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Climate Change News Audiences: Analysis of News Use and Attitudes in Eight Countries

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and Richard Fletcher



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Contents

About the Authors	2
Acknowledgements	2

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	5
Methodology	7
1. Climate Change News Use One Year On	9
2. Climate Change Misinformation	15
3. Coverage of Direct Action Climate Protests	21
4. Perception of Health Impacts of Climate Change	25
5. Climate Justice	30
6. Climate Change, Politics, and Influence	35
7. Climate Change and Solutions Journalism	40
Conclusion	42

References	44
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Executive Summary

In this new report, we build on our 2022 survey to present fresh insights into how people in eight countries – Brazil, France, Germany, India, Japan, Pakistan, the UK, and the USA – access news and information about climate change in 2023. Among others, our main objective is to capture year-on-year change, if there is any, in people’s climate change news consumption patterns. Additionally, we aim to introduce new findings related to the issue of climate justice and the role of solution-oriented journalism, among other aspects.

To ensure the consistency and comparability of our work across years, we conducted our survey in the same eight countries as we did in 2022. By doing so, we remain true to our focus of taking a diverse set of countries to understand regional variations across the globe with regard to climate change news. This enables us to provide a valuable comparison between two groups: countries like France, Germany, Japan, the UK, and the USA in the Global North, and Brazil, India, and Pakistan in the Global South. In the former group, patterns of news consumption are well documented, whereas in the latter, empirical research on the subject is still in its early stages and remains under-researched, even though these regions are home to substantial populations and face heightened climate-related risks (Eckstein et al. 2021; World Bank Group 2021). Consequently, we have made a special effort to collect data from Global South nations.

It is important to note that our survey primarily relies on online data collection methods. Therefore, the data from India and Pakistan, in particular, have inherent limitations due to restricted internet access, as discussed in the methodology section. Consequently, these findings should be interpreted as, at best, representative of the online, English-speaking populations in these countries (although respondents in Pakistan had the option to complete the survey in Urdu, the majority chose the English version).

Analysing data from Brazil, France, Germany, India, Japan, Pakistan, the UK, and the USA, we find that:

- In most of the eight countries there has been a slight increase in climate change news use, with just over half (55%) on average using climate change news in the previous week.
- Climate news avoidance and trust in climate information from the news media have remained roughly stable, but avoidance has decreased slightly in the UK, USA, and Pakistan, as well as trust in the UK and Germany.
- Scientists remain the most trusted sources of news and information about climate change, trusted by 73% on average, and respondents more often see them used as sources in the news media than any other source of information.
- Over three quarters (80%) of survey respondents say they are concerned about climate change misinformation, consistent with data from 2022.

- Once again, respondents think television and online (including social media and messaging apps) are where they see most climate-related misinformation. Politicians, political parties, and governments are frequently mentioned as sources of false and misleading information.
- Nearly two thirds of respondents believe that news media play a significant role in influencing climate change decisions, actions by large businesses, government policies, and public attitudes, with particularly strong beliefs in Brazil, India, and Pakistan.
- There is large variation in how soon respondents think people in their country will face the serious effects of climate change, with significant proportions in every country thinking the consequences are decades away at least. However, people who use climate change news on a weekly basis are considerably more likely to think that people are being affected by climate change now.
- Significant disparities exist in perceptions of the impact of climate change on public health specifically, with those in Global South countries (Brazil, India, Pakistan) generally perceiving larger effects (50% or more) than those in the Global North (UK, USA, France, Germany, Japan).
- Just over half of respondents think that climate change has a larger effect on poorer people (53%) and poorer countries (52%), but there is a considerable partisan disagreement on this in France, the UK, and the USA, with those leaning politically right less likely to agree.
- People are more likely to think that richer countries and more polluting countries should take greater responsibility for reducing climate change, and weekly climate change news users are more likely to hold this view.
- In the UK, USA, Germany and France opinion is roughly evenly split on whether direct action climate protests (e.g. blocking roads, disrupting sporting events) are covered fairly by the news media. But in Germany, the UK, and the USA opinion varies depending on whether people support or oppose the protests.
- People in our survey expressed a high level of interest in various types of climate coverage, including news that discusses latest developments, positive news, and coverage presenting solutions. People did not express a clear preference for the type of solutions journalism they are most interested in.

Introduction

This year, 2023, may go down not only as the hottest ever recorded but also as a year that has, with an alarming increase in the frequency and severity of a wide range of climate change-induced extreme weather events, given us a stark foretaste of the climate change impacts we can anticipate over the coming decades and centuries.¹ These impacts are far-reaching, extending to human health, politics, food supplies, infrastructure, financial markets, and society at large, and transcending national boundaries.

At the time of writing this report, we find ourselves just a few days away from the 28th Conference of Parties (COP28), a pivotal gathering where world leaders will convene to chart a path forward in addressing this existential crisis, which continues to suffer from inadequate policy measures and prescribed actions.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), our atmosphere now holds more carbon dioxide than at any time in human history (IPCC 2023). It is increasingly likely that global surface temperatures will surpass the critical 1.5 degrees Celsius threshold set during the COP21 summit of 2015, known as the Paris climate agreement (Ibid.). As indicated by the Global Hunger Index, the ramifications of anthropogenic climate change have exacerbated food insecurity, resulting in a surge in global hunger for the first time in decades.²

While the current trajectory might suggest an impending climate catastrophe, it is crucial to acknowledge the progress. For instance, the cost of renewable energy has fallen faster than expectations, paving the way for clean energy transition. Moreover, over half of the world's economies have already moved beyond a peak in power generation from fossil fuels (Lockhart et al. 2023).

Despite these positive signs, we still face significant challenges. In fact, scientists have urged world governments to urgently make use of one last window of opportunity to shift course that requires industrialised nations to drastically reduce greenhouse gases and swiftly reach their respective net-zero targets (IPCC 2023). However, considering the scale of this challenge and the widespread impacts that affect us all, coupled with the awareness that our window for effective action is rapidly closing, the responsibility extends well beyond governments alone; it falls on all key stakeholders, including the news media, which is the focus of our present work.

A substantial body of empirical evidence has identified that news media are crucial in shaping policy agendas, fostering public discourse, and motivating individuals to take pro-environmental actions. We know that the majority of people come across information on climate change from news media (Newman et al. 2020), which are thus influencing public understanding of and engagement with the issue. Understanding people's climate news consumption patterns and their impact on related attitudes remains critical for scholars, journalists, and policymakers, especially in countries from the Global South that are generally under-researched (Ejaz and Najam 2023; Schäfer and Painter 2020).

¹ <https://www.wired.co.uk/article/climate-change-facts>

² <https://www.globalhungerindex.org/issues-in-focus/2019.html>

In this report, our aim is to offer fresh insights on the changes and consistencies in climate change news consumption patterns in a diverse sample of eight countries: France, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and Brazil, India, and Pakistan, all of which contend with the profound impacts of climate change. Drawing from data collected through an online survey in 2023, this study not only updates our understanding of climate news consumption habits but also offers a valuable point of comparison with our earlier report published in 2022. In addition to news consumption, we assess public opinion on various related aspects, including the health impacts of climate change, public support for and coverage of direct action protests, and climate justice.

Since our last report, only small changes are observed in the frequency of climate change news consumption and media platform preferences, as online and television news continue to be most used across the eight countries. The stability in trust of scientists, activists, and international institutions as primary sources of climate information maybe reassuring, yet concerns persist among respondents about climate change misinformation. The impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly apparent, prompting some to participate in direct action protests, but our findings indicate that these actions do not enjoy widespread public support. Regarding public perception of the health impacts of climate change, fewer respondents in Global North countries perceive significant health effects than those in the Global South. People recognise the disproportionate impact of climate change on poorer countries and individuals, but less so when it comes to women compared with men. Generally, respondents express interest in all types of solution-oriented climate news.

We hope our report, while providing new insights on issues linking climate change to health, politics, and climate justice, contributes to the ongoing global conversation about climate change, furnishes journalists and policymakers with evidence-based insights, and inspires informed public engagement on this pressing issue.

Methodology

This report is based on a survey conducted by Ipsos on behalf of the Oxford Climate Journalism Network (OCJN) at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ), University of Oxford. Among others, our main purpose is to understand how people access and evaluate news and information about climate change. Data were collected by Ipsos using an online questionnaire fielded between 18 and 31 August 2023 across Brazil, France, Germany, India, Japan, Pakistan, the UK, and the USA.

Ipsos was responsible for the fieldwork and provision of weighted data and tables only, and RISJ was responsible for the design, reporting, and interpretation of the results.

Samples in each country were assembled using nationally representative quotas for age group, gender, and region. The data were weighted to targets based on census or industry-accepted data for the same variables. The age range in France, Germany, the UK, and the USA is 18–75, and 18–65 in Japan and Brazil. It is worth highlighting that the samples in India and Pakistan differ slightly from those in 2022 in terms of age range (18–55 in 2023, 18–65 in 2022), so some extra caution is warranted when making year-on-year comparisons in these countries. Furthermore, it is important to point out that online samples tend to under-represent the news consumption habits of people who are older and less affluent, meaning online use is typically over-represented and traditional offline use under-represented. In this sense, it is better to think of results as representative of the online population. Sample sizes are approximately 1,000 in each country, meaning that there is a margin of error of at least \pm four percentage points. Differences of less than five percentage points should be interpreted very cautiously, especially for demographic subsamples.

Table 1. Nationally representative sample sizes

Country	Sample size	Fieldwork dates	Internet penetration*
UK	1,103	18–20 August 2023	98%
USA	1,097	18–22 August 2023	92%
France	1,069	18–21 August 2023	93%
Germany	1,065	23–28 August 2023	93%
Japan	1,000	29–31 August 2023	83%
Brazil	1,000	28–31 August 2023	84%
India	1,000	22–24 August 2023	49%
Pakistan	1,000	25–31 August 2023	37%

*Source: Digital 2023 July global statshot report, Datareportal, <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2023-july-global-statshot>

As noted above, online samples tend to under-represent the consumption habits of people who are not online (typically older, less affluent, and with limited formal education). Moreover,

people usually opt into online surveys, so they tend to over-represent people who are politically more active.

It is also important to highlight that online surveys have their limitations, primarily stemming from the reliance on respondents' memory, which can be flawed or influenced by various biases. For instance, when it comes to gauging public sentiments regarding climate change, previous studies have cautioned about social desirability bias, which may lead to an incomplete representation of citizens' true attitudes (Beiser-McGrath and Bernauer 2021) and even an overestimation of their self-reported environmentally friendly views (Larson and Kinsey 2019).

Furthermore, in the context of questions related to misinformation, it is crucial to acknowledge that these can offer insights into people's perceptions of the issue rather than provide an objective measure of the extent to which individuals have encountered false information. Nevertheless, in line with the recommendations of prior research, we have taken steps to mitigate these potential challenges by implementing careful questionnaire design and testing.

