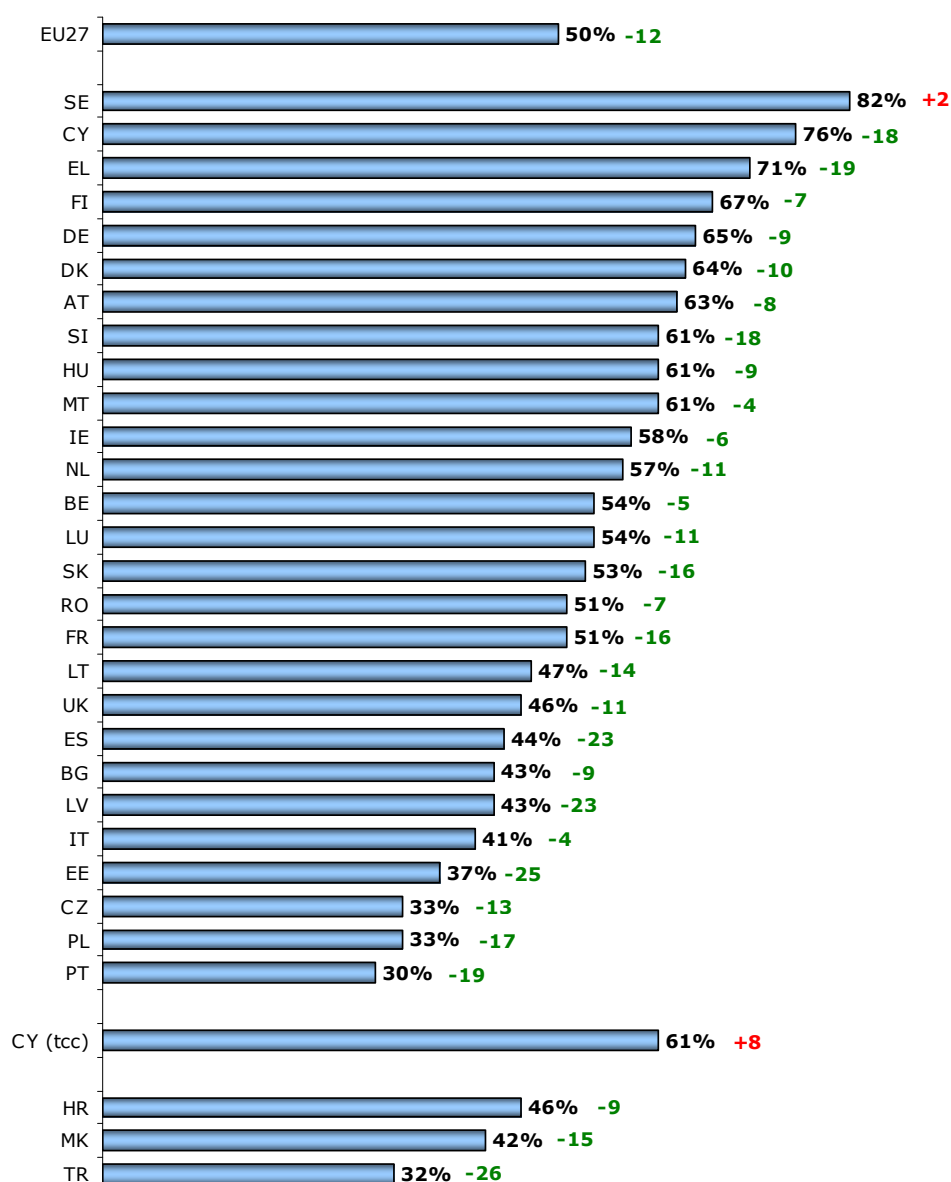


+and – indicate evolution from EB69 Spr. 2008

Sweden's sensitivity towards climate change, as reported in other Eurobarometer surveys, continues here. They are the only country showing an **increase** in mentions for climate change since the previous survey (80% in spring 2008 to 82% in January-February 2009). Climate change is now mentioned, by those in Sweden, on par with "poverty and lack of food and drinking water" as being a serious problem. In addition, Sweden shows the **least** mention of "a major economic downturn" being a serious problem facing the world, thereby further posting results in contrast to the other European countries.

In your opinion, which of the following do you consider to be the most serious problem currently facing the world as a whole - % EU

■ Climate change



+ and - indicate evolution from EB 69 Spr. 2008

Socio-demographic analysis






We now return to the analysis of *all* answers given by the respondents (first *and* other answers). When taking into account different socio-demographic variables it appears that:

- ✓ "Poverty and lack of food and drinking water" is seen as the most serious problem by men and women, though **women** show higher mentions on this issue than men (68% versus 64%). In addition, women are more likely to mention "the spread of infectious disease". In their turn, men are more likely to mention "a major economic downturn" and "the increasing world population" as one of the most serious problems.
- ✓ **Older respondents** (aged 55+) are less likely to mention "climate change" as a serious problem (44%) compared to all the other younger age groups. The middle age groups (25-54) are more likely to mention "a major global economic downturn" (age 25-39: 54%, age 40-54: 52%) showing similar sensitivity to the current economic climate as the youngest (age 15-24: 55%) but more than the oldest (age 55+: 44%) age groups.
- ✓ **Respondents who studied until they reached the age of 20 or beyond** are considerably more likely to find poverty, climate change and the increasing world population serious problems than those who finished their studies at the age of 19 or before. International terrorism and the spread of an infectious disease, however, are more frequently mentioned by those who finished their studies earlier.
- ✓ **Those who position themselves at the left end of the political scale** appear to mention "climate change", "poverty" and "armed conflicts" considerably more often than respondents at the right end of the scale. On the other hand, "international terrorism" and "a major economic downturn" is cited more often by respondents on the right side of the political spectrum than by those on the left.

"Climate change" is mentioned most frequently by **managers and students** and, conversely, the least by house persons and retired people

The issue of "climate change" appears to be the second or third most important problem across all socio-demographic categories, thus reflecting its importance across the citizens surveyed.

Which do you consider to be the most serious problems currently facing the world as a whole?

	Poverty, lack of food and drinking water	A major global economic downturn	Climate change
EU27	66%	52%	50%
 Sex			
Male	64%	54%	51%
Female	68%	51%	50%
 Age			
15-24	63%	49%	55%
25-39	65%	54%	54%
40-54	68%	57%	52%
55 +	66%	48%	44%
 Education (End of)			
15-	67%	45%	42%
16-19	64%	55%	49%
20+	69%	56%	57%
Still studying	67%	48%	61%
 Respondent occupation scale			
Self-employed	62%	57%	50%
Managers	70%	58%	59%
Other white collars	63%	58%	51%
Manual workers	66%	54%	50%
House persons	68%	46%	46%
Unemployed	67%	52%	51%
Retired	65%	48%	45%
Students	67%	48%	61%
 Left-Right scale			
(1-4) Left	72%	51%	55%
(5-6) Centre	66%	54%	54%
(7-10) Right	62%	55%	47%

The extent to which respondents feel informed about certain topics related to climate change, i.e. their *subjective* level of information, appears to be of crucial influence on their perception of "climate change" (for more information about respondents' self-perceived levels of information about the topic, see chapter 2). Those who say that they feel informed about the issue are significantly more inclined to think that "climate change" is one of the most serious problems our world faces today.

Which do you consider to be the most serious problems currently facing the world as a whole?

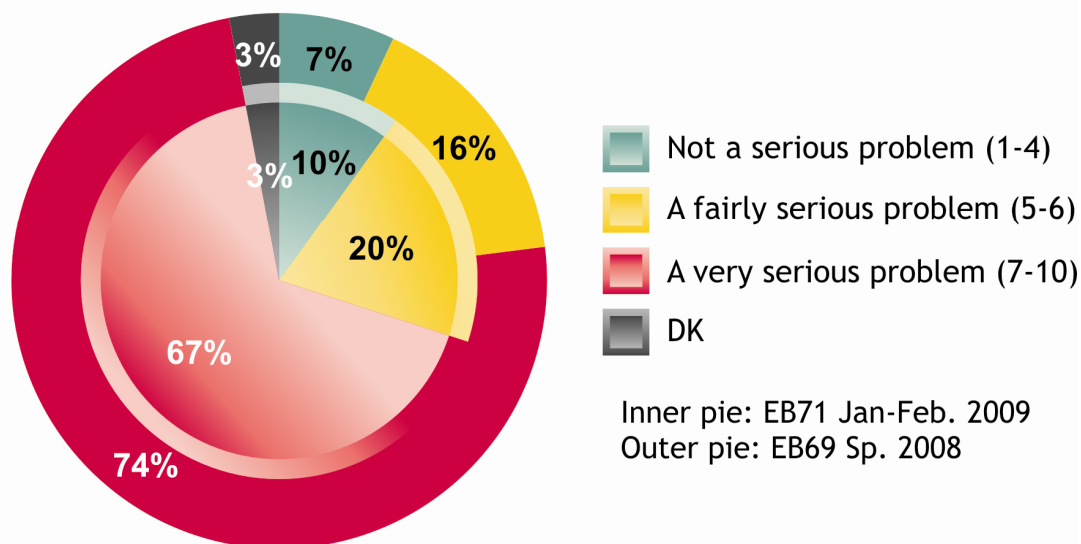
	Poverty, lack of food and drinking water	A major global economic downturn	Climate change
EU27	66%	52%	50%
Causes of climate change			
Informed	67%	54%	58%
Not informed	65%	51%	42%
Consequences of climate change			
Informed	67%	54%	58%
Not informed	65%	51%	42%
Ways to fight climate change			
Informed	67%	54%	57%
Not informed	66%	51%	45%

1.2 Assessing the seriousness of the issue

- Despite the overshadowing economic crisis, a vast majority of Europeans think that climate change is a very serious issue -

The respondents were invited to assess the level of seriousness of climate change on a scale from 1 to 10. More than two-thirds of Europeans think that "climate change" is **a very serious problem (67%)**, while 20% find it a fairly serious problem and 10% do not think it is a serious problem⁶. In line with the lower mentions of climate change being a serious problem facing the world, there is a decline in the number of Europeans who classify "climate change" as "a very serious problem" (75% in spring 2008 to 67% in January-February 2009). Therefore, it is again likely that the perceived seriousness of the economic downturn has led to a decline in the level of concern for climate change.

Question: QE2. And how serious a problem do you think climate change is at this moment?
Please use a scale from 1 to 10, where '1' would mean that it is "not at all a serious problem" and '10' would mean that it is a problem extremely serious".