Some figures in this report show averages across countries. Percentages for all countries can be viewed using the interactive figures at: <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/climate-change-news-audiences-analysis-news-use-and-attitudes-eight-countries>

1. Climate Change News Use One Year On

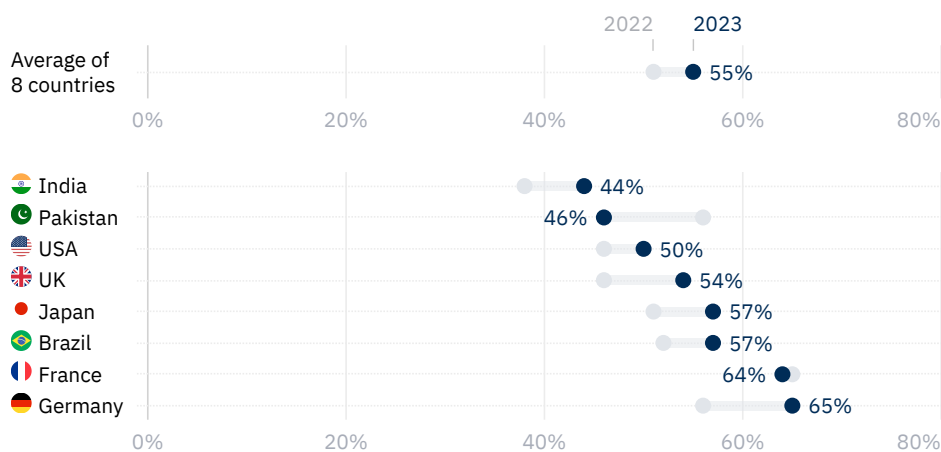
This year is on track to be the hottest on record, as the average global temperature has been 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels on about one third of all days so far in 2023. It has also been a big year for climate journalism. As politicians in some parts of the world push back against climate policies, and protesters disrupt public events to make their voices heard, journalism faces new challenges in informing the public and holding power to account.

This report focuses on the audience for that journalism. And when we analyse the survey responses they provide, it is clear that many of the key indicators of climate news use by the public remain broadly stable compared with when we last measured them in 2022. Others have changed slightly. In some cases, we might take a degree of comfort and reassurance in both the public's willingness to engage with climate news and the ability of journalists and news organisations to actively engage them. Other findings are just as concerning now as they were in 2022, highlighting the work that needs to be done.

Starting with a basic measure of news use, our data from 2023 show that, on average, 55% of the public access news and information about climate change on a weekly basis. Looking at individual countries the figure ranges from just under half in India (44%) to around two thirds in Germany (65%). Most have seen a slight increase from 2022, such as in Germany (+9pp), Japan (+6pp), and the UK (+8pp), though there was a decrease in Pakistan (-10pp), and we should be very cautious about inferring trends from just two data points.

Figure 1. Proportion that saw, read, or heard any news or information about climate change in the last week

There has been an increase in climate change news use in Germany, Brazil, Japan, India, and the UK



Q5A. When, if at all, was the last time you saw, read, or heard any news or information about climate change, from any source?
Base: Total sample in each country-year ≈ 1000.

It remains the case that around one quarter say they come across news and information about climate change less than every two weeks, and a small minority of around 5% say it has been a year or more since they engaged with climate news.

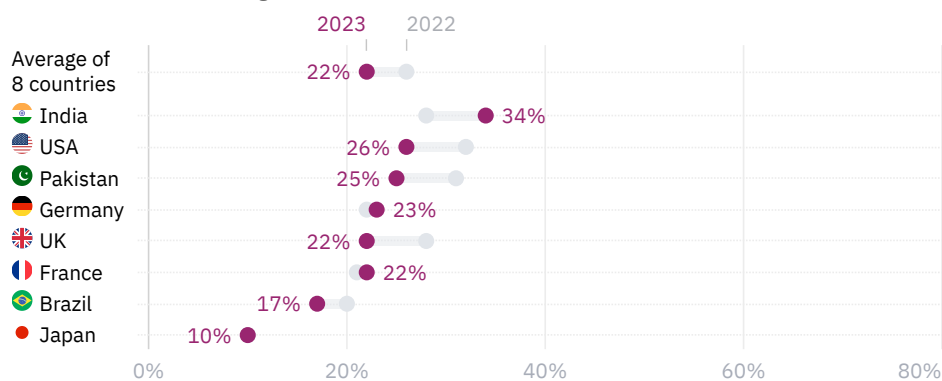
The proportion that say they always or often actively avoid news about climate change has

also remained broadly stable, averaging 22% across the eight countries. In parallel to the slight bump in climate news use, regular climate news avoidance has also dropped slightly in some countries, such as in Pakistan (-6pp), the UK (-6pp), and the USA (-6pp), which brings the eight-country average down slightly, though elsewhere climate news avoidance remains stable. In 2022 we found that climate news avoidance mapped very closely onto news avoidance in general, and the same is true this year. As we explained in our 2023 *Digital News Report*, many news avoiders – particularly those with low levels of interest in news and politics – avoid news generally without necessarily making exceptions for different news topics.

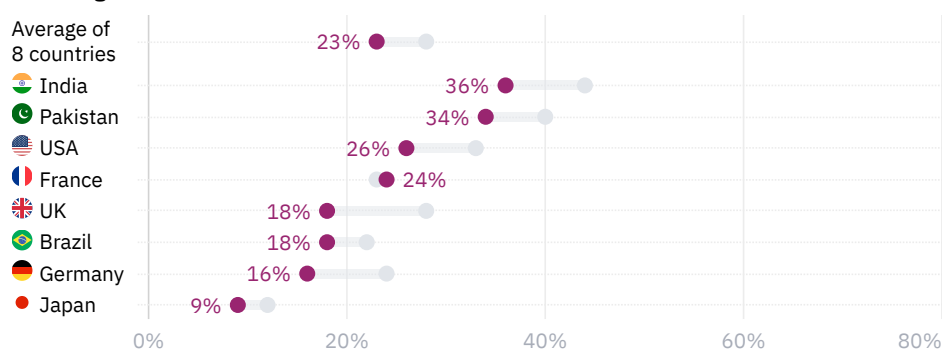
Figure 2. Proportion that often/always actively avoid each

There has been a decrease in climate news avoidance in Pakistan, the UK, and the USA. Climate news avoidance has increased in India

News about climate change



News in general

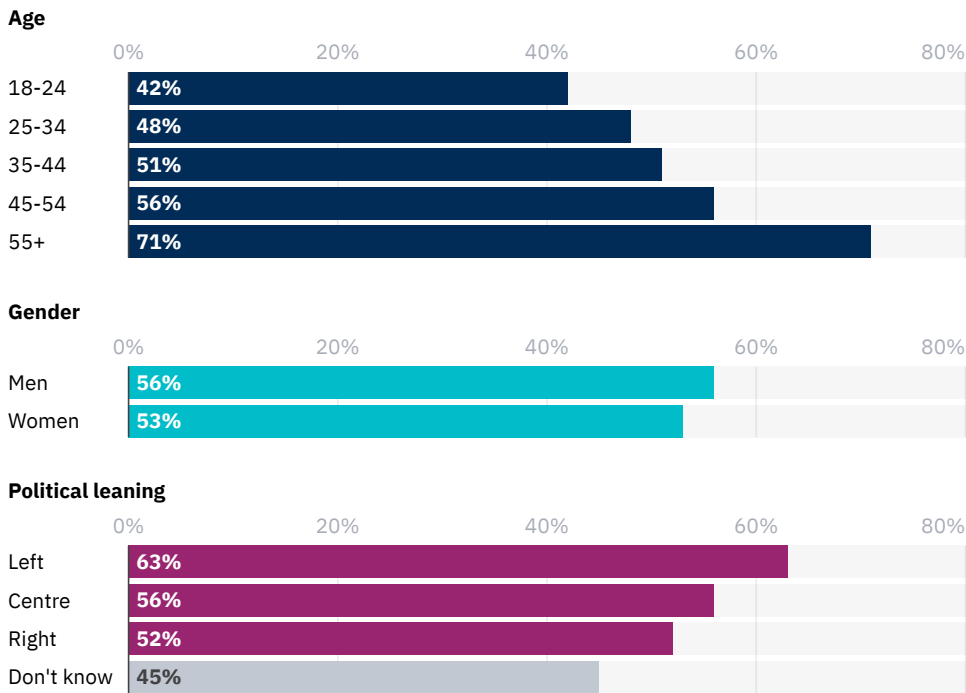


Q21. How often, if at all, do you personally actively try to avoid news in general/news on climate change. *Base: Total sample in each country-year ≈ 1000.*

The demographic patterns associated with weekly climate change news use also follow those we typically associate with news use more broadly. Although we might think of young people as being more interested in climate issues, those aged 55 or over are considerably more likely to have accessed climate change news in the last week than the 18–24s, in part because older people are more likely to regularly consume news overall. Gaps by gender are small in our eight-country average, but in Europe and the USA the gap between men and women can be as much as ten percentage points (with men more likely to say they use climate news weekly). Those on the political left are also around ten percentage points more likely than those on the right to access climate news; but it is important to keep in mind that those that can place themselves on a left-right ideological scale are more likely to be regular climate news users than those that say they ‘don’t know’ (which is mostly people with low levels of political interest).

Figure 3. Proportion that saw, read, or heard any news or information about climate change in the last week - average of eight countries

Older age groups and those on the Left are more likely to use climate change news



Q5A. When, if at all, was the last time you saw, read, or heard any news or information about climate change, from any source?
 Base: 18-24/25-34/35-44/45-54/55+ = 1330/1836/1757/1518/1893, Men/Women = 4122/4180, Left/Centre/Right/Don't know = 1184/4075/1444/1026.

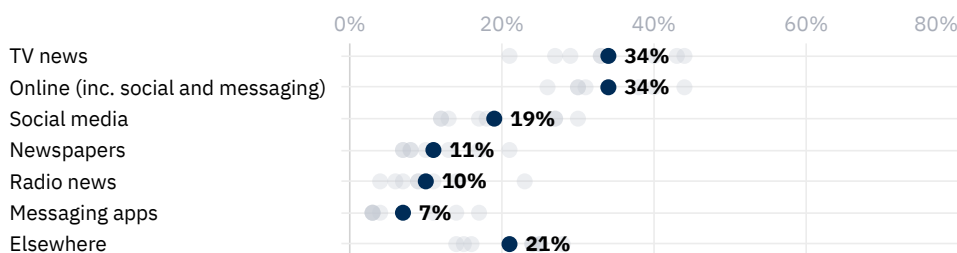
When it comes to the different media that people use to get news and information about climate change, it is still the case that online and television news are the most widely used media. Although there is some country variation, around one third (34%) accessed news and information about climate change from each in the week prior to the survey. Social media (19%) are more widely used than both radio (10%) and print newspapers (11%).

Figure 4. Proportion that saw, read, or heard climate change news or information from each in the last week

TV news and online (incl. social and messaging) are the most widely used media for climate change news

See website for individual country data

● Average of 8 countries ● Brazil ● France ● Germany ● India ● Japan ● Pakistan ● UK ● USA

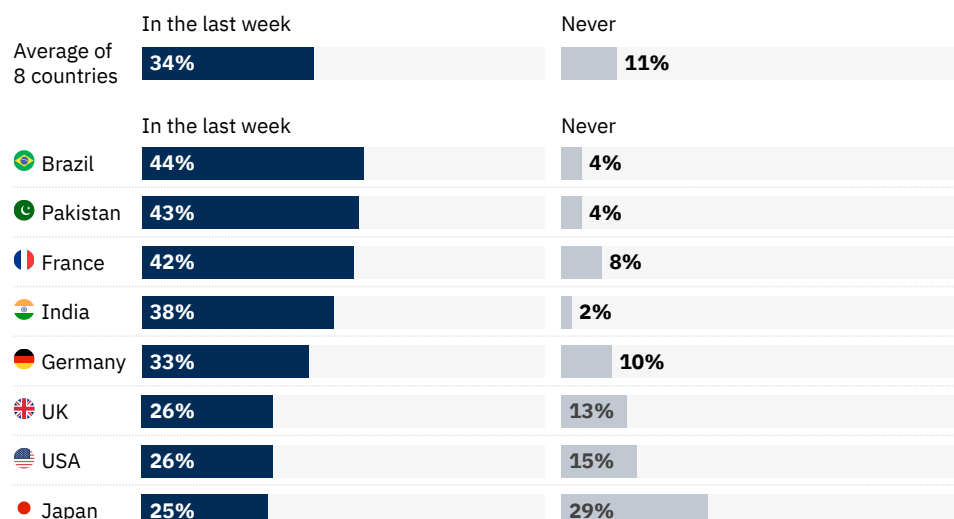


Q5. Thinking specifically about the news or information about climate change you saw, read, or heard within the last week. Where did you see, read, or hear this? Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000. Note: Elsewhere includes 'Documentaries', 'Magazines, blogs, reports, etc. specialising in environmental/climate issues', 'Face-to-face or telephone/video conversations with people I know', and 'Academic journals'.

This year we also asked people how often they talk about climate change with their friends and family. Of course, these conversations can be completely different to accessing news about climate change, but it is striking that one third (34%) – the same proportion that say they get news from television or online – say they have conversations about climate change each week. One in ten (11%) say they have never spoken about climate change to either their friends or family, rising to around three in ten in Japan (29%).

Figure 5. Proportion that say each was the last time they had a conversation about climate change with their friends or family

Between one quarter and one half of respondents have conversations about climate change each week - but some people never talk about this with their friends and family

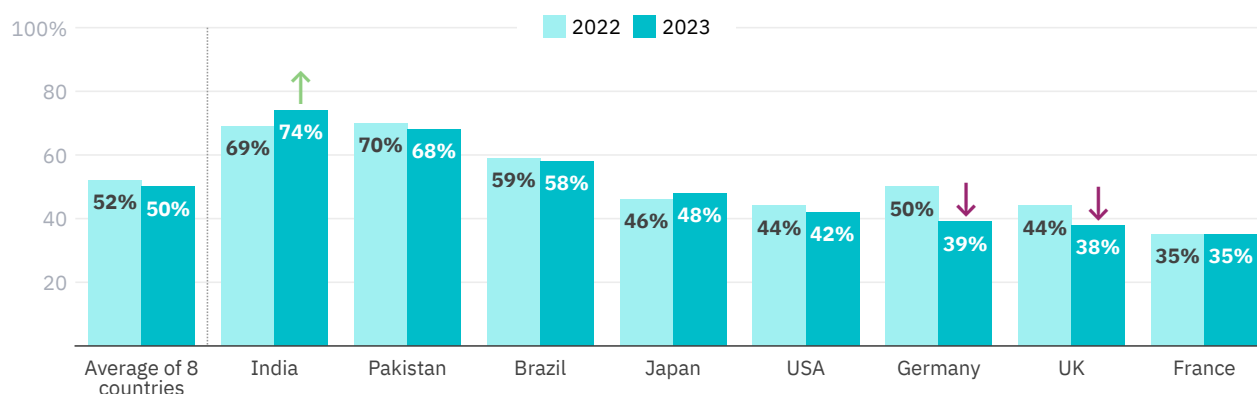


Q36. When was the last time, if ever, you talked about climate change with your friends or family? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

Trust in the news media for news and information about climate change has remained broadly stable at 50% in 2023 compared with 52% in 2022. In the UK there has been a decrease in trust (-6pp), and there was a larger decrease in Germany (-11pp); otherwise, except for India, where trust has risen, the figures are stable.

Figure 6. Proportion that trust the news media as a source of news and information about climate change

Trust in climate news from the news media has remained broadly stable – but has decreased in Germany and the UK



Q7. Please look at the groups below and indicate the extent to which you would generally trust or distrust each one as a source of news or information about climate change. – News media (organisations delivering news to the public via radio, TV, newspapers, news magazines, or online news sources). *Base: Total sample in each country-year ≈ 1000.*

Trust in other sources (e.g. scientists, government, charities) has also remained stable, but with a few exceptions. In Germany trust in most sources of information about climate change has fallen in the last year (except for ‘trust in people you know personally’), and in Brazil trust in government has risen from 36% to 47% following the election of President Lula da Silva in late 2022.

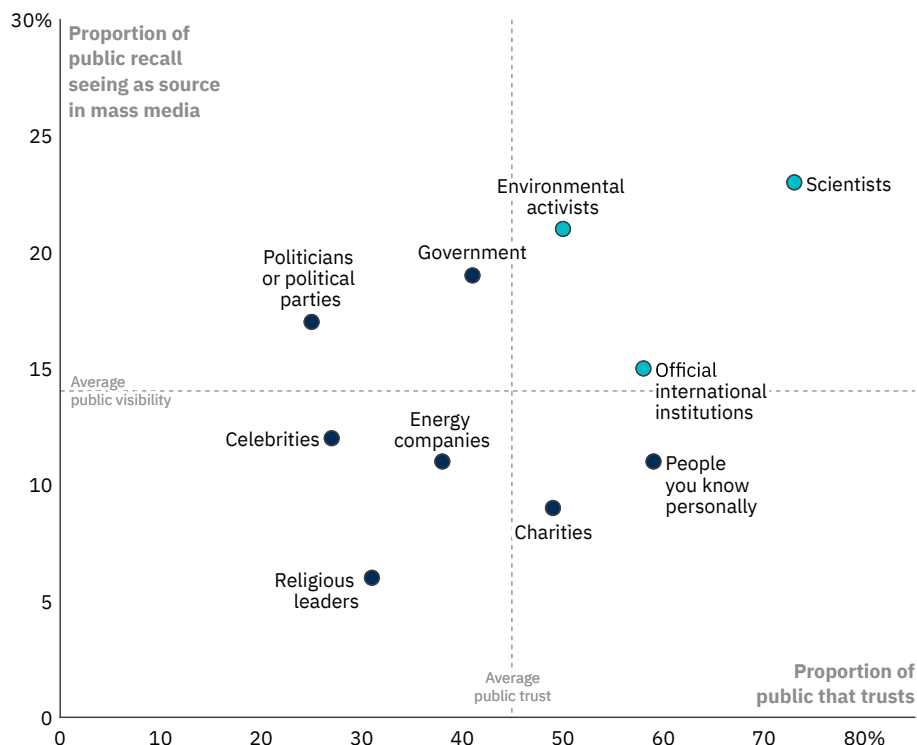
Figure 7 plots public trust in different sources of news and information about climate change against the proportion that recall them commenting or being mentioned as the source in news reports. As we explained in last year’s report, public trust in scientists as sources of news and information about climate change is high (73%), and it is scientists that people most often recall being used as sources of information in the mass media³ (23%). In general, sources that enjoy higher levels of public trust (e.g. environmental activists and official international institutions like the United Nations) tend to be more visible in the mass media. Religious leaders and celebrities, who are not typically trusted by large parts of the population, are rarely seen commenting on climate change in the mass media. To some extent this indicates that news organisations are showcasing trusted sources of information. But there are exceptions. Both politicians and governments are seen in the mass media as sources of information on climate change relatively frequently, but both have lower than average public trust. The news media may have little choice but to feature politicians and governments when they speak about climate policy but should keep in mind that they are not seen as trusted sources of information on climate change more broadly.

³ We use the term ‘mass media’ to refer to the news media and social media.

Figure 7. Proportion that recall seeing each as a source of climate news or information in the mass media plotted against trust – average of eight countries

Some sources of news and information about climate change that the public trusts (e.g. scientists, activists, and official international institutions) are also more likely to be seen used as a source of climate information in the mass media

See website for precise percentages



Q7. Please look at the groups below and indicate the extent to which you would generally trust or distrust each one as a source of news or information about climate change. **Q6.** Thinking about the news or information you saw, read, or heard about climate change within the last week in the following places. Which types of organisations or individuals do you recall commenting or being mentioned as the source? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

2. Climate Change Misinformation

The persistence of misinformation about climate change and belief in it remains one of the primary contributors to climate inaction (Biddlestone et al. 2022). This is exemplified by the IPCC in its AR5 report, which, for the first time, acknowledged climate misinformation as a key issue, one that creates uncertainty and makes it harder to identify risks, thus contributing to delayed mitigation and adaptation action (IPCC 2022).

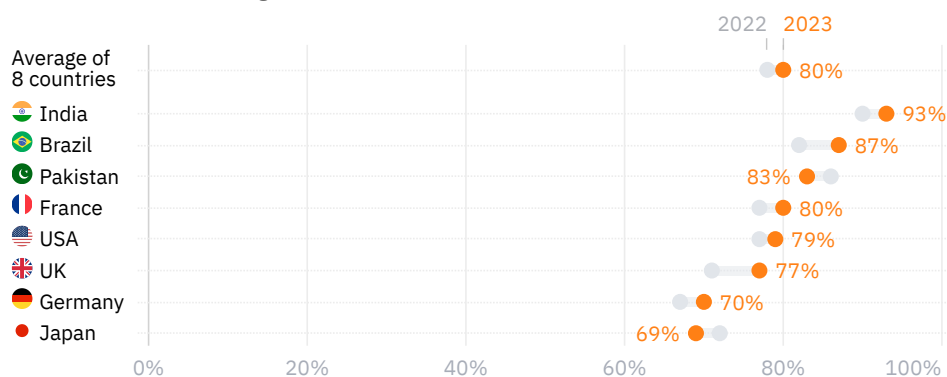
In addition to recognising the importance of misinformation, the IPCC underscored the role of offline and online news media in amplifying unscientific and contrarian messages and contributing to the spread of misinformation (IPCC 2022). However, at the same time, recent work shows news media can also help (Altay et al. 2023) by making people more informed about, and potentially more resilient to, misinformation (Humprecht et al. 2020; Acerbi et al. 2022).

Given the importance of misinformation and the associated role of news media, as in 2022, we collected data on public concern about the issue and the frequency of climate misinformation exposure across online and offline platforms and sources. However, before presenting this year's findings, it is important to reiterate that our results are derived from survey data, consequently relying on (a) individuals' perceptions of what they consider misinformation and (b) their recollection. As such, these data do not offer an objective measure of actual exposure to false and misleading information, but rather people's perceptions of exposure. It may also be the case that people who do not believe in the existence of climate change perceive claims of its existence as misinformation.

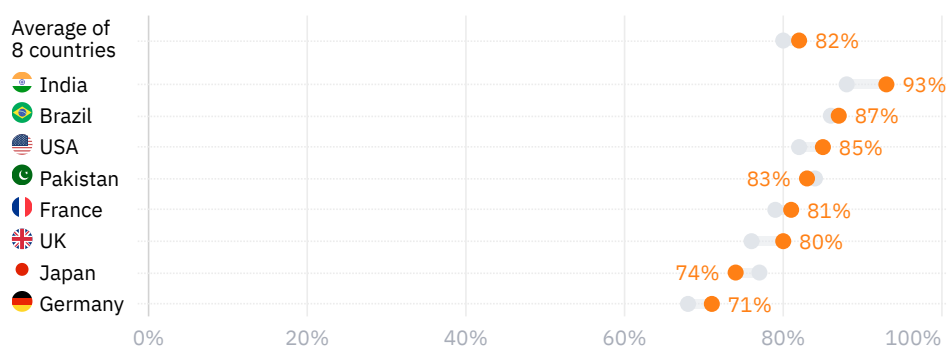
Figure 8. Proportion who are extremely/very/somewhat concerned about false or misleading information about each

In most countries concern about climate misinformation is high and stable – but there were slight increases in Brazil and the UK