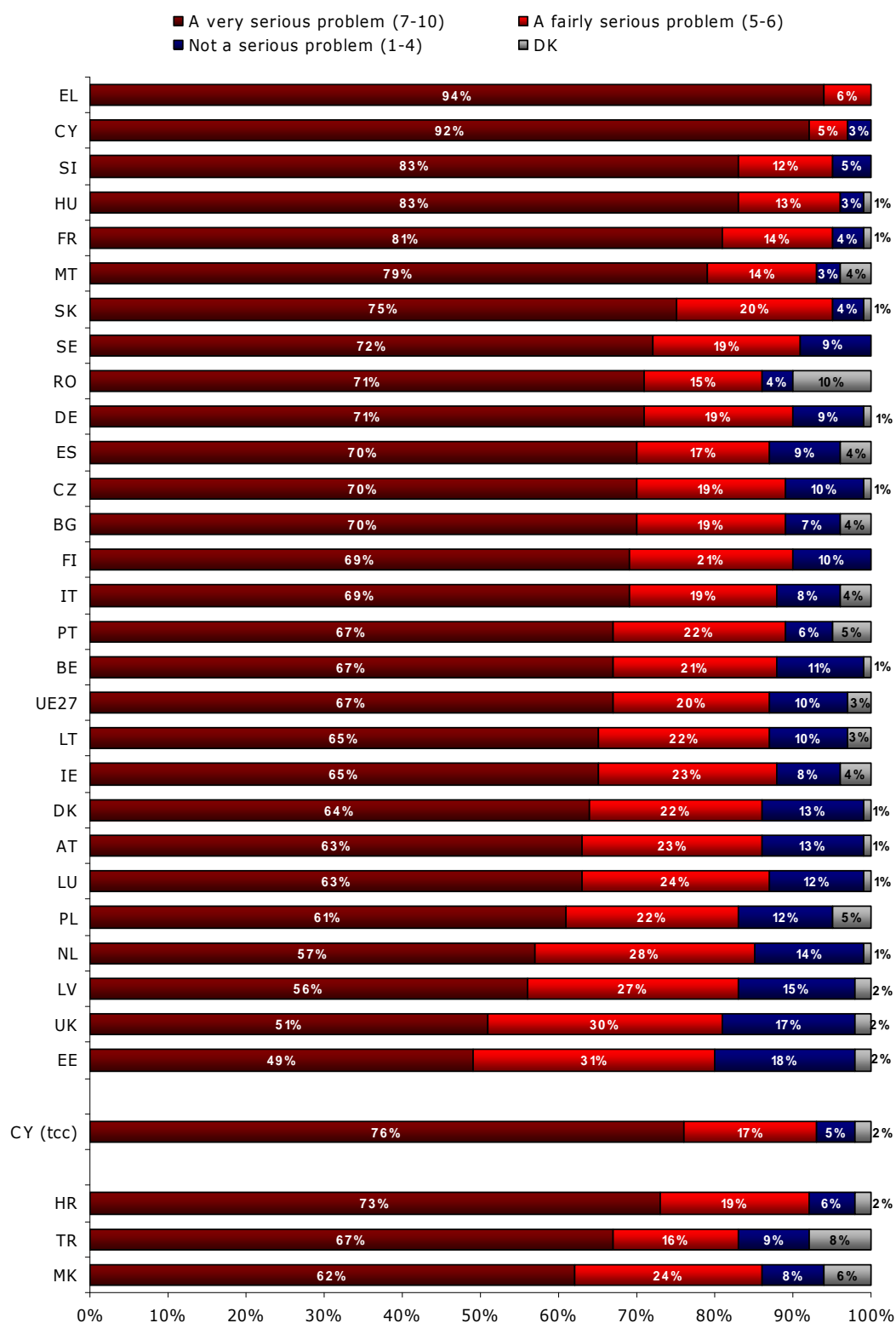


Greeks and Cypriots are particularly likely to feel that climate change is a **very serious** problem, with more than nine in ten respondents expressing this. Results are also well above the EU average in Slovenia, Hungary and France, where more than eight in ten respondents find this issue very serious.

The proportions of citizens holding the opposite opinion i.e. that climate change is **not a very serious** issue, reach their highest levels in the United Kingdom and Estonia. More than 15% of citizens in these countries say that they do not think that climate change is a serious problem.

⁶ A score between 7 and 10 is categorised as "very serious", between 5 and 6 "fairly serious" and between 1 and 4 "not a serious problem"

QE2T How serious a problem do you think climate change is at this moment?








From a **socio-demographic point of view**, it appears that those who consider "climate change" to be a very serious problem are more often respondents who:

- ✓ are female
- ✓ are between 15 and 54 years old
- ✓ studied until the age of 16 or longer
- ✓ are students, self employed or white-collar workers
- ✓ are left wing in their political outlook
- ✓ feel informed about the causes and consequences of climate change and the ways to combat it

The group that does not think "climate change" is a serious problem is largely the opposite of the above and respondents are more likely to be:

- ✓ male
- ✓ age 55+
- ✓ retired
- ✓ right wing in their political outlook

QE2 And how serious a problem do you think climate change is at this moment?

	Not a serious problem (1-4)	A fairly serious problem (5-6)	A very serious problem (7-10)	DK
EU27	10%	20%	67%	3%
 Sex				
Male	11%	20%	67%	2%
Female	8%	20%	69%	3%
 Age				
15-24	9%	19%	70%	2%
25-39	8%	20%	70%	2%
40-54	10%	18%	70%	2%
55 +	11%	21%	64%	4%
 Education (End of)				
15-	11%	22%	63%	4%
16-19	10%	20%	68%	2%
20+	9%	18%	72%	1%
Still studying	8%	16%	73%	3%
 Respondent occupation scale				
Self-employed	10%	18%	70%	2%
Managers	10%	20%	69%	1%
Other white collars	8%	19%	71%	2%
Manual workers	9%	22%	67%	2%
House persons	8%	20%	69%	3%
Unemployed	9%	21%	67%	3%
Retired	12%	20%	64%	4%
Students	8%	16%	73%	3%
 Left-Right scale				
(1-4) Left	10%	17%	72%	1%
(5-6) Centre	10%	23%	66%	1%
(7-10) Right	12%	21%	65%	2%

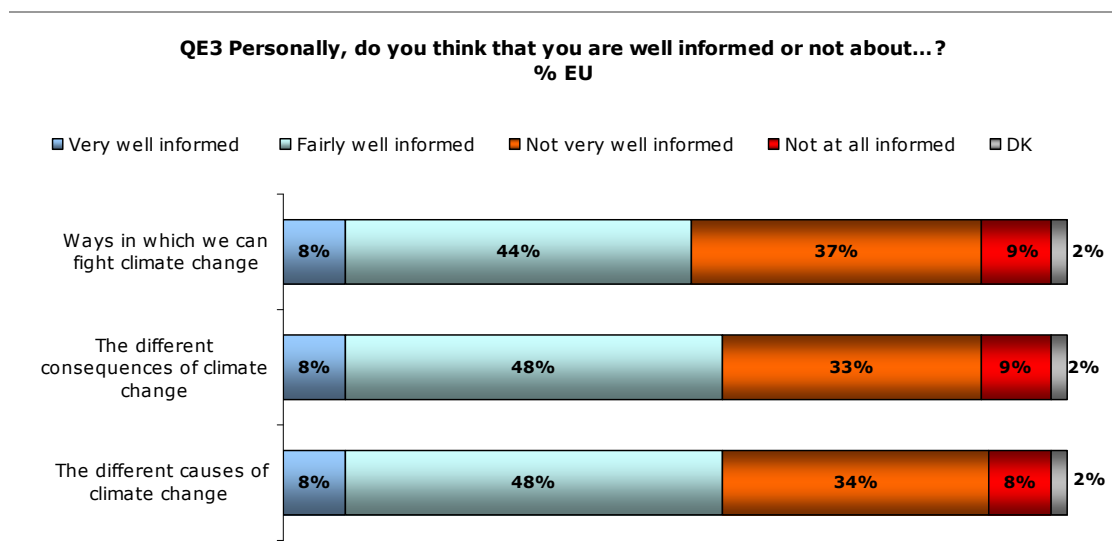
2. Level of information about climate change

- More than half of Europeans feel informed about climate change -

More than half of Europeans feel **very well or fairly well informed** about different aspects of climate change; 56% respectively confirm that they are well informed about both the *causes* and the *consequences* of climate change, whereas 52% report that they feel very well or fairly well informed about the ways of fighting it.

However, for all three aspects of climate change, more than four in ten respondents do not feel **very well informed or not at all informed**. Just less than one in ten respondents confirm that they are not at all informed. Opinions on the topic are firm as seen through low "don't know" responses. Compared to the measurement in spring 2008, the results are stable, with no improvement in citizens' levels of knowledge on an overall level.

The results show that there is a correlation between the three different items.