News about climate change



News in general



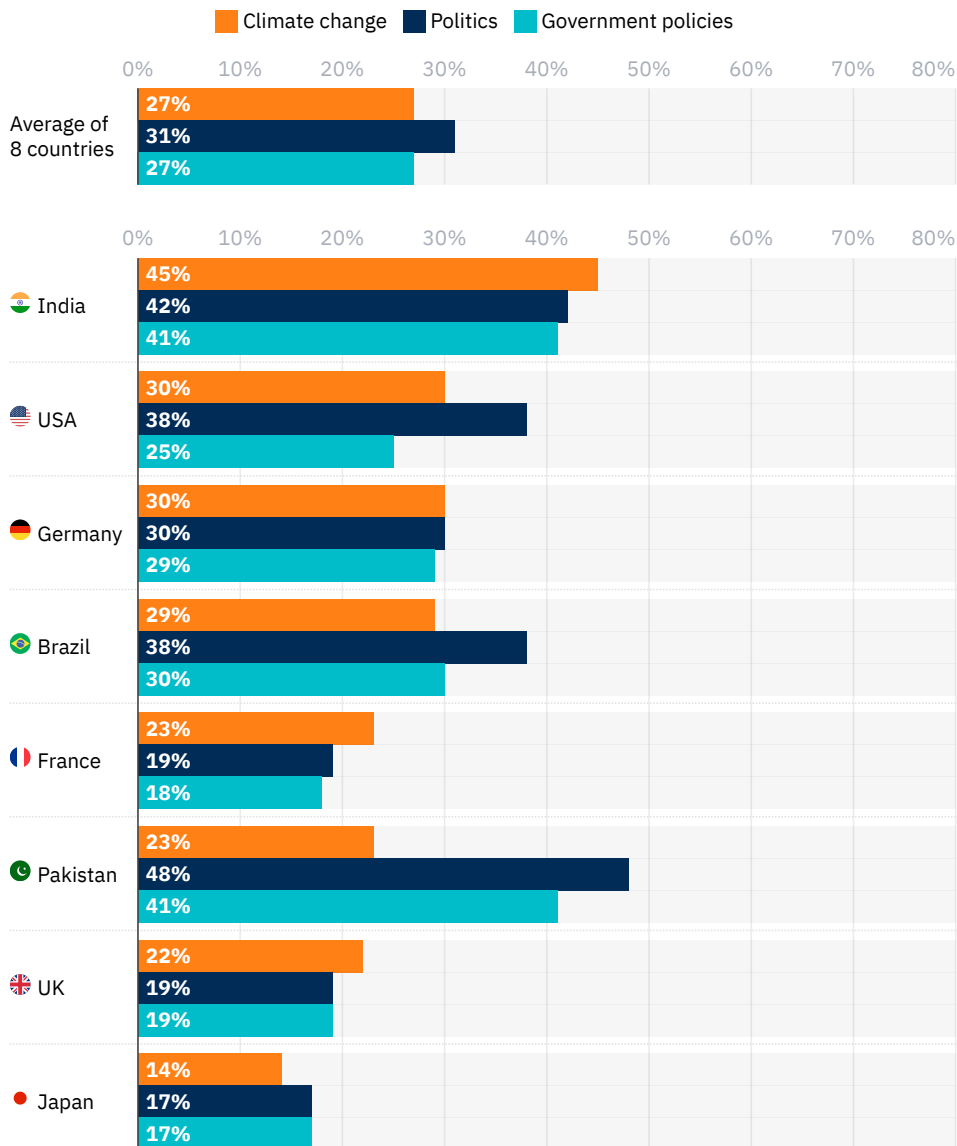
Q15. To what extent are you concerned, or not, that some news or information you see, read, or hear may be false or misleading? News or information in general/News or information on climate change. Base: Total sample in each country-year ≈ 1000.

Like the previous year, we measured public opinion on the level of concern about misinformation in general and specifically on climate change. As illustrated in Figure 8, it is evident that concern about both types of misinformation remains high; 80% of respondents across eight countries say they are at least somewhat concerned about false or misleading news about climate change. The figure is below average in Japan (69%) and Germany (70%), and above average in Brazil (87%) and India (93%), but in every case a clear majority are concerned. However, when compared with the previous year, there has not been a statistically significant shift in this concern at either the aggregate or country levels, except for small increases in Brazil and the UK. Also, concern over misinformation in climate news is no smaller or no greater than misinformation in news in general.

Today's information ecosystem is marred with misinformation on a range of topics. We asked respondents to estimate their exposure to different types of information they believed to be false or misleading. Figure 9 shows the top three types of misinformation our respondents claim to have seen in the last week. We find that, on average across all countries, perceived exposure to misinformation about climate change (27%) is roughly as common as misinformation about politics (31%) and government policies (27%).

Figure 9. Proportion that think they saw false or misleading information about each in the last week

Perceived exposure to climate misinformation is similar to exposure to political misinformation and misinformation about government policy

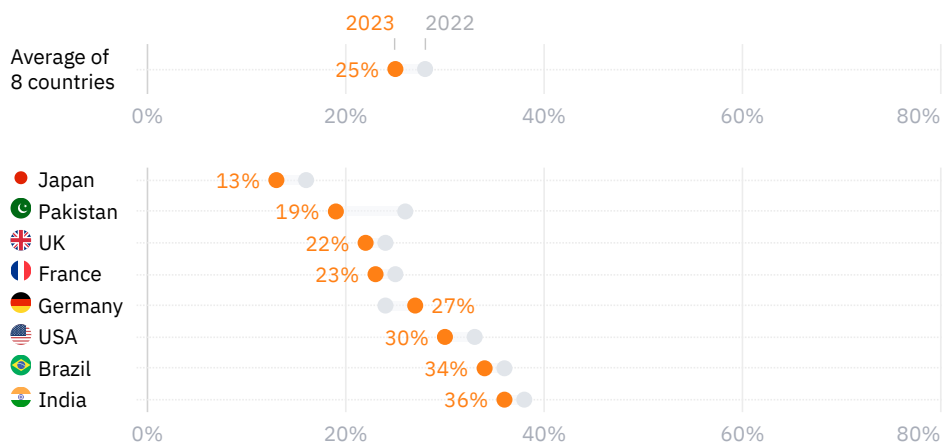


Q16. To the best of your knowledge, have you personally seen, read, or heard any news or information that you believe to be false or misleading about any of the following topics, in the last week? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

Comparing perceived exposure to climate change misinformation to last year, we find that, on average, a similar percentage of people recall encountering misleading information on climate change in 2022 (28%) as 2023 (25%). This pattern has remained consistent across all countries, except for Pakistan, where there was a seven percentage point reduction in respondents' claims of seeing perceived misinformation on climate change in the last week.

Figure 10. Proportion who think they come across false or misleading information on climate change all the time/often

There has been no statistically significant change in perceived frequency of climate change misinformation exposure, except for in Pakistan

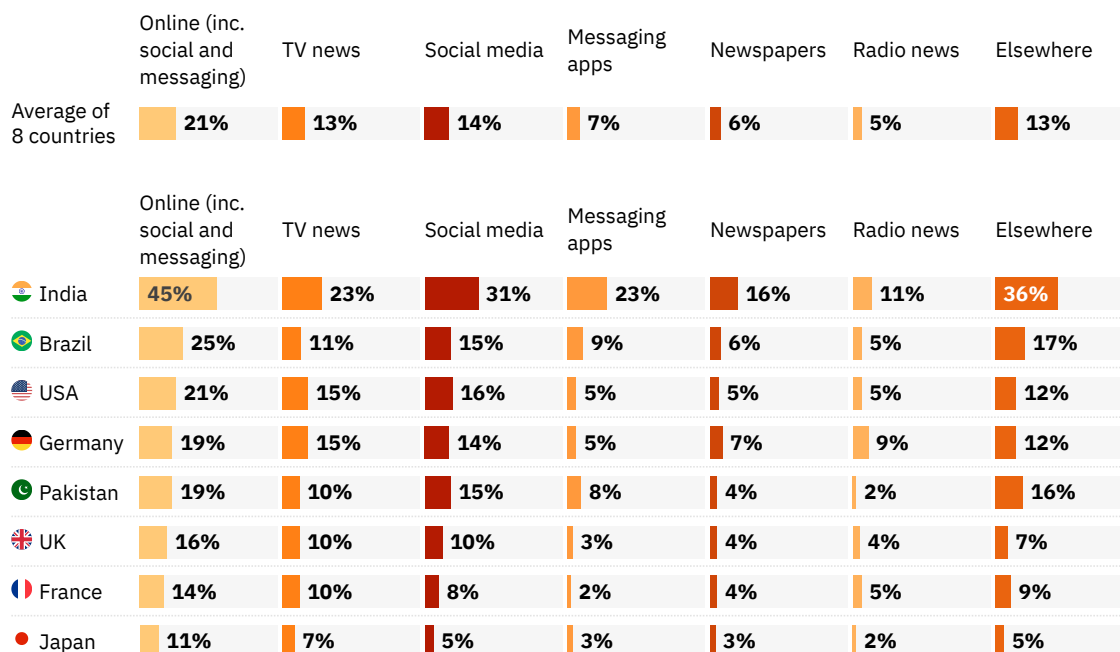


Q19. How often, if at all, do you personally come across news or information about climate change that you believe to be false or misleading? *Base: Total sample in each country-year ≈ 1000.*

When asked about where people think they were exposed to climate change misinformation, our findings show a mixture of similarities to our previous study (Ejaz et al. 2022) and new insights, especially in country-level differences. As illustrated in Figure 11, across countries, a higher percentage of our respondents in India (45%), Brazil (25%), and the USA (21%) think they encountered false news and misleading information online (including social media and messaging apps) compared with Japan, France, and the UK, where the percentage ranged from 11% to 16%. Like 2022, newspapers and radio remain less frequently cited than other sources across all countries.

Figure 11. Proportion that think they came across false or misleading information on each in the last week

Respondents are more likely to think that they come across climate change misinformation online (including on social media and messaging apps)

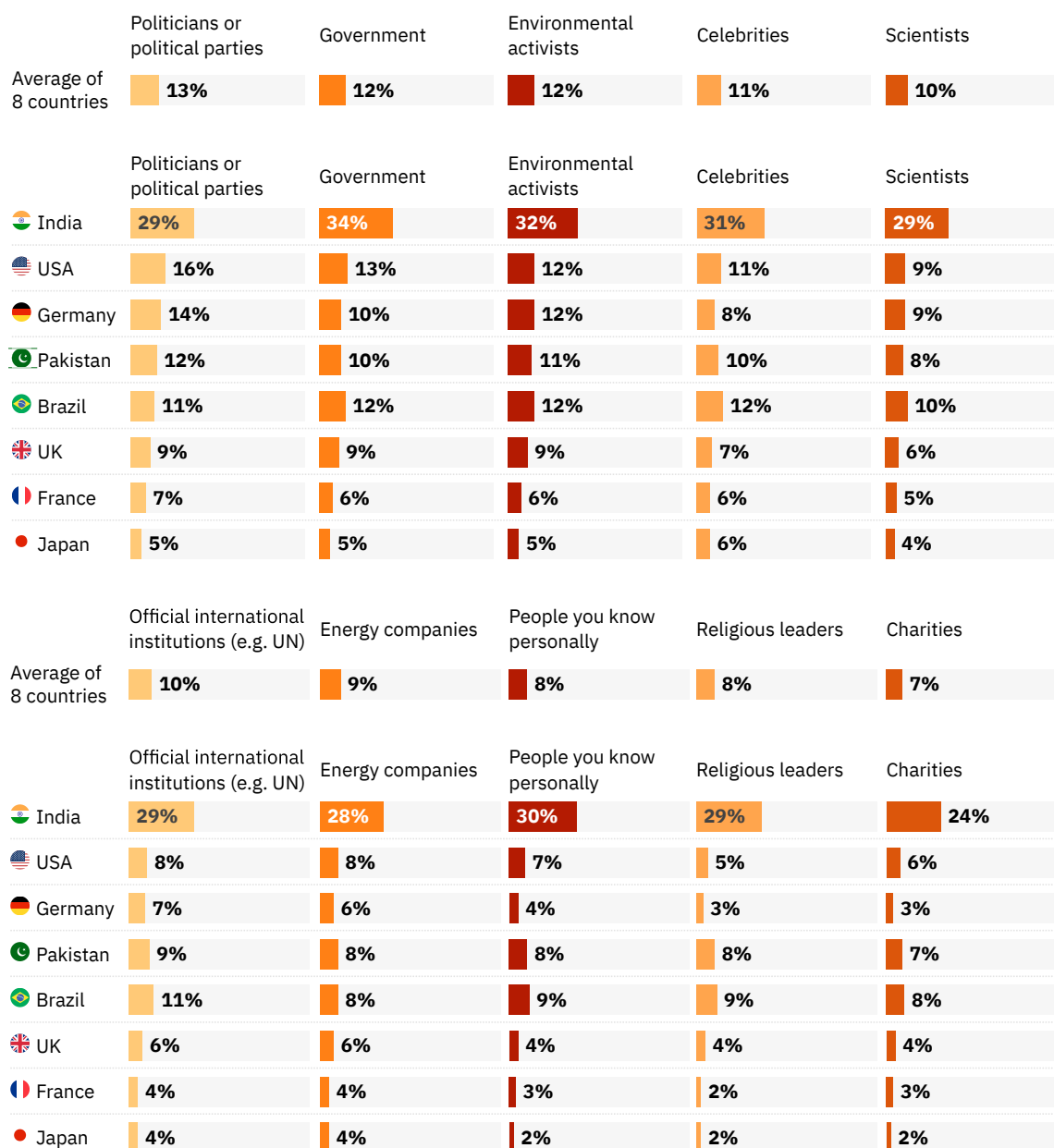


Q18. Thinking specifically about the news or information about climate change you saw, read, or heard in the last week that you believe to be false or misleading. Where did you see, read, or hear this? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000. Note: Elsewhere includes 'Documentaries', 'Magazines, blogs, reports, etc. specialising in environmental/climate issues', 'Face-to-face or telephone/video conversations with people I know', and 'Academic journals'.*