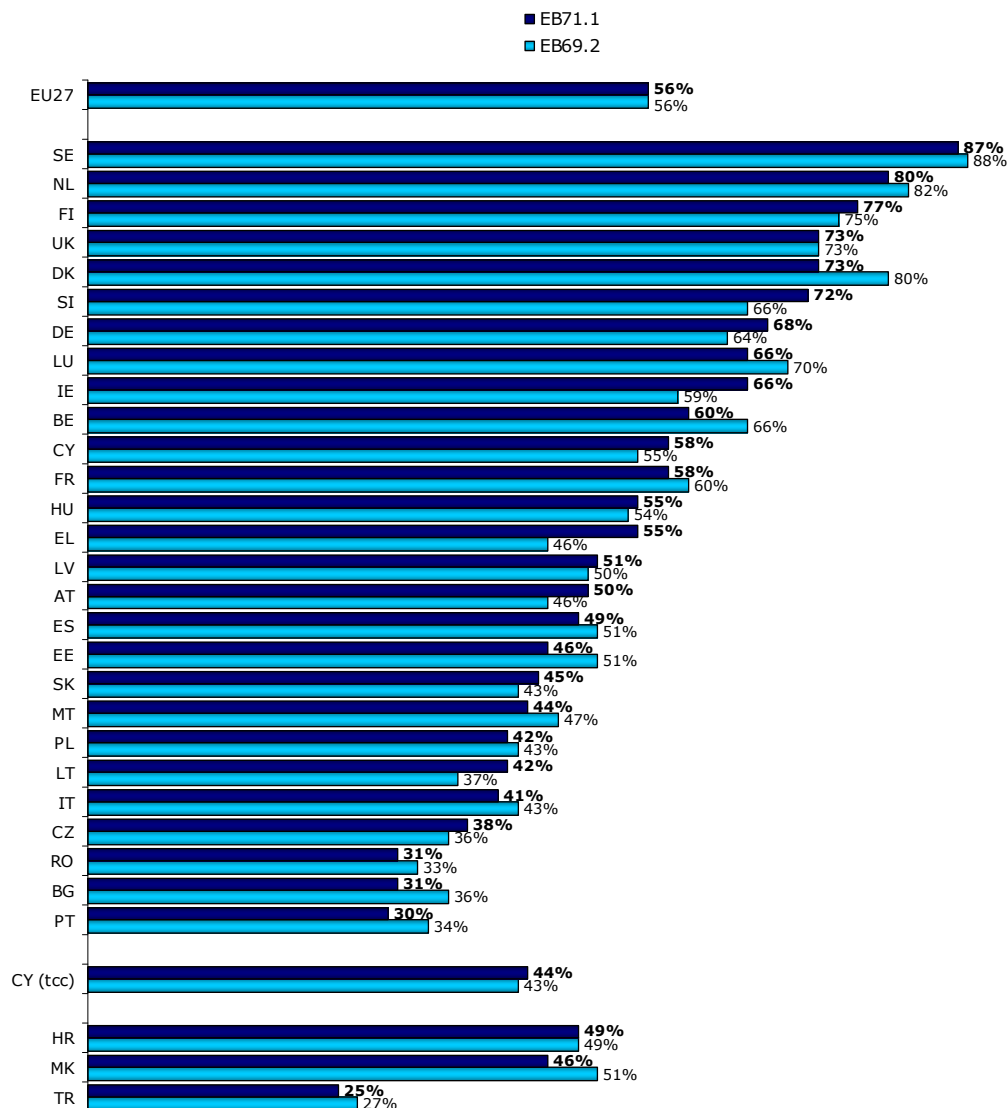


Citizens from Sweden, the Netherlands and Finland feel the **best informed** about issues related to climate change. At least three-quarters of respondents in those countries feel informed about the causes and the consequences of climate change and at least seven in ten feel knowledgeable about the ways in which climate change can be fought. Citizens in the United Kingdom also appear to feel well informed about ways in which to fight climate change.

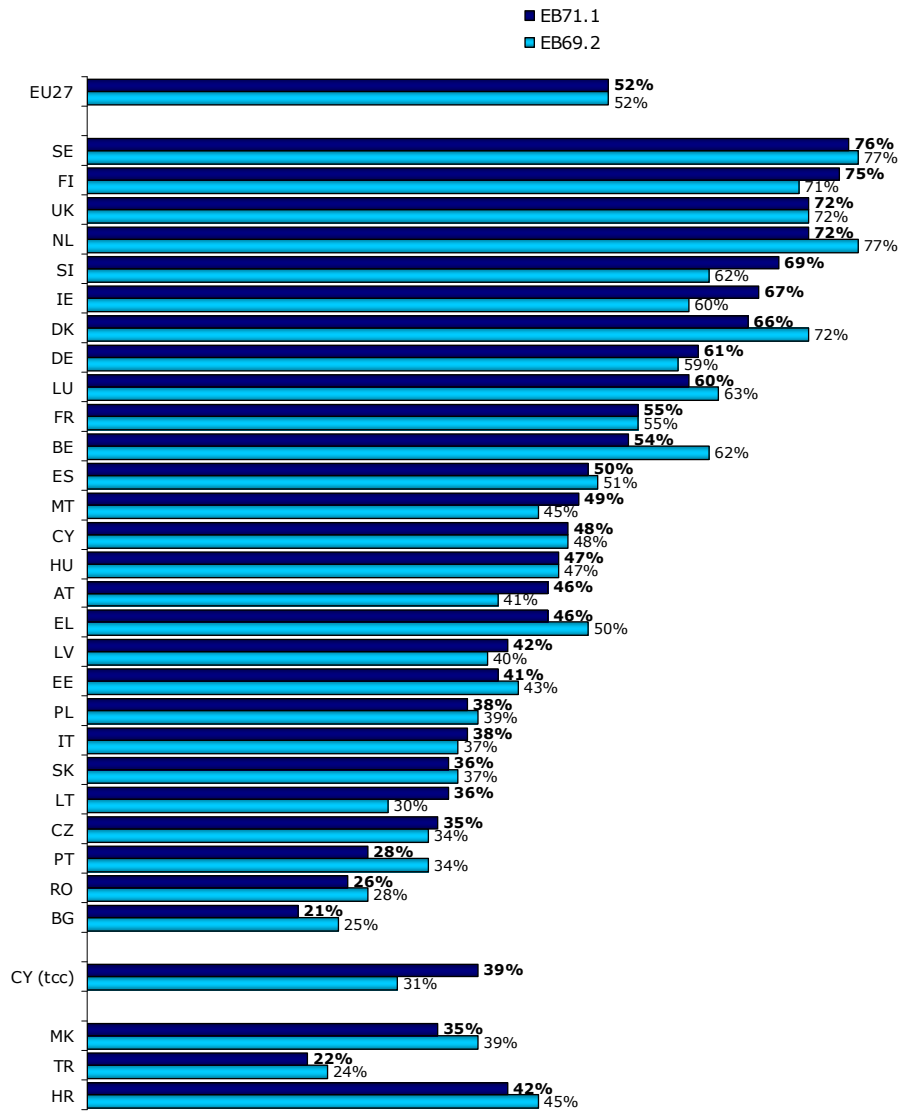
The **lowest levels of (subjective) information** can be found among Bulgarians, Romanians, Portuguese and Turkish citizens. In fact more than six in ten respondents in these countries typify themselves as poorly informed about the *causes*, *consequences* and *ways of fighting* climate change.

Although results on an overall level are fairly stable, when compared to spring 2008, some changes on a country level are evident: Ireland and Slovenia show increased levels of knowledge for the causes, consequences and ways to fight climate change. For example, the subjective levels of information of the ways to fight climate change have increased from 62% to 69% in Slovenia, and 60% to 67% in Ireland. Greek citizens also show an increase in knowledge levels for the different causes of climate change (from 46% to 55%) and for the different consequences of climate change (from 53% to 58%).

QE3.1 Personally, do you think that you are well informed or not about... ?
The different causes of climate change - Well informed

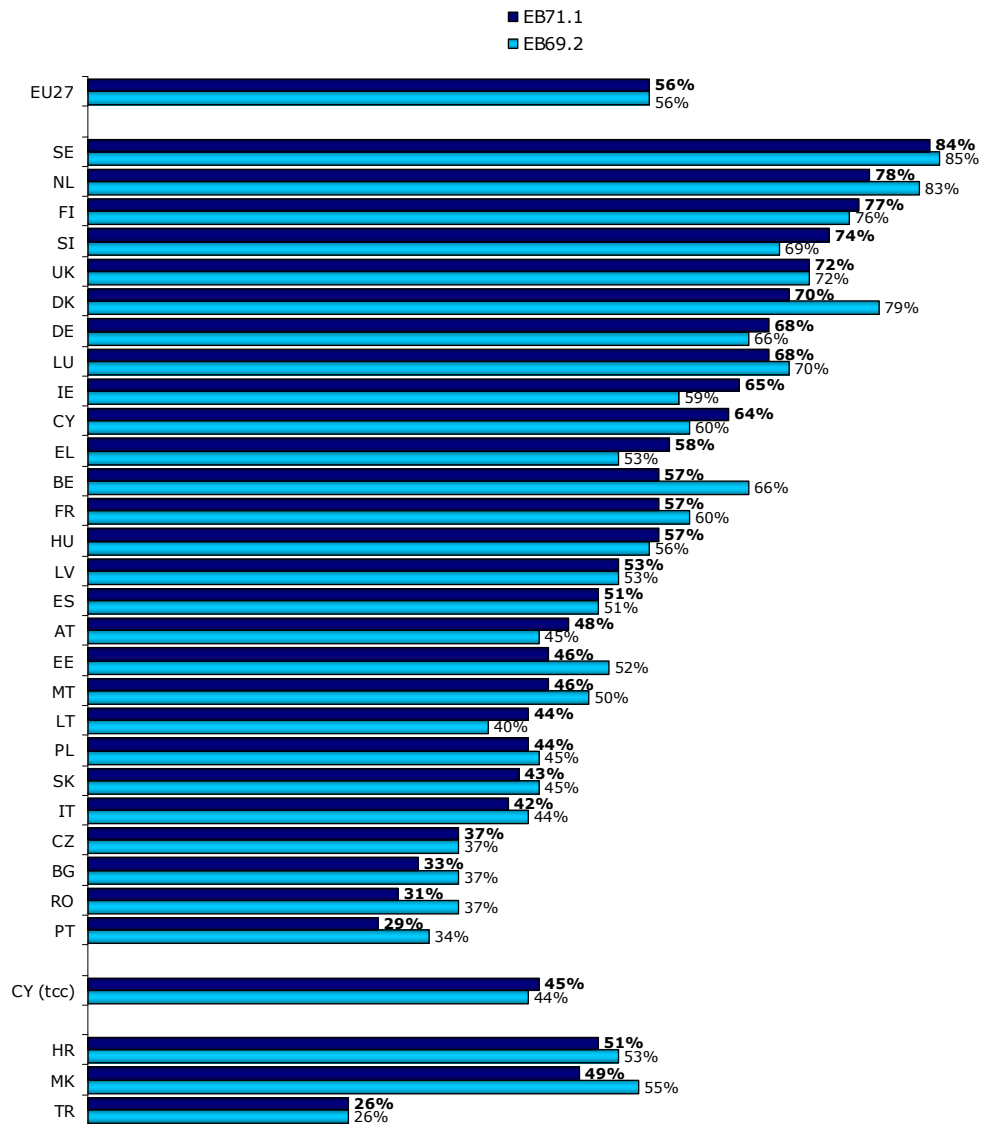


QE3.2 Personally, do you think that you are well informed or not about... ?
Ways in which we can fight climate change - Well informed



On the other hand, Belgium and Denmark report decreased levels of information, most prominently for the consequences of climate change (66% to 57% for Belgium; 79% to 70% for Denmark). Greek citizens show decreased levels of being informed on the aspect of ways in to fight climate change (50% to 46%).