We also asked respondents about the sources of this misinformation. Figure 12 illustrates that, on average across all countries, politicians and political parties (13%) as well as governments (12%) are relatively frequently cited as sources of climate change misinformation. While variations across countries are evident for some sources, the differences between the sources on the list are not statistically significant in many cases.

Figure 12. Proportion that think they came across false or misleading information about climate change from each in the last week

Governments, politicians and political parties are among the most frequently mentioned sources of climate change misinformation by respondents



Q17. Thinking specifically about the news or information about climate change you saw, read or heard in the last week that you believe to be false or misleading ... aside from any journalists, reporters, presenters, etc. that may have delivered the news or information, which types of organisations or individuals do you recall commenting or being mentioned as the source? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

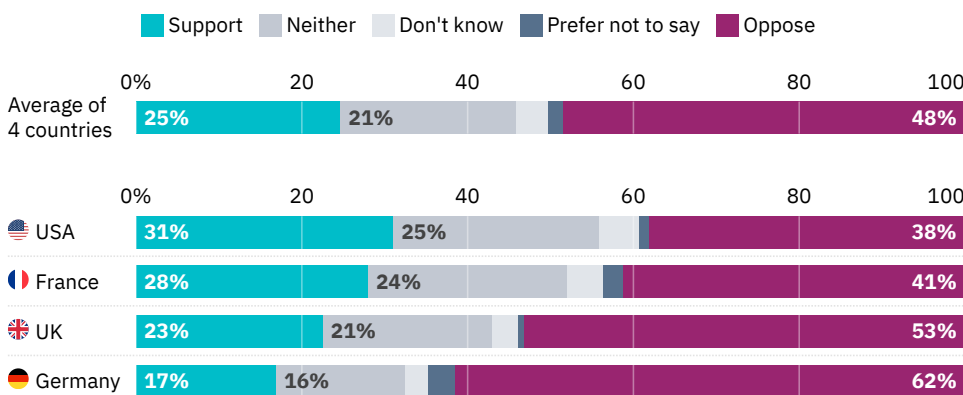
3. Coverage of Direct Action Climate Protests

In recent years there has been a surge in what are sometimes called direct action climate protests. In different countries protesters have variously disrupted sporting events, glued themselves to works of art, and blocked transport routes to raise awareness of the damage caused by climate change. But these protests can be controversial, with critics questioning whether they actually undermine the cause they are arguing for.

Leaving this larger question to one side, we are primarily interested in what people think about the news media coverage of the protests. However, to start to map this out, we first need to gauge public support or opposition in countries where prominent direct action protests have occurred.⁴ When we do this across France, Germany, the UK, and the USA, we see that support among our respondents is typically lower than opposition. In Germany, 17% say that they ‘strongly support’ or ‘tend to support’ direct action protests related to climate change (e.g. blocking roads, disrupting sporting events). Support is slightly higher in France (28%), rising to almost one third (31%) in the USA. In the UK, support is at 23% with opposition at 53%. This overall negative view is broadly aligned with other polling in the UK that tends to find similar views of specific groups and protests.⁵

Figure 13. Proportion that support direct action protests related to climate change (e.g. blocking roads, disrupting sporting events)

A larger proportion of respondents oppose direct action protests against climate change than support them



Q37. To what extent do you support or oppose direct action protests related to climate change (e.g. blocking roads, disrupting sporting events, etc.), or do you neither support nor oppose them? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

However, it is important to recognise that support for direct action protests also varies considerably across different demographic groups. It is stronger among the under 35s and stronger still among those who self-identify with the political left (46%), but even here there is not majority support. Men are slightly more likely to express support for direct action protests, but they are also more likely to oppose them; women are more likely to have a mixed view. We see a similarly mixed picture when we split the data by different levels of climate news use. More frequent climate change news use does not seem to be associated with higher levels of

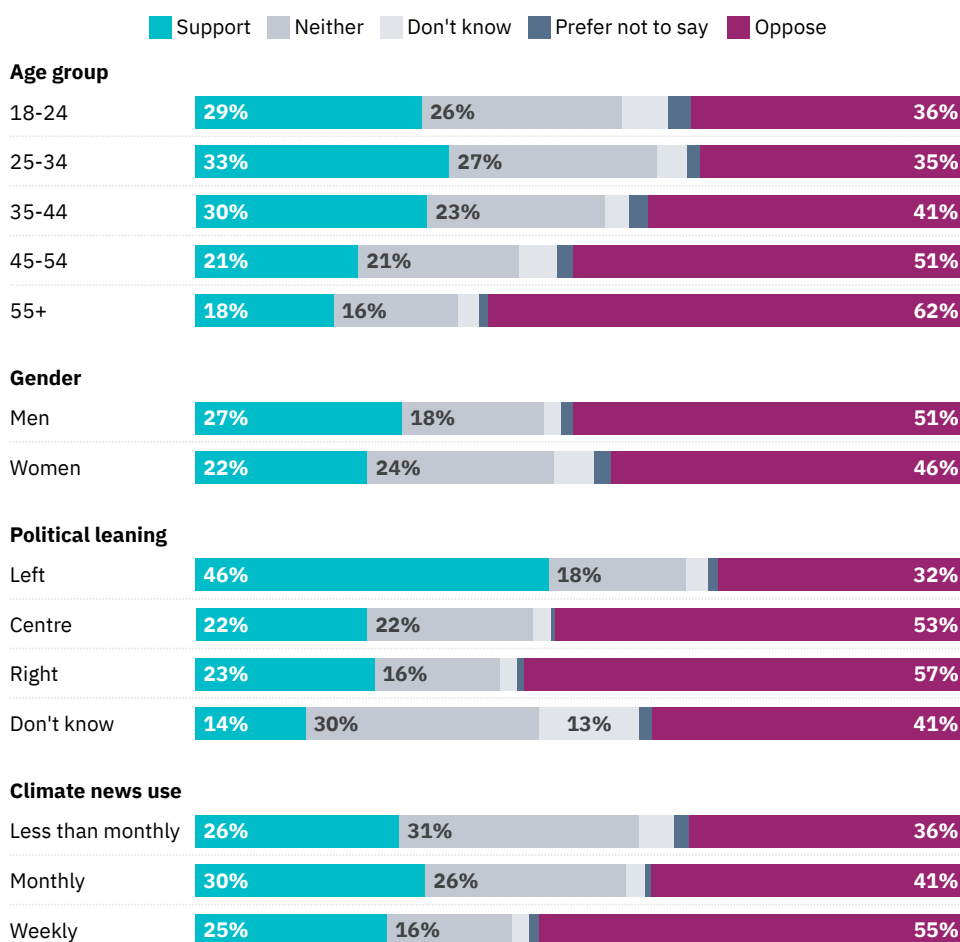
⁴ <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/after-rise-climate-direct-action-europe-cracks-down-2023-08-10/>

⁵ <https://yougov.co.uk/politics/articles/25889-canning-town-protesters-fail-find-sympathy-brits-d>; <https://yougov.co.uk/topics/politics/survey-results/daily/2023/07/06/57ab9/2>

support, but it does seem to be associated with higher levels of opposition. However, this is largely because older people use climate news more frequently and are much more likely to oppose direct action protests.

Figure 14. Proportion that support direct action protests related to climate change (e.g. blocking roads, disrupting sporting events) – average of four countries

Support for direct action protests is larger among younger respondents and those who self-identify with the political Left



Q37. To what extent do you support or oppose direct action protests related to climate change (e.g. blocking roads, disrupting sporting events, etc.), or do you neither support nor oppose them? *Base: 18-24/25-34/35-44/45-54/55+ = 495/767/776/808/1488, Men/Women = 2087/2215, Left/Centre/Right/Don't know = 725/2246/594/494, those that use climate news Less than monthly/Monthly/Weekly = 897/583/2497 in France, Germany, UK, USA.*

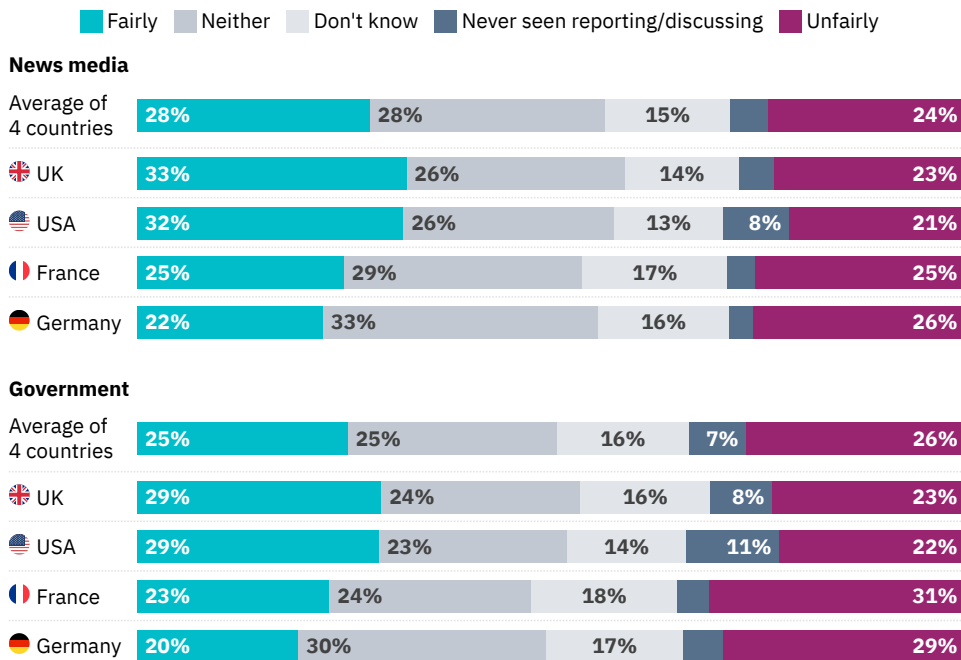
We also asked our respondents how fairly or unfairly different sources report on or discuss these protests. Public opinion is quite evenly split in all cases. When it comes to news coverage, around one quarter in Germany (22%) and France (25%) and one third in the UK (33%) and the USA (32%) think that it is fair, with around one quarter saying it is unfair, and nearly half saying they either 'don't know' or think the coverage is 'neither fair nor unfair'. This probably reflects the fact that, although this can be a divisive issue, much coverage does not make an explicit judgement of events.