QE3.2 Personally, do you think that you are well informed or not about... ?
The different consequences of climate change - Well informed



From a **socio-demographic** point of view, shown in the table, we see that:

- ✓ **Men** feel better informed than women about the causes of climate change, its consequences and the ways it could be combated.
- ✓ **The group of older respondents** (aged 55+) feels significantly less informed than its younger counterparts about these issues.
- ✓ The self-perceived level of information among respondents **increases with their levels of education**.
- ✓ **Managers, students, other white collar workers** and those who are **self employed** feel the best informed about these issues while retired, unemployed people and manual workers feel the least informed.
- ✓ Respondents' place of residence has an influence on their subjective information levels; respondents in rural areas more frequently feel poorly informed about climate change than those living in large towns.
- ✓ People who think that climate change is a **very serious problem** feel better informed about its different *causes* and *consequences* (59% and 60% versus 56% EU27 average 'well informed' for both aspects) than those who do not consider it to be a serious problem (54% and 55% versus 56% EU27 average 'well informed' for both aspects). Those who regard climate change as a *fairly* serious problem feel the least informed about all issues related to climate change (its causes, consequences and the ways to fight it; 48% on causes and consequences respectively versus 42% EU27 average 'badly informed' for both aspects and 50% versus 46% EU27 average 'badly informed' on the aspect of ways in which to fight climate change).

Personally, do you think that you are well informed or not about...?

	The different causes of climate change			The different consequences of climate change			Ways in which we can fight climate change		
	Total "Well informed"	Total "Badly informed"	DK	Total "Well informed"	Total "Badly informed"	DK	Total "Well informed"	Total "Badly informed"	DK
EU27	56%	42%	2%	56%	42%	2%	52%	46%	2%
 Sex									
Male	59%	39%	2%	59%	39%	2%	55%	43%	2%
Female	52%	46%	2%	53%	45%	2%	49%	48%	3%
 Age									
15-24	56%	42%	2%	57%	41%	2%	52%	46%	2%
25-39	58%	40%	2%	58%	40%	2%	54%	43%	3%
40-54	59%	40%	1%	59%	40%	1%	54%	44%	2%
55 +	51%	47%	2%	52%	46%	2%	47%	50%	3%
 Education (End of)									
15-	41%	56%	3%	41%	57%	2%	38%	59%	3%
16-19	55%	43%	2%	55%	43%	2%	51%	47%	2%
20+	69%	30%	1%	70%	29%	1%	65%	34%	1%
Still studying	65%	33%	2%	63%	34%	3%	57%	40%	3%
 Left-Right scale									
(1-4) Left	62%	37%	1%	62%	37%	1%	57%	42%	1%
(5-6) Centre	60%	39%	1%	62%	37%	1%	58%	41%	1%
(7-10) Right	56%	42%	2%	56%	42%	2%	53%	45%	2%
 Respondent occupation scale									
Self-employed	59%	39%	2%	59%	38%	3%	56%	41%	3%
Managers	73%	26%	1%	72%	26%	2%	68%	31%	1%
Other white collars	59%	39%	2%	60%	38%	2%	57%	41%	2%
Manual workers	54%	44%	2%	55%	43%	2%	50%	48%	2%
House persons	42%	56%	2%	44%	54%	2%	40%	57%	3%
Unemployed	48%	50%	2%	48%	51%	1%	46%	52%	2%
Retired	51%	47%	2%	51%	47%	2%	47%	50%	3%
Students	65%	33%	2%	63%	34%	3%	57%	40%	3%
Perception of climate change									
A very serious problem	59%	40%	1%	60%	39%	1%	55%	44%	1%
A fairly serious problem	50%	48%	2%	50%	48%	2%	48%	50%	2%
Not a serious problem	54%	44%	2%	55%	43%	2%	52%	45%	3%

3. Combating climate change

3.1 Attitudes towards climate change and ways of fighting it

- Although climate change is seen as a serious problem, it can be solved -

Respondents were invited to give their opinion on a number of statements linked to the problem of climate change.⁷ Their attitudes can be summarised as follows: the issue of climate change is serious but the process is not unstoppable.

Whilst nearly two-thirds of Europeans (65%) **do not** think that the **seriousness of climate change has been exaggerated**, they are nevertheless predominantly optimistic and mostly disagree (58%) with the statement that the process of climate change is **unstoppable**. However, also just under a third (31%) are rather pessimistic and believe that climate change is an unstoppable process.

On the seriousness of climate change, around a quarter (27%) of Europeans think that the seriousness of climate change has been exaggerated.

According to a wide majority of Europeans (75%), **alternative fuels** should be used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Belief in alternative fuels has also increased significantly, from 70% in spring 2008.

Another measurement showing an encouraging significant increase is the belief that fighting climate change can have a **positive effect on the European economy** (56% in spring 2008 to 62% in January-February 2009), which is remarkable in the light of the current economic downturn. The share of "don't know answers" is quite high at 17%.

As far as the causes of climate change are concerned, the majority of citizens (62%) disagree with the statement that **CO₂ emissions have only a marginal impact** on climate change.

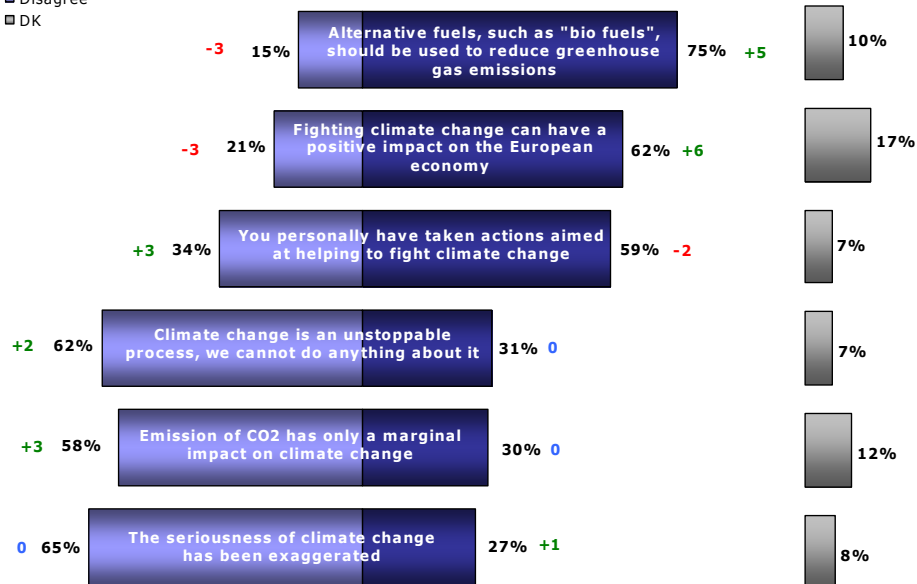
Turning to **citizens' personal contribution** to the fight against climate change, we see that a clear majority (59%) confirm that they have taken some kind of action on this matter. However, compared to spring 2008, more people state they *have not* personally taken action aimed at helping to fight climate change (31% in spring 2008 to 34% in January-February 2009). The current economic and financial crisis impacting on the respondents' lives may play a role in this regard.

⁷ QE4 For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree...? Climate change is an unstoppable process, we cannot do anything about it; The seriousness of climate change has been exaggerated; Emission of CO₂ (Carbon dioxide) has only a marginal impact on climate change; Fighting climate change can have a positive impact on the European economy; Alternative fuels, such as "bio fuels", should be used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; You personally have taken actions aimed at helping to fight climate change

QE4 For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree.
- % EU

+ and - indicate evolution from EB69 Spr. 2008

■ Agree
■ Disagree
■ DK



3.1.1 Alternative fuels

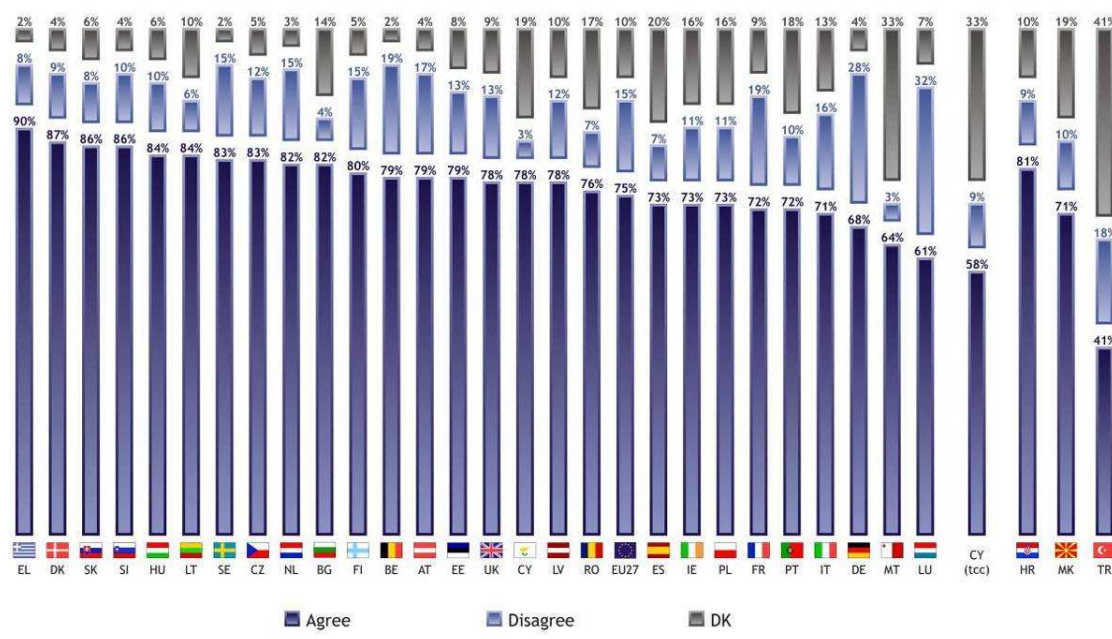
On average, three quarters of Europeans think that alternative fuels should be used to reduce greenhouse gases (75%), 15% disagree with this and 10% say that they do not know. The results **at country level** are relatively homogenous. Absolute majorities in all countries polled, in fact, agree with this (except for Turkey where 41% agree).

The **strongest belief in the usage of alternative fuels** is found in Greece, Denmark, Slovenia and Slovakia, though in most other countries more than six in ten citizens also feel that fuels of this type should be used to reduce greenhouse gases. The greatest increases in the belief that alternative fuels should be used can be found in Germany (54% in spring 2008 to 68% in January-February 2009), with Bulgaria (72% to 82%) and Lithuania (75% to 84%) also posting large increases.

On the other side of the spectrum, as mentioned, are Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot Community where 41% and 58% agree (respectively). However, it should be noted that a third or more of citizens in these two countries feel they are not familiar enough with the topic to give their opinion, as 41% in Turkey and 33% in the Turkish Cypriot Community give "don't know" in reply to this question. A similar high level of unfamiliarity is found in Malta (33% "don't know"). Malta and Turkey also show the greatest **decrease** in the belief in the usage of alternative fuels –64% of Maltese now agree that alternative fuels should be used (compared to 73% in spring 2008) though this is largely due to more Maltese not having an opinion. In Turkey though, belief in alternative fuels have declined from 50% to 41% due to more people *disagreeing* that alternative fuels should be used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Question: QE4.5. For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree.

Option: Alternative fuels, such as "bio fuels", should be used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions



The analysis of the results by **socio-demographic variables** reveals:

- ✓ **Women** are more likely than men *not to have an opinion* about the usage of alternative fuels to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as can be seen in higher "don't know" levels. This leads to higher proportions of men both agreeing *and* disagreeing that such fuels should be used for this purpose.
- ✓ Most inclined to agree that alternative fuels should be used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are respondents in the lowest two **age** groups (aged 15-39 years). Respondents who are 55 years and older are most inclined to disagree with this. They also, more frequently than respondents in other age groups, have no opinion regarding this topic.
- ✓ Looking at **education** levels, those who completed their education at the age of 15 years or younger are more likely to be unfamiliar with the topic (17% "don't know"), and therefore least likely to "agree" that alternative fuels should be used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Although more than three-quarters of those who continued their studies to the age of 20 or beyond believe in alternative fuels (76%), they are also more likely to "disagree" that alternative fuels should be used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (18%). This indicates how better-educated citizens are more likely to have an opinion on the matter.
- ✓ For various **employment categories** it is noted that house persons and retired citizens are more likely to be unfamiliar with the topic.
- ✓ Respondents who feel **informed about the causes and consequences of climate change** and the ways to fight it are significantly more likely than those who feel poorly informed about these issues to agree with the statement. This is however clearly due to the much higher rate of "don't know" replies among respondents in the latter group.
- ✓ Those who think that climate change is a **very serious problem** are considerably more likely to think that alternative fuels should be used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions than those who feel that climate change is not a serious problem.

3.1.2 Personal action taken to fight climate change

Close to six in ten Europeans (59%) claim that they have taken personal measures to fight climate change, while just over a third (34%) say they have not.

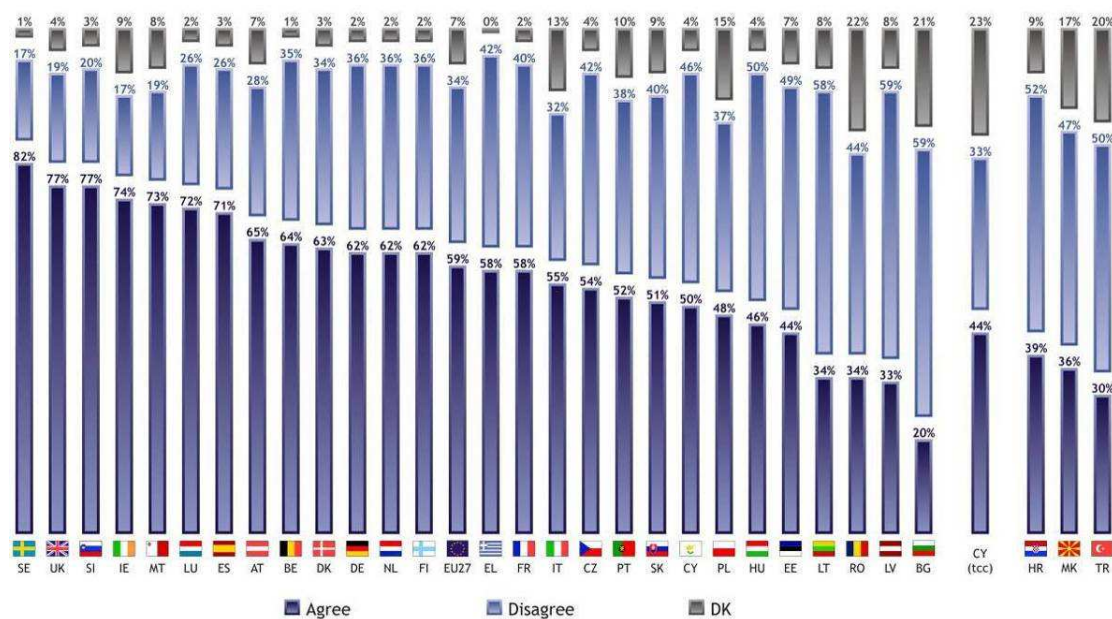
At country level the largest proportion of those who have personally taken action aimed at helping to fight climate change can be found in Sweden (82%). Slovenia and the United Kingdom also show large proportions of people who have taken action. At the other end of the spectrum, in Lithuania, Romania and Latvia only about a third of citizens have taken action aimed at helping to fight climate change.

However, it should be noted that more people in Lithuania have personally become involved in fighting climate change when compared to the previous measure (26% in spring 2008 to 34% in January-February 2009). Decreased levels of involvement are reported especially in Cyprus (72% down to 50%), Slovakia (67% down to 51%) and Greece (72% down to 58%) when comparing the results for spring 2008 and January to February 2009.

In Romania, Turkey, Bulgaria and the Turkish Cypriot Community, at least one in five citizens can not say whether they have taken actions aimed at helping to fight climate change, which is well above the EU average of 7%.

Question: QE4.6. For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree.

Option: You personally have taken actions aimed at helping to fight climate change








Analysis by socio-demographic variables reveals that:

- ✓ An increase in respondents' **age** increases the likelihood that they have taken personal action. The results for the highest age (age 55+) bracket, however, do not follow this pattern.
- ✓ "Taking personal action" is significantly more common among respondents with a longer **education** (ending at the age of 20+) than among those who ended their educational career at a relatively early age. Those who finished school at 15 or younger are much more inclined to give a "don't know" reply than respondents in other educational categories.
- ✓ Actions aimed at helping to fight climate change were more frequently taken by respondents who position themselves to the left of the **political scale** than by those who describe themselves as politically "right-wing".
- ✓ Among **occupational groups**, managers most often confirm that they have personally taken action aimed at helping to fight climate change. Students and unemployed people are most likely to disagree with this. Taking actions to fight climate change can be costly, and this may explain why the categories that act personally are those who have the higher standard of living.
- ✓ "Taking action" to fight climate change is much more widespread among respondents who feel **well-informed about climate change** (its causes, consequences and the ways to fight it) than among those who feel ill-informed about these issues.
- ✓ Quite logically, those who think that climate change is a **very serious problem** are considerably more likely to have taken personal action aimed at fighting climate change than those who do not think it is a serious problem.

For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you ...

You personally have taken actions aimed at helping to fight climate change

	Totally agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Totally disagree	DK	Agree	Disagree
EU27	15%	44%	22%	12%	7%	59%	34%
Sex							
 Male	15%	44%	22%	13%	6%	59%	35%
Female	16%	44%	22%	11%	7%	60%	33%
Age							
 15-24	11%	40%	26%	16%	7%	51%	42%
25-39	16%	48%	21%	10%	5%	64%	31%
40-54	18%	46%	20%	11%	5%	64%	31%
55 +	14%	43%	22%	13%	8%	57%	35%
Education (End of)							
 15-	13%	39%	25%	14%	9%	52%	39%
16-19	15%	45%	22%	12%	6%	60%	34%
20+	20%	50%	17%	9%	4%	70%	26%
Still studying	11%	41%	26%	16%	6%	52%	42%
Respondent occupation scale							
 Self-employed	15%	50%	20%	8%	7%	65%	28%
Managers	20%	54%	16%	7%	3%	74%	23%
Other white collars	16%	49%	21%	9%	5%	65%	30%
Manual workers	16%	43%	21%	13%	7%	59%	34%
House persons	15%	40%	26%	11%	8%	55%	37%
Unemployed	15%	39%	24%	16%	6%	54%	40%
Retired	14%	42%	22%	14%	8%	56%	36%
Students	11%	41%	26%	16%	6%	52%	42%
Left-Right scale							
 (1-4) Left	17%	47%	20%	12%	4%	64%	32%
(5-6) Centre	17%	48%	20%	10%	5%	65%	30%
(7-10) Right	14%	43%	25%	12%	6%	57%	37%

3.1.3 Impact on the European economy

More than six out of ten Europeans (62%) think that fighting climate change can have a positive impact on the European economy, while close to a fifth (21%) disagree and 17% state that they do not know. As mentioned, despite the financial and economic crisis, the measure for the positive impact on the economy has increased significantly from spring 2008 (56%).

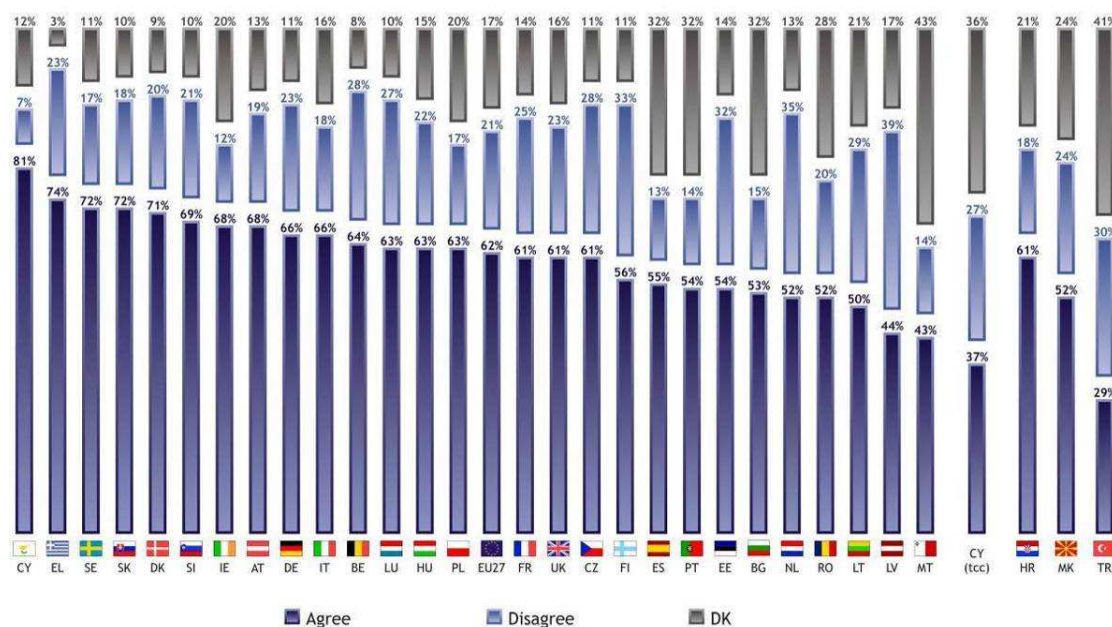
At country level, more than eight in ten of Cypriot (81%) citizens and more than seven in ten of Greek (74%), Slovak (72%), Swedish (72%) and Danish (71%) respondents think that fighting climate change could have a positive impact on the European economy. However, more than a third of those polled in Latvia (39%) and the Netherlands (35%) disagree. Finland disagrees at 33%.