If we instead look at views on how each country's respective government discusses the issue, we see broadly similar proportions in each country saying that direct action protests are discussed

fairly compared with the news media. However, slightly higher proportions in France (31%) and Germany (29%) think that the government discusses the issue unfairly. Once again, we see between 40% and 50% saying they either 'don't know' or think the discussion is 'neither fair nor unfair'.

Figure 15. Proportion that thinks each reports on or discusses direct action protests related to climate change fairly

Respondents are evenly split on whether protests are covered/discussed fairly – with slightly larger proportions saying so in the UK and the USA



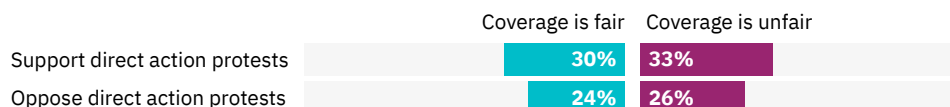
Q38. Still thinking about direct action protests related to climate change (e.g. blocking roads, disrupting sporting events, etc.) ... How fairly or unfairly do you think each of the following reports on or discusses these protests? – News media (organisations delivering news to the public via radio, TV, newspapers, news magazines, or online news sources)/The government (including national government, local government, public agencies in your country). *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

To better understand these numbers we can split the data by support for the protests; however, it is of course important to recognise that news coverage may itself shape support or opposition. In France, people's assessment of the coverage does not appear to be strongly influenced by whether they support such protests. In the UK and Germany, supporters of direct action protests are more likely to think the news coverage of them has been unfair. In the UK in particular, the extent to which people's underlying view of the protests shapes their view of the coverage is clear, with those who oppose the protests more likely to think the coverage has been fair. In the USA, we see some evidence of the opposite, with protest supporters much more likely to see the coverage as fair.

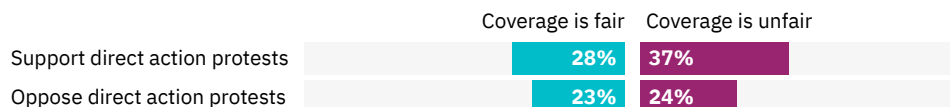
Figure 16. Proportion that think the news media have covered direct action protests related to climate change fairly by support for the protests

Opinion about the news coverage of protests in the UK and the USA varies by support for the protests

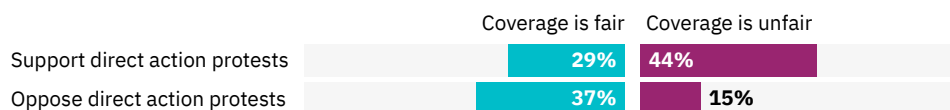
France



Germany



UK



USA



Q37. To what extent do you support or oppose direct action protests related to climate change (e.g. blocking roads, disrupting sporting events, etc.), or do you neither support nor oppose them? **Q38.** Still thinking about direct action protests related to climate change (e.g. blocking roads, disrupting sporting events, etc.) ... How fairly or unfairly do you think each of the following reports on or discusses these protests? – News media (organisations delivering news to the public via radio, TV, newspapers, news magazines, or online news sources)/The government (including national government, local government, public agencies in your country). Base: Support/Oppose direct action protests in France = 301/433, Germany = 180/652, UK = 255/590, USA = 326/255.

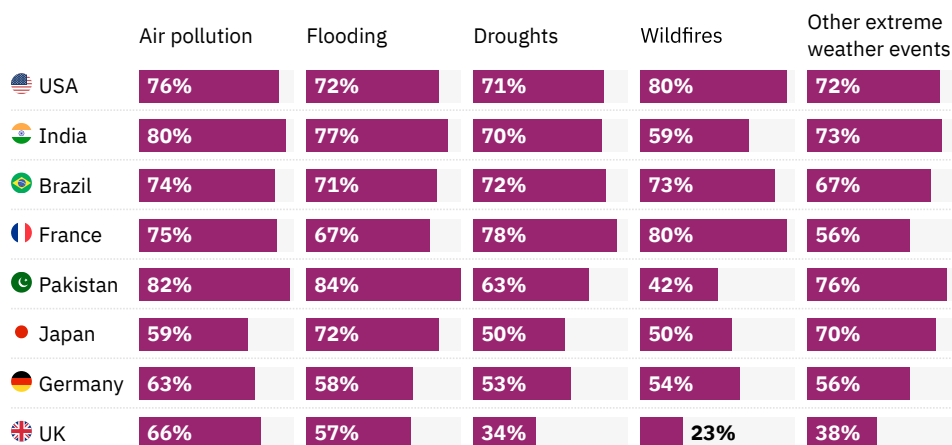
4. Perception of Health Impacts of Climate Change

Research has consistently found a link between climate change and adverse effects on human health. The recent Lancet Countdown report on health and climate change issued a dire warning, attributing the global increase in frequent and extreme weather events, disruptions to water and food systems, and shifts in the environmental suitability for infectious diseases to unchecked climate change, which poses a great threat to the well-being of both present and future generations (Romanello et al. 2021).

News media can play a crucial role in raising public awareness about the link between climate change and health, and framing climate change as a public health concern has been shown to positively influence public understanding and engagement with the issue (Depoux et al. 2017). In light of this, we examine public perceptions of the link between climate change and health, as well as the media's contributions to this understanding, across eight countries.

Figure 17. Proportion of people who believe their country experiences a great deal/fair amount of each

A majority of respondents in each country say they experience at least a fair amount of air pollution and flooding

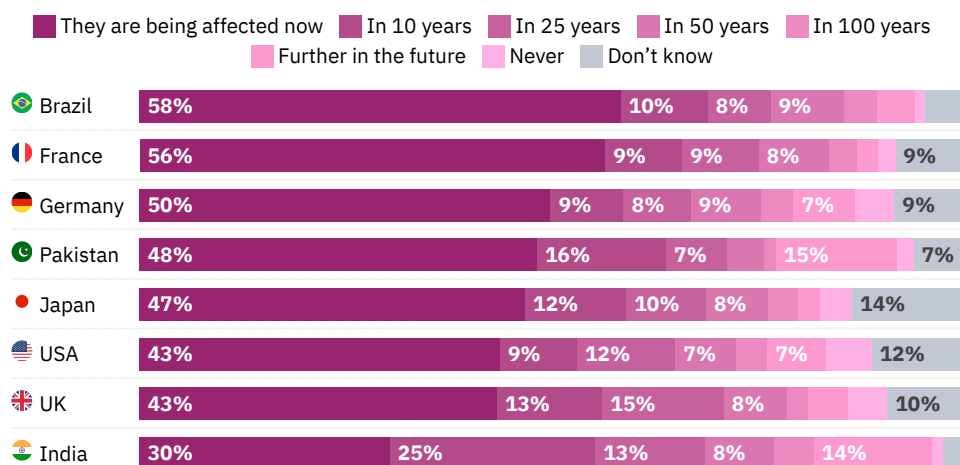


Q34b. To what extent, if at all, does your country experience each of the following? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

Our starting point is to measure the extent to which people think their country experiences a range of different extreme weather events. Figure 17 illustrates that a majority of our respondents believe their country experiences a fair amount of air pollution and flooding. On average across all countries, 72% think their country experiences air pollution, ranking it at the top, closely followed by flooding (70%). These findings align with previous research that identifies air pollution as one of the world's most prevalent health and environmental challenges, contributing to over six million deaths annually (Ritchie and Roser 2017).

Figure 18. Proportion that think people in their country are being affected by the more serious consequences of climate change now

There is large variation in how soon respondents think people in their country will be affected by climate change, with significant proportions thinking the more serious consequences are decades away

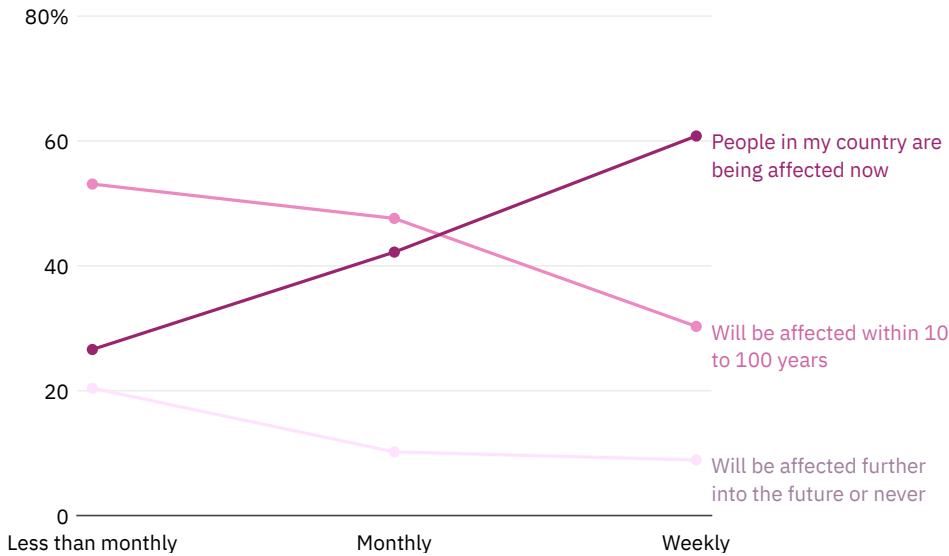


Q33. In what timeframe, if any, do you think people in [country] will be affected by the potentially more serious consequences of climate change (e.g. flooding, droughts, extreme weather events, etc.)? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

We also explore when respondents think people in their country will be affected by the more serious consequences of climate change. Our findings, presented in Figure 18, reveal notable variations. The proportion of people who think their country is being affected now is 43% in the UK and the USA, rising to 58% in Brazil. In India, however, just three out of every ten respondents (30%) perceive their country is currently being impacted by climate change, while a quarter (25%) anticipate these effects in ten years. This is perhaps surprising given the frequent occurrence of extreme weather events in India over the past five years. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that in all countries a significant percentage of our respondents still perceive climate change and its impacts as distant, unlikely, or simply unknown.

Figure 19. Proportion that think people in their country are being affected by the more serious consequences of climate change now – by climate change news use

Across all eight countries respondents who use climate change news more frequently are more likely to think people are being affected by climate change now



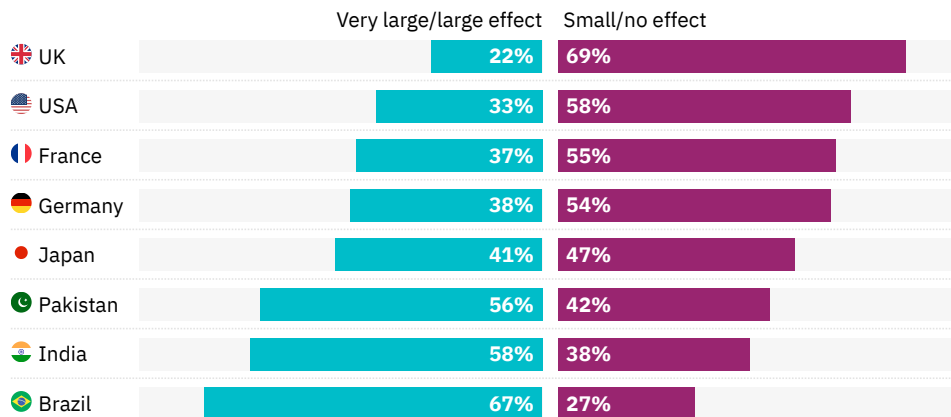
Q33. In what timeframe, if any, do you think people in your country will be affected by the potentially more serious consequences of climate change (e.g. flooding, droughts, extreme weather events, etc.)? **Q5A.** When, if at all, was the last time you saw, read, or heard any news or information about climate change, from any source? *Base: Those that consume climate change news Less than monthly/Monthly/Weekly in all eight countries = 1926/1277/4556.*

Next, we examine the role news media can play in making people realise the urgency of the impacts of climate change. Figure 19 provides a clear illustration that the more frequently individuals consume climate change news, the more likely they are to agree that people in their respective countries are *currently* experiencing the effects of climate change. Moreover, as the frequency of climate change news consumption increases, the percentage of respondents who anticipate more serious impacts within the next 10 to 100 years decreases. In contrast, for those who believe the impacts are distant or may never materialise, the percentages remain relatively stable, even with frequent consumption of such news. In all cases, it is important to point out that we do not have evidence that climate news use causes a change in attitudes, and it may be that people who are most concerned about the impact of climate change consume news on it as a result.