Though some negative perceptions are evident in the Netherlands, it is also noted that this country shows the highest increase in mentions that fighting climate change can have a positive impact on the European economy (38% in spring 2008 to 52% in January-February 2009). Other countries showing high increases since spring 2008 include Spain (45% to 55%), the UK (51% to 61%) and Cyprus (72% to 81%).

Forty-three percent of Maltese, 41% of Turks and 36% of those in the Turkish Cypriot Community say that they do not know whether fighting climate change would have a positive effect on the European economy. Also, 32% of Spanish and Bulgarian citizens express "don't know".

Question: QE4.4. For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree.

Option: Fighting climate change can have a positive impact on the European economy









Looking at the influence of **socio-demographic factors** on respondents' opinions, we see that:

- ✓ **Men** are more likely than **women** to believe that fighting climate change can affect the European economy positively. Women are, also, less likely than men to have an opinion in this respect, seen in high "don't know" levels.
- ✓ Looking at the **age groupings**, **older** respondents (age 55+) are more likely to have no opinion on this matter, with one in five (20%) stating they "don't know".
- ✓ Agreement with the statement that fighting climate change has a positive effect on European economy rises along with respondents' levels of **education**. This can partially be explained by the high "don't know" rates among less educated people.
- ✓ Respondents who classify themselves on the left-hand spectrum of the political scale are more likely to agree than those on the right (67% vs. 62% respectively).
- ✓ The highest level of agreement is found among managers. The variations in terms of **occupational groupings** are clearly linked to the strong differences in the proportions of "don't know" replies between those groups.
- ✓ This is also the case for respondents' **subjective level of information**. Due to significant differences in the proportions of "don't know" replies, those who feel well-informed about different aspects of climate change agree to a much stronger extent that the European economy would be affected positively by fighting climate change than those who do not feel well informed about those issues.
- ✓ For a clear majority of those respondents **who consider climate change a very serious problem**, fighting climate change can have a positive impact on the European economy (62%), compared to only 44% agreement among respondents who do not think that climate change is a serious problem.

For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you ...

Fighting climate change can have a positive impact on the European economy

	Totally agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Totally disagree	DK	Agree	Disagree
EU27	17%	45%	16%	5%	17%	62%	21%
Sex							
 Male	19%	46%	17%	5%	13%	65%	22%
 Female	15%	45%	15%	5%	20%	60%	20%
Age							
 15-24	15%	46%	17%	5%	17%	61%	22%
25-39	18%	45%	16%	5%	16%	63%	21%
40-54	18%	45%	17%	6%	14%	63%	23%
55 +	15%	45%	15%	5%	20%	60%	20%
Education (End of)							
 15-	14%	40%	15%	6%	25%	54%	21%
16-19	16%	47%	16%	5%	16%	63%	21%
20+	22%	46%	17%	5%	10%	68%	22%
Still studying	15%	47%	16%	5%	17%	62%	21%
Respondent occupation scale							
 Self-employed	20%	47%	15%	6%	12%	67%	21%
Managers	21%	49%	18%	4%	8%	70%	22%
Other white collars	17%	48%	16%	5%	14%	65%	21%
Manual workers	15%	45%	18%	6%	16%	60%	24%
House persons	13%	41%	14%	6%	26%	54%	20%
Unemployed	19%	40%	17%	5%	19%	59%	22%
Retired	15%	45%	15%	4%	21%	60%	19%
Students	15%	47%	16%	5%	17%	62%	21%
Left-Right scale							
 (1-4) Left	20%	47%	16%	4%	13%	67%	20%
(5-6) Centre	17%	47%	17%	5%	14%	64%	22%
(7-10) Right	16%	46%	19%	6%	13%	62%	25%

3.1.4 Climate change is not an unstoppable process

The majority of Europeans (62%) disagree with the statement that climate change is an unstoppable process, while less than a third *do* think that there is nothing that can be done about climate change (31%). Another 7% say that they do not know. There are in fact only three countries, Latvia, Poland and Estonia, where *no* absolute majority of citizens disagrees with the statement.

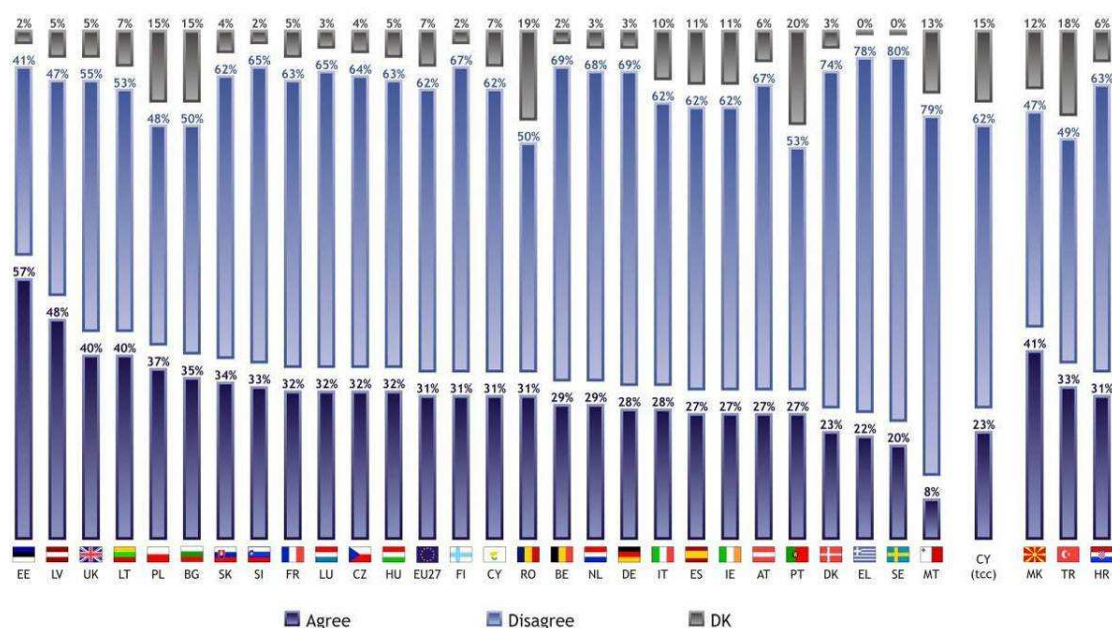
The **greatest optimism** in this respect, i.e. the highest proportions of respondents disagreeing with the statement, can be found in Sweden, Malta and Greece. In those countries well above seven in ten citizens disagree that climate change is an unstoppable process, while fewer than a quarter hold the opposite opinion. Contrary to low "don't know" levels in Sweden and Greece, Malta shows 13% "don't know". In addition, in Malta, significantly fewer citizens *agree* that climate change is an unstoppable process (19% in spring 2008 down to 8% in January-February 2009), partly due to higher levels of "don't know" mentions but also due to greater optimism.

The largest proportion of citizens believing that **climate change is an unstoppable process** exists, conversely, in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the United Kingdom and Poland. Cyprus also shows greater levels of agreement when compared to the previous survey as 31% now believe climate change is unstoppable (compared to 19% in spring 2008).

The highest proportion of "don't know" replies is found in Portugal (20%), Romania (19%) and Turkey (18%).

Question: QE4.1. For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree.

Option: Climate change is an unstoppable process, we cannot do anything about it.








From a **socio-demographic perspective**, we see that:

- ✓ Although the levels of disagreement are equal between the two **genders**, females are more likely than males to not have an opinion on whether climate change is an unstoppable process.
- ✓ Respondents in the oldest age group (age 55+) are less likely to feel that climate change can be stopped, compared to the other age groupings. This is due to them being more likely to *agree* that climate change is an unstoppable process (34%) and having no opinion on the matter (10%).
- ✓ Levels of disagreement increase with respondents' **educational levels**. On the other hand, rates of "don't know" replies increase with lower educational levels.
- ✓ Those on the left-hand side of the political spectrum are more likely to disagree (65%) than those on the right (60%).
- ✓ **Retired and unemployed people** most frequently think that climate change is an unstoppable process, while **managers, students and other white collar workers** are most likely to disagree with this.
- ✓ Respondents who feel **well-informed** about the causes and consequences of climate change and the ways to fight it more frequently disagree with the statement than those who do not feel well informed about these subjects. This can however be explained by the fact that the latter group much more frequently than the former gives a "don't know" reply.
- ✓ It is also interesting to observe that those who regard climate change as a **very serious problem** seem much more inclined than those holding the opposite view to disagree that this phenomenon is an unstoppable process.

For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you ...

Climate change is an unstoppable process, we cannot do anything about it

		Totally agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Totally disagree	DK	Agree	Disagree
	EU27	7%	24%	37%	25%	7%	31%	62%
	Sex							
	Male	8%	24%	37%	25%	6%	32%	62%
	Female	7%	22%	36%	26%	9%	29%	62%
	Age							
	15-24	8%	21%	39%	26%	6%	29%	65%
	25-39	6%	22%	37%	29%	6%	28%	66%
	40-54	7%	23%	38%	26%	6%	30%	64%
	55 +	9%	25%	34%	22%	10%	34%	56%
	Education (End of)							
	15-	9%	24%	33%	21%	13%	33%	54%
	16-19	7%	26%	38%	23%	6%	33%	61%
	20+	6%	20%	38%	32%	4%	26%	70%
	Still studying	7%	19%	40%	29%	5%	26%	69%
	Respondent occupation scale							
	Self-employed	7%	24%	36%	26%	7%	31%	62%
	Managers	5%	20%	39%	34%	2%	25%	73%
	Other white collars	6%	23%	37%	29%	5%	29%	66%
	Manual workers	7%	25%	38%	24%	6%	32%	62%
	House persons	5%	23%	36%	25%	11%	28%	61%
	Unemployed	10%	24%	33%	25%	8%	34%	58%
	Retired	9%	26%	34%	20%	11%	35%	54%
	Students	7%	19%	40%	29%	5%	26%	69%
	Left-Right scale							
	(1-4) Left	7%	25%	37%	23%	8%	32%	60%
	(5-6) Centre	8%	23%	36%	26%	7%	31%	62%
	(7-10) Right	7%	23%	36%	28%	6%	30%	64%

3.1.5 Impact of CO emissions on climate change

While the majority of Europeans (58%) disagree that the impact of CO₂ emissions on climate change is only marginal, 30% think that CO₂ emissions only have a marginal impact and 12% confirm they do not know.

Hungarians are most likely to disagree with this statement (76%), though high mentions are also found amongst the Danish, Greeks, Slovenians, Slovaks and Swedish – in all these countries at least seven out of 10 respondents think that CO₂ emissions have **more than a marginal effect** on climate change.

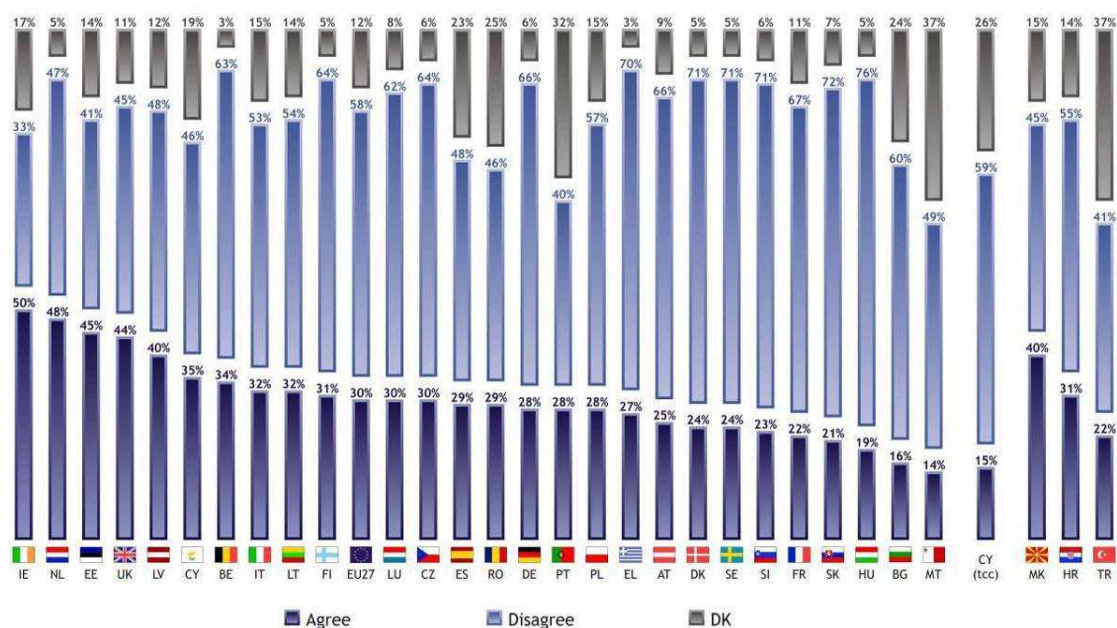
Irish, Dutch, Estonian and British respondents are, conversely, particularly convinced that emissions of CO₂ **only have a marginal impact** on climate change. In **Ireland**, the proportion so believing (50%) is significantly higher than those who disagree (33%), and has also increased significantly since spring 2008 (where 41% agreed that CO₂ emissions only have a marginal impact). The majority of Estonians (45%) are also of the opinion that the impact of emissions is only marginal. In the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, opinion appears to be strongly divided.

Comparing the results on a country level with spring 2008 shows that, in addition to Ireland, Latvia and Lithuania also post higher levels of the sentiment that CO₂ emissions only have a marginal impact on climate change (for Latvia: 31% to 40%; for Lithuania: 23% to 32%).

The "don't know" rates are particularly high in Malta, Turkey (both 37%) and Portugal (32%).

Question: QE4.3. For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree.

Option: Emission of CO₂ (Carbon dioxide) has only a marginal impact on climate change








Analysis by **socio-demographic variables** shows that:

- ✓ The level of agreement with the statement is higher among **men** than among women, i.e. men are particularly likely to think that CO₂ emissions only have a marginal effect on climate change. "Don't know" rates, however, are higher among women.
- ✓ The oldest respondents (aged 55+) are not as likely as other respondents to disagree with the statement that CO₂ emissions only have a marginal impact on climate change. This can most probably be explained by the much higher proportions of "don't know" replies in this **age group**.
- ✓ The levels of disagreement increase with respondents' levels of **education**. This should also clearly be put in relation to the strongly increasing proportions of "don't know" replies, when educational levels fall.
- ✓ Those to the left of the **political spectrum** disagree more often than those on the right that the impact of CO₂ emissions on climate change is only marginal.
- ✓ Managers form the **occupational category** most likely to disagree that CO₂ emissions only have a marginal effect on climate change, with higher answers of "don't know" amongst house persons and retired respondents.
- ✓ Respondents who feel **well-informed** about the causes and consequences of climate change and the ways to fight it tend to disagree with this more frequently than those who do not feel well informed about these subjects. It needs to be taken into account that the latter group more often give a "don't know" reply than the former.
- ✓ Those who consider climate change to be a **very serious problem** are significantly more likely to disagree that the impact of CO₂ emissions is only marginal, than those who think that climate change is not a serious problem.

For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you ...

Emission of CO2 (Carbon dioxide) has only a marginal impact on climate change

	Totally agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Totally disagree	DK	Agree	Disagree
EU27	7%	23%	33%	25%	12%	30%	58%
Sex							
 Male	9%	24%	33%	25%	9%	33%	58%
Female	6%	23%	32%	24%	15%	29%	56%
Age							
 15-24	7%	21%	34%	26%	12%	28%	60%
25-39	6%	23%	34%	27%	10%	29%	61%
40-54	7%	24%	34%	26%	9%	31%	60%
55 +	7%	24%	30%	22%	17%	31%	52%
Education (End of)							
 15-	7%	23%	29%	19%	22%	30%	48%
16-19	7%	25%	34%	23%	11%	32%	57%
20+	7%	21%	34%	32%	6%	28%	66%
Still studying	7%	19%	34%	29%	11%	26%	63%
Respondent occupation scale							
 Self-employed	10%	26%	32%	23%	9%	36%	55%
Managers	6%	23%	37%	31%	3%	29%	68%
Other white collars	7%	23%	35%	27%	8%	30%	62%
Manual workers	6%	24%	35%	24%	11%	30%	59%
House persons	5%	22%	29%	23%	21%	27%	52%
Unemployed	8%	23%	31%	24%	14%	31%	55%
Retired	7%	25%	29%	22%	17%	32%	51%
Students	7%	19%	34%	29%	11%	26%	63%
Left-Right scale							
 (1-4) Left	7%	22%	32%	29%	10%	29%	61%
(5-6) Centre	7%	25%	34%	25%	9%	32%	59%
(7-10) Right	8%	26%	35%	22%	9%	34%	57%

3.1.6 The "seriousness" of climate change has not been exaggerated

Close to two-thirds of Europeans (65%) do not think that the seriousness of climate change has been exaggerated, while just over a quarter (27%) believes that it has.

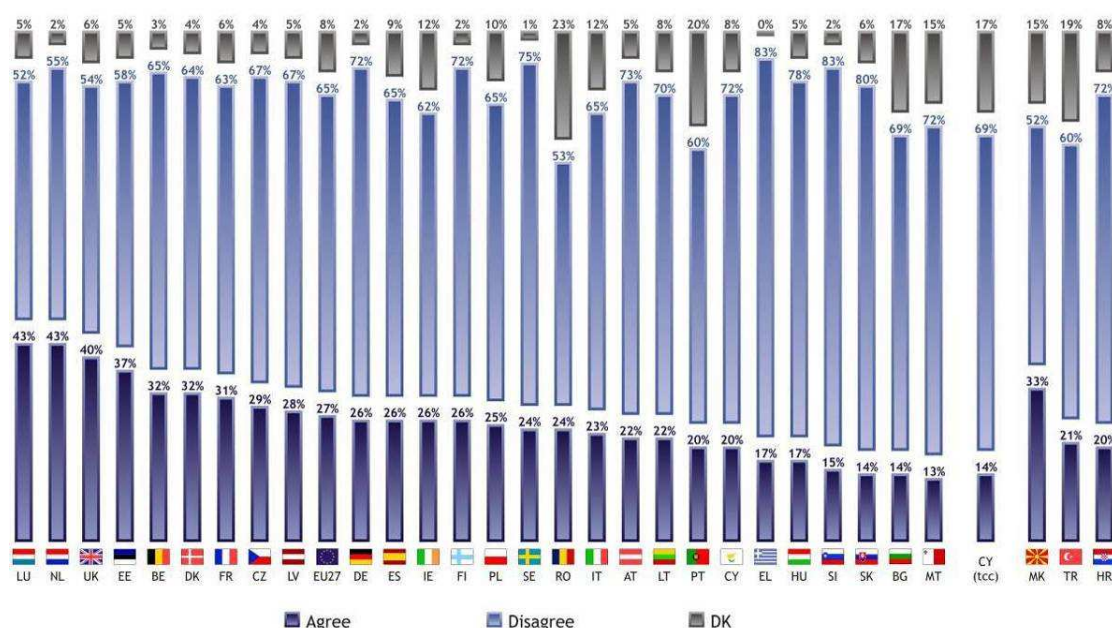
Climate change is seen to be particularly serious for respondents in Slovenia and Greece. More than eight in ten Slovenian and Greek respondents (83% respectively) say that they **do not think that the seriousness of climate change has been exaggerated**.

The opposite tendency can be observed in the Netherlands, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom, where around four in ten respondents agree that **the seriousness of this phenomenon has been exaggerated**. These figures also reach relatively high levels in Estonia (37%), where mentions have increased significantly from 30% in spring 2008. Other countries showing higher mentions of the seriousness being exaggerated include Latvia (18% up to 28%), Poland (18% up to 25%), Estonia (30% up to 37%) and the Czech Republic (22% up to 29%).

The proportions of "don't know" replies are far above the EU average of 8% in Romania (23%) and Portugal (20%).

Question: Q4.2. For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree.

Option: The seriousness of climate change has been exaggerated








A **socio-demographic breakdown** reveals that:

- ✓ **Men**, more often than women, think that the seriousness of climate change has been exaggerated.
- ✓ Disagreement, furthermore, seems to be much more widespread among respondents that ended their **education** at the age of 20 or later than among those who finished at a younger age. The share of "don't know" replies is much bigger in the latter group than in the former.
- ✓ Those who lean towards the right **politically** are considerably more likely to believe that the seriousness of this issue has been exaggerated.
- ✓ Those who feel **well-informed** about the causes and consequences of climate change and the ways to fight it are more likely to disagree, compared with those who do not feel well informed about these subjects, though this is due to a larger proportion of the *latter* having no opinion.
- ✓ Respondents who consider climate change to be a **very serious problem** are significantly more likely to disagree than those who believe that climate change is not a serious problem.

For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you ...