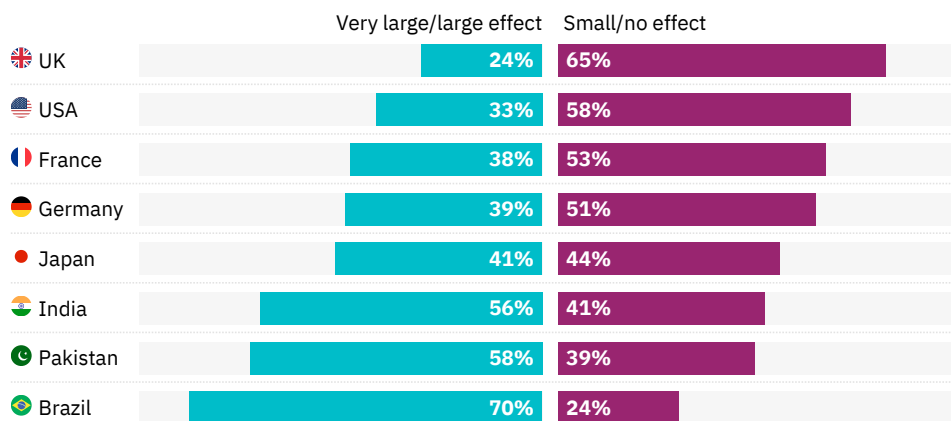
Figure 20. Proportion that think climate change is having large or small effect on each

Respondents in countries from the Global North are less likely to think that climate change is having a large effect on their health, their family’s health, and the health of citizens in their country

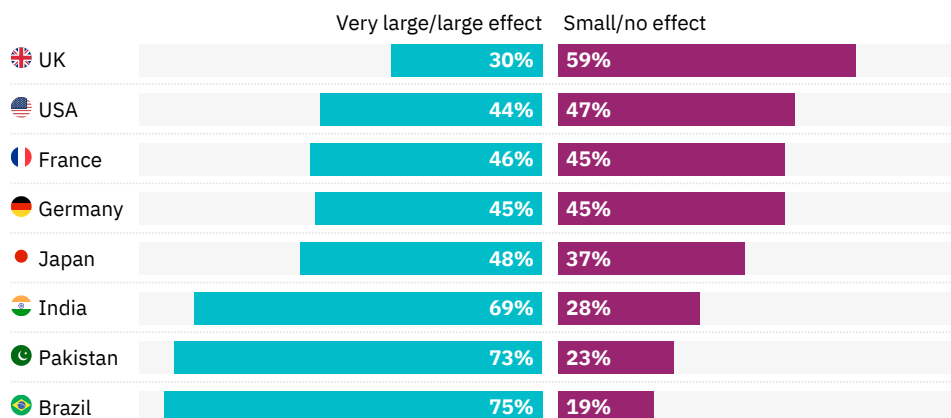
Your physical health



Your family’s physical health



The physical health of citizens of your country



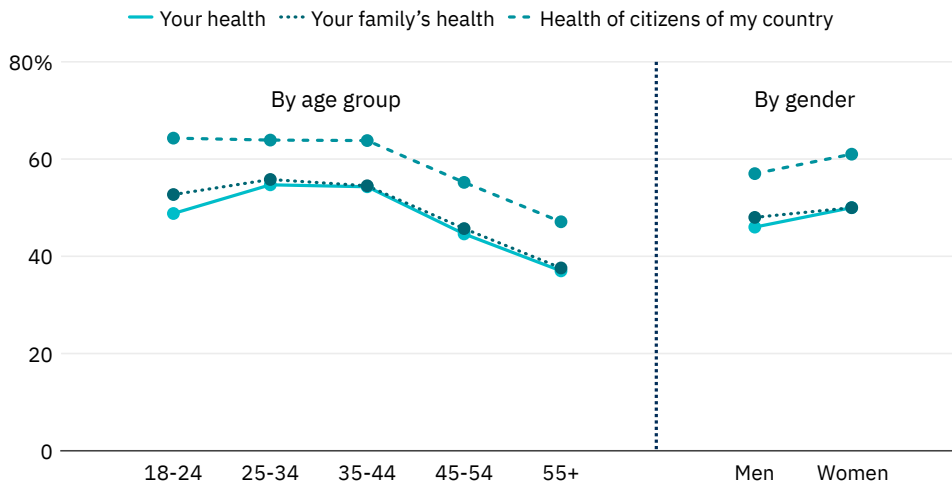
Q34a. How much of an effect, if any, do you think climate change is having on your own physical health, your family’s physical health and the physical health of people in [country]? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

Probing public opinion on the extent of climate change-induced impacts on health, Figure 20 reveals a striking contrast between the Global North and South. For instance, more than half of our respondents in Brazil, India, and Pakistan believe that climate change is having very large or large effects on their health and that of their families and fellow citizens. In contrast, majorities in the UK (69%), USA (58%), France (55%), and Germany (54%) perceive small or

no effects from climate change on their individual health. Likewise, for their families, this percentage ranges from 65% to 51%, and for the health of people in their respective countries, it varies between 59% and 45%.

Figure 21. Proportion that think climate change has a large effect on each – average of eight countries

Younger respondents are more likely to think that climate change has a large effect on health



Q34a. How much of an effect, if any, do you think climate change is having on your own physical health/your family's physical health/the physical health of people in your country? *Base: 18-24/25-34/35-44/45-54/55+ = 1330/1836/1757/1518/1893, Men/Women = 4122/4180.*

When we segmented the data by gender and age groups, Figure 21 reveals that younger respondents are more likely to perceive significant health effects from climate change. However, this perception significantly declines among individuals aged 45 and above. In contrast, gender-based differences are less prominent. Furthermore, across all age groups and genders, a higher percentage believe that climate change has a large effect on the health of citizens in their country compared with their own health and that of their family.

5. Climate Justice

While climate change is often portrayed as a global issue, recent climate-induced disasters like floods in South Asia, wildfires in Greece and Canada, and recurrent heatwaves in Europe have revealed its disproportionate impact on politically, culturally, and economically marginalised communities and nations, bringing the issue of climate justice to the forefront (Harlan et al. 2015; Das 2020).

Climate justice, as a concept, addresses the fact that those least responsible for causing climate change are often the most severely affected and are often excluded from decision-making processes related to climate mitigation and adaptation (Newell et al. 2021). At the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27) held in Egypt in 2022, the topic of climate justice took centre stage. The conference's conclusion, where nations reached an agreement to establish a much-needed 'loss and damage' facility, was hailed as a significant success and a landmark achievement (Tannis 2022).

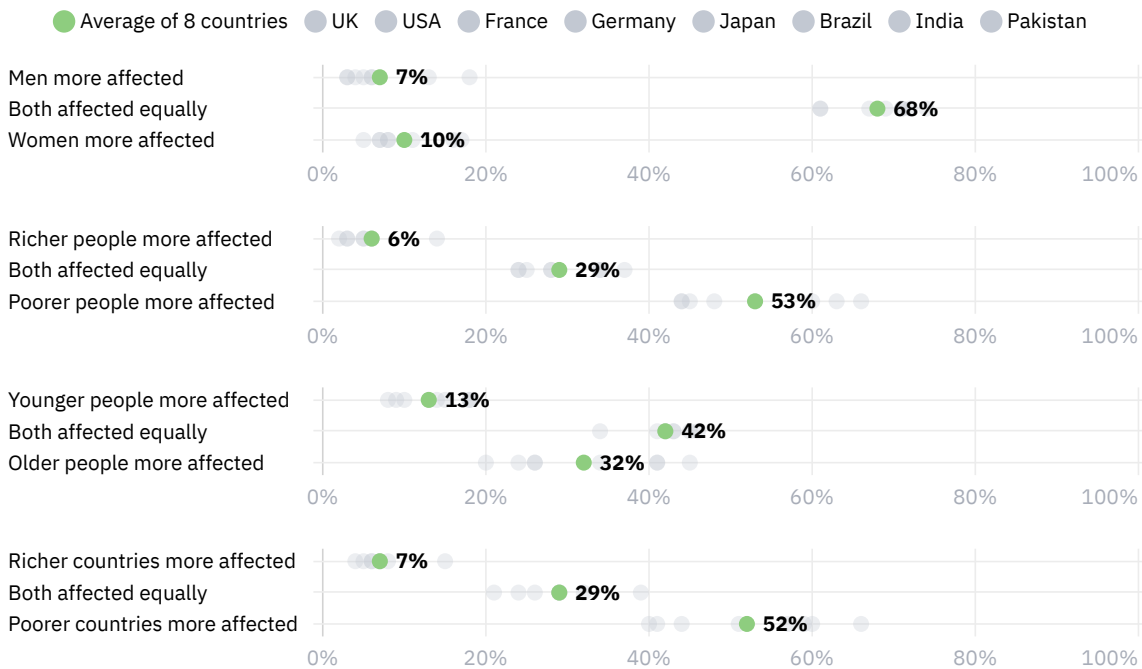
With the ongoing international attention on this critical issue and the escalating impacts of climate change, we sought the opinions of our respondents. Specifically, we asked about their perceptions of how these impacts affect different groups and their views on who is most responsible for addressing them.

As shown in Figure 22, there are different opinions on the impact of climate change on various groups. On average across all countries, a substantial majority of our respondents, more than two thirds (68%), believe that climate change-induced impacts do not discriminate based on gender. Similarly, over one third (42%) of respondents do not perceive different effects on younger and older populations – though it is important to remember that we asked specifically about who is affected *now*, and we may have seen different results if we had asked about the effect over the course of people's lives. Concerning the impact on poorer individuals and nations, slightly more than half of our respondents agree that these groups are disproportionately affected by climate change, although there are notable variations across countries. For instance, over 60% of respondents in Pakistan share this view, while just over 40% of respondents in Japan agree.

Figure 22. Proportion that think each group is more affected by climate change

Respondents think that poorer people and poorer countries are affected by climate change – but think men and women and younger and older people are affected equally

See website for individual country data



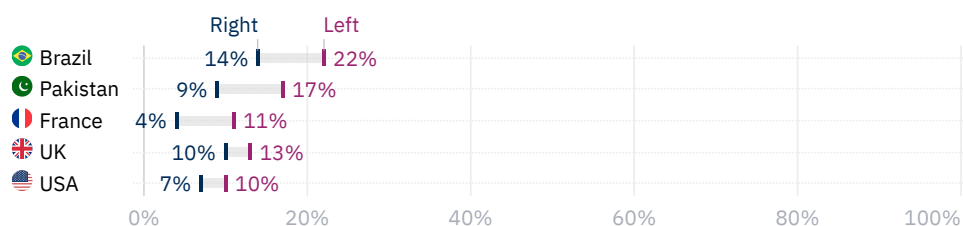
Q30. On balance, who is more affected by climate change in [country]? Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000. Note: Proportion that selected ‘Don’t know’ or ‘I do not think anyone is affected by climate change’ not shown.