The seriousness of climate change has been exaggerated

	Totally agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Totally disagree	DK	Agree	Disagree
EU27	6%	21%	34%	31%	8%	27%	65%
 Sex							
Male	8%	23%	34%	29%	6%	31%	63%
Female	5%	20%	34%	32%	9%	25%	66%
 Age							
15-24	5%	22%	38%	28%	7%	27%	66%
25-39	5%	20%	36%	33%	6%	25%	69%
40-54	7%	21%	34%	33%	5%	28%	67%
55 +	7%	23%	32%	28%	10%	30%	60%
 Education (End of)							
15-	7%	22%	32%	28%	11%	29%	60%
16-19	7%	22%	35%	29%	7%	29%	64%
20+	6%	19%	34%	37%	4%	25%	71%
Still studying	5%	20%	38%	31%	6%	25%	69%
 Respondent occupation scale							
Self-employed	8%	19%	34%	34%	5%	27%	68%
Managers	6%	21%	34%	36%	3%	27%	70%
Other white collars	6%	20%	36%	33%	5%	26%	69%
Manual workers	6%	22%	35%	30%	7%	28%	65%
House persons	4%	19%	35%	31%	11%	23%	66%
Unemployed	7%	22%	33%	30%	8%	29%	63%
Retired	7%	24%	31%	27%	11%	31%	58%
Students	5%	20%	38%	31%	6%	25%	69%
 Left-Right scale							
(1-4) Left	6%	21%	33%	35%	5%	27%	68%
(5-6) Centre	7%	23%	34%	31%	5%	30%	65%
(7-10) Right	8%	25%	35%	26%	6%	33%	61%

Summarising the socio-demographic results

In summary, we see that respondents with a longer education who feel well-informed about climate change (its causes, consequences and the ways of fighting it) or who consider this phenomenon to be a very serious problem are more inclined to believe that *climate change is serious*, that *the process of it can be stopped*, that *alternative fuels* should be used to fight it and that fighting climate change would *impact the European economy positively* than respondents who spent shorter time within education, rather feel ill-informed about the subject or do not think that climate change is a serious problem.

Respondents representing the former groups are also more likely than those in the latter to have taken personal *action against climate change* or to know that *CO₂ emissions do not have a merely marginal impact* on climate change.

CONCLUSION

Climate change is still seen as one of the **top three most serious problems** facing the world today, though the seriousness of this issue (as with many other world problems) has **declined in the face of the economic downturn**, which dominates public opinion (and perceived concerns).

Still, over two-thirds of Europeans feel that climate change is a **very serious problem**, and that the seriousness of climate change **has not been exaggerated**.

However, Europeans feel that climate change **can be stopped** and the proportion of those thinking that fighting it can have a positive impact on the economy has increased. Undoubtedly, the fact that most Europeans **feel well informed** about climate change, its consequences, causes and ways of combating it assists in enabling people to join in the fight. Nevertheless, when asked at taking action a personal level, the proportion of Europeans that claim to personally act to fight climate change has decreased since spring 2008.

It is important, however, to note the variances in responses at a country level, especially in light of the fact that to effectively combat climate change a collective effort is required.

To this end a trend is noted in Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria and Lithuania – in these countries, specifically, citizens admit to **not being well informed** about the causes, consequences and ways of combating climate change. This then leads to citizens from these countries either **not personally taking action** against climate change, or not being able to say whether they are taking any action..

In addition, several countries show a **lack of familiarity** (through higher “don’t know” levels) regarding the consequences and outcomes regarding climate change, when probed on specifics. For example, Turkey shows high levels of unfamiliarity with climate change’s impact on the European economy, the efficacy of using alternative fuels, whether climate change can be stopped and the impact of CO₂ emissions. Malta, the Turkish Cypriot Community, Romania and Portugal also show above average levels of unfamiliarity with more than one of these aspects.

On the other side of the spectrum, Sweden, Slovenia, the United Kingdom and Ireland are countries where an above average number of citizens are **both well informed about climate change, and personally take action** to fight climate change. In Ireland and Slovenia the proportions of citizens who feel well informed about the causes, consequences and ways to fight climate change have increased since spring 2008.

Looking further at the perceptions and attitudes regarding climate change, respondents in Sweden, Greece, Denmark and Slovakia state that CO₂ emissions have a significant impact on climate change. In addition, all these countries feel that the seriousness of climate change has **not been exaggerated**, though the process of climate change **can be stopped**.

The Netherlands and the United Kingdom differ from this trend – although they, like the countries mentioned above, feel well informed about climate change, more than four in ten citizens in these countries say that the seriousness of climate change **has been exaggerated** and CO₂ emissions have only a **marginal** impact on climate change. Hence, there is greater division of opinion in these two countries, which leads to only around half of citizens in the United Kingdom and Netherlands classifying climate change as a “very serious” problem (significantly lower than the European average).

In socio-demographic terms, women, those with a shorter education, and older citizens (aged 55+) feel *the least informed* about climate change. In general, there is a positive correlation between the perceived level of knowledge about climate change, and the perceived seriousness of the issue.

It can be concluded that, despite the economic and financial crisis, concerns about climate change have retained their “position” in the public’s mind.

Whilst considerable country variations are noted, there is a positive base of informed and active citizens in the fight against climate change.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Between the 16th of January and the 22nd of February 2009, TNS Opinion & Social, a consortium created between Taylor Nelson Sofres and EOS Gallup Europe, carried out wave 71.1 of the EUROBAROMETER, on request of the EUROPEAN COMMISSION, Directorate-General for Communication, "Research and Political Analysis" and the EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.

The SPECIAL EUROBAROMETER N°313 is part of wave 71.1 and covers the population of the respective nationalities of the European Union Member States, resident in each of the Member States and aged 15 years and over. The SPECIAL EUROBAROMETER N°313 has also been conducted in the three candidate countries (Croatia, Turkey and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and in the Turkish Cypriot Community. In these countries, the survey covers the national population of citizens and the population of citizens of all the European Union Member States that are residents in these countries and have a sufficient command of the national languages to answer the questionnaire. The basic sample design applied in all states is a multi-stage, random (probability) one. In each country, a number of sampling points was drawn with probability proportional to population size (for a total coverage of the country) and to population density.

In order to do so, the sampling points were drawn systematically from each of the "administrative regional units", after stratification by individual unit and type of area. They thus represent the whole territory of the countries surveyed according to the EUROSTAT NUTS II (or equivalent) and according to the distribution of the resident population of the respective nationalities in terms of metropolitan, urban and rural areas. In each of the selected sampling points, a starting address was drawn, at random. Further addresses (every Nth address) were selected by standard "random route" procedures, from the initial address. In each household, the respondent was drawn, at random (following the "closest birthday rule"). All interviews were conducted face-to-face in people's homes and in the appropriate national language. As far as the data capture is concerned, CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interview) was used in those countries where this technique was available.

ABBREVIATIONS	COUNTRIES	INSTITUTES	N° INTERVIEWS	FIELDWORK DATES	POPULATION 15+
BE	Belgium	TNS Dimarso	1.018	22/01/2009 22/02/2009	8.786.805
BG	Bulgaria	TNS BBSS	1.000	16/01/2009 30/01/2009	6.647.375
CZ	Czech Rep.	TNS Aisa	1.050	22/01/2009 12/02/2009	8.571.710
DK	Denmark	TNS Gallup DK	1.016	19/01/2009 18/02/2009	4.432.931
DE	Germany	TNS Infratest	1.523	17/01/2009 10/02/2009	64.546.096
EE	Estonia	Emor	1.003	17/01/2009 09/02/2009	887.094
EL	Greece	TNS ICAP	1.000	21/01/2009 12/02/2009	8.691.304
ES	Spain	TNS Demoscopia	1.003	20/01/2009 13/02/2009	38.536.844
FR	France	TNS Sofres	1.035	17/01/2009 11/02/2009	46.425.653
IE	Ireland	TNS MRBI	1.000	20/01/2009 12/02/2009	3.375.399
IT	Italy	TNS Infratest	1.060	21/01/2009 06/02/2009	48.892.559
CY	Rep. of Cyprus	Synovate	504	21/01/2009 15/02/2009	638.900
CY(tcc)	Turkish Cypriot Comm.	KADEM	500	24/01/2009 11/02/2009	143.226
LV	Latvia	TNS Latvia	1.001	23/01/2009 11/02/2009	1.444.884
LT	Lithuania	TNS Gallup Lithuania	1.010	22/01/2009 03/02/2009	2.846.756
LU	Luxembourg	TNS ILReS	504	17/01/2009 13/02/2009	388.914
HU	Hungary	TNS Hungary	1.023	23/01/2009 13/02/2009	8.320.614
MT	Malta	MISCO	500	16/01/2009 12/02/2009	335.476
NL	Netherlands	TNS NIPO	1.044	24/01/2009 21/02/2009	13.017.690
AT	Austria	Österreichisches Gallup-Institut	1.000	16/01/2009 09/02/2009	7.004.205
PL	Poland	TNS OBOP	1.000	25/01/2009 17/02/2009	32.155.805
PT	Portugal	TNS EUROTESTE	1.000	26/01/2009 13/02/2009	8.080.915
RO	Romania	TNS CSOP	1.043	16/01/2009 12/02/2009	18.246.731
SI	Slovenia	RM PLUS	1.008	17/01/2009 13/02/2009	1.729.298
SK	Slovakia	TNS AISA SK	1.025	20/01/2009 13/02/2009	4.316.438
FI	Finland	TNS Gallup Oy	1.017	23/01/2009 17/02/2009	4.353.495
SE	Sweden	TNS GALLUP	1.017	22/01/2009 13/02/2009	7.562.263
UK	United Kingdom	TNS UK	1.314	22/01/2009 18/02/2009	50.519.877
HR	Croatia	Puls	1.000	18/01/2009 02/02/2009	3.734.300
TR	Turkey	TNS PIAR	1.005	17/01/2009 10/02/2009	47.583.830
MK	Former Yugoslav Rep. of Macedonia	TNS Brima	1.009	17/01/2009 24/01/2009	1.648.012
TOTAL			30.232	16/01/2009 22/02/2009	453.865.399

For each country a comparison between the sample and the universe was carried out. The Universe description was derived from Eurostat population data or from national statistics offices. For all countries surveyed, a national weighting procedure, using marginal and intercellular weighting, was carried out based on this Universe description. In all countries, gender, age, region and size of locality were introduced in the iteration procedure. For international weighting (i.e. EU averages), TNS Opinion & Social applies the official population figures as provided by EUROSTAT or national statistic offices. The total population figures for input in this post-weighting procedure are listed above.

Readers are reminded that survey results are estimations, the accuracy of which, everything being equal, rests upon the sample size and upon the observed percentage. With samples of about 1,000 interviews, the real percentages vary within the following confidence limits:

Observed percentages	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
Confidence limits	± 1.9 points	± 2.5 points	± 2.7 points	± 3.0 points	± 3.1 points