If we split the data by political leaning, notable differences emerge, particularly in the Global North countries, in respondents’ views on the impacts of climate change on poorer nations and individuals. For instance, as shown in Figure 23, the gap between left- and right-leaning respondents in the UK agreeing with statements about the impact of climate change on poorer people and nations was 37pp and 26pp, respectively. This contrast is similar in the USA and France. The political divide concerning the climate change-related impacts on women and older people are relatively less pronounced.

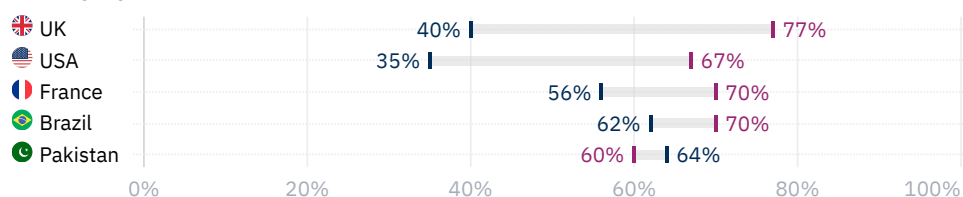
Figure 23. Proportion that think each are much more affected by climate change – by political leaning

Views on whether poorer people and poor countries are more affected by climate change are different between those on the Left and those on the Right – especially in Global North countries

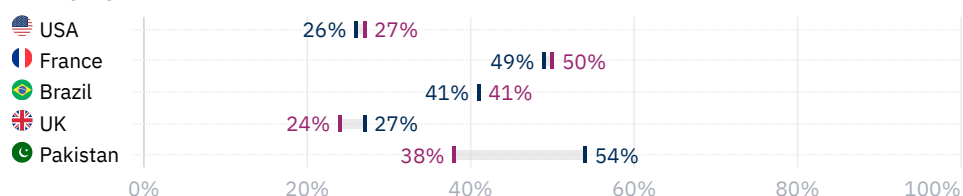
Women are much more affected



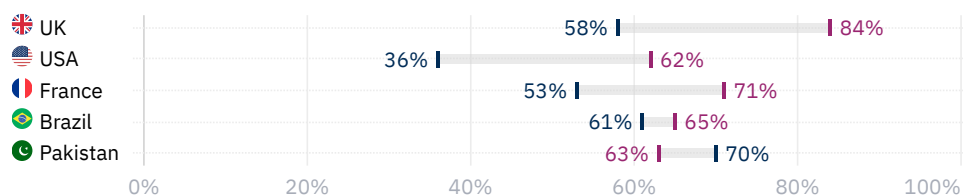
Poorer people are much more affected



Older people are much more affected



Poorer countries are much more affected

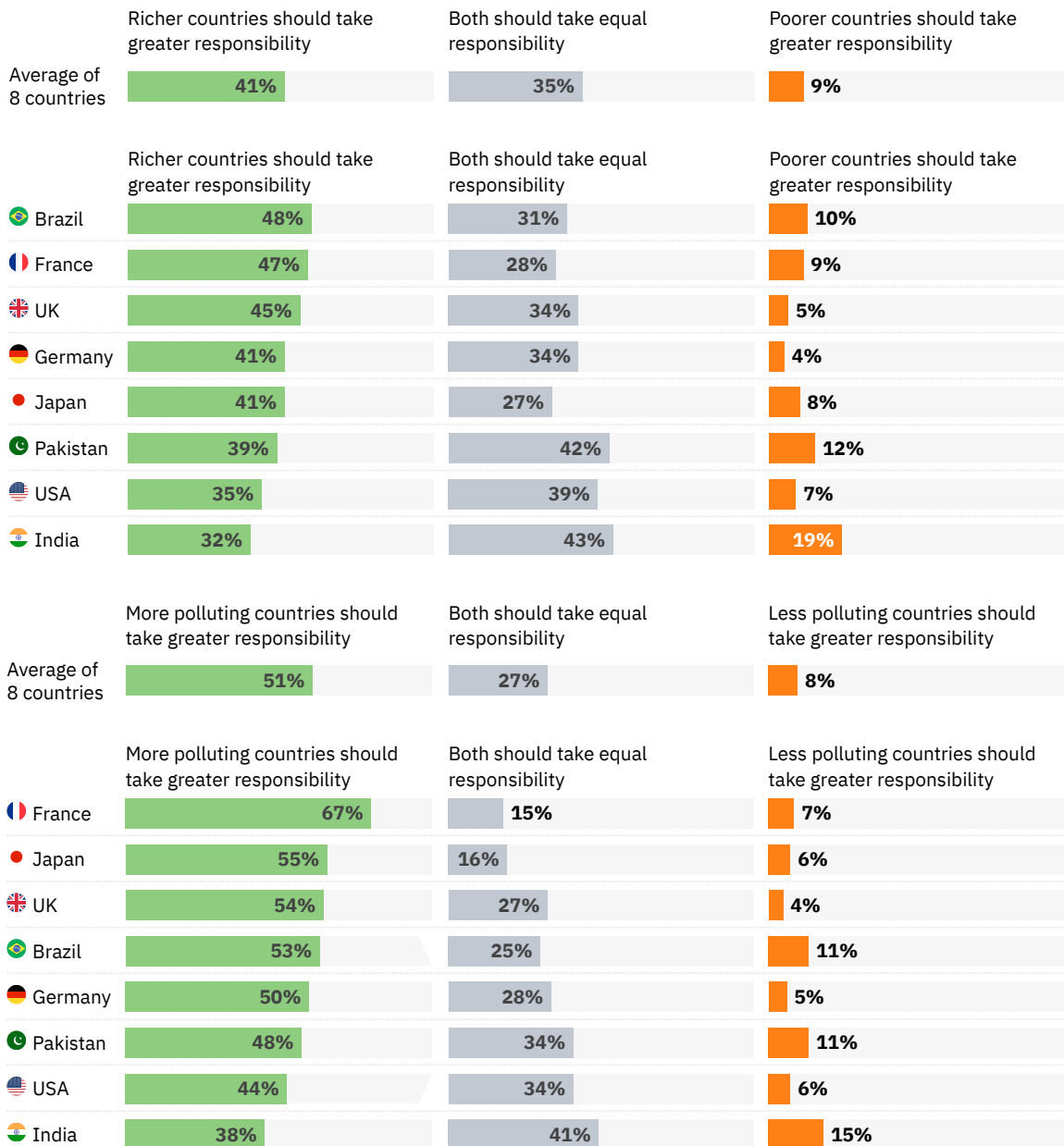


Q30. On balance, who is more affected by climate change in [country]? Base: Left/Right in Brazil = 225/199, France = 242/237, Pakistan = 120/204, UK = 182/105, USA = 193/186. Note: Germany, India, and Japan are not included because there are too few respondents from the Left/Right to produce reliable estimates.

An essential aspect of the concept of climate justice is the allocation of responsibility for climate change (Das 2020). Figure 24 illustrates that, on average across all eight countries, over one third (41%) of our participants believe that wealthier nations should assume greater responsibility, and half (51%) assert that more polluting countries should take on a larger role in mitigating climate change.

Figure 24. Proportion who think each should take greater responsibility for reducing climate change

Respondents are more likely to think that richer countries and more polluting countries should take greater responsibility for reducing climate change

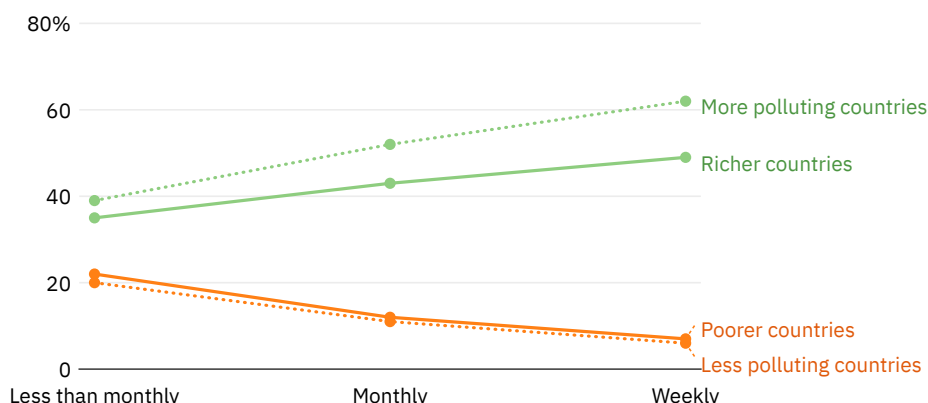


Q31A/B. Who do you think should take greater responsibility for reducing climate change? Richer countries, poorer countries, or should they take equal responsibility?/More polluting countries, less polluting countries, or should they take equal responsibility?
 Base: Total sample in each country = 1000. Note: Not showing proportions for 'I do not think any countries should take responsibility for reducing climate change', 'I do not think any countries are affected by climate change, and 'Don't know'.

We obtained additional insights on attribution of responsibility when classifying these responses according to the frequency with which people consume news about climate change. Figure 25 demonstrates that, across all countries, individuals who consume climate change news on a weekly basis are more inclined to agree that wealthier and more polluting countries should assume a greater responsibility in reducing climate change. Conversely, frequent consumers of climate news are less likely to attribute higher responsibility to poorer and less polluting countries, but, again, we do not have evidence of a causal relationship.

Figure 25. Proportion that think each should take greater responsibility for reducing climate change – by climate change news use

On average across all eight countries more frequent climate change news users are more likely to think that richer countries and more polluting countries should take greater responsibility for reducing climate change



Q31A/B. Who do you think should take greater responsibility for reducing climate change? Richer countries, poorer countries, or should they take equal responsibility?/More polluting countries, less polluting countries, or should they take equal responsibility?
 Base: Less than monthly/Monthly/Weekly climate change news users across eight countries = 1926/1277/4556.

To address the issue of climate injustice, key stakeholders must engage with the topic and bring it forth in public discourse. Consequently, we aimed to assess public perceptions of various actors and their roles in discussing the attribution of responsibility to address climate change. As shown in Figure 26, across all countries, respondents are most likely to agree that official international institutions (e.g. the UN), governments, scientists, and politicians should talk more about climate justice. Regarding expectations of the news media, approximately half of our respondents also feel that news media should give more attention to this issue.

Figure 26. Proportion that thinks each should talk more about the responsibility of different countries to reduce climate change

Respondents are more likely to think that official international institutions (e.g. the UN), governments, politicians, and scientists should talk more about climate justice – but around half think the **news media** should talk more about this

	UK	USA	France	Germany	Japan	Brazil	India	Pakistan
Official international institutions	57%	51%	56%	51%	46%	69%	60%	62%
The government	56%	53%	58%	54%	47%	68%	60%	61%
Scientists	53%	51%	57%	50%	42%	66%	60%	65%
Politicians or political parties	55%	50%	55%	52%	45%	68%	59%	59%
Energy companies	52%	50%	55%	49%	37%	68%	61%	60%
News media	49%	50%	53%	46%	40%	68%	59%	66%
Environmental activists	43%	46%	44%	31%	30%	63%	58%	62%
Charities	42%	38%	44%	39%	23%	62%	56%	55%
Celebrities	36%	38%	37%	36%	21%	61%	56%	58%
Religious leaders	36%	38%	35%	29%	16%	59%	54%	56%
People you know personally	31%	36%	31%	30%	18%	60%	57%	54%

Q32. Thinking now about the discussion around different countries taking greater or lesser responsibility for reducing climate change (e.g. depending on whether they are richer/poorer, more polluting/less polluting, etc.) ... Do you think each of the following groups should talk less about this, talk more about this, or are they talking about this at the right level? Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.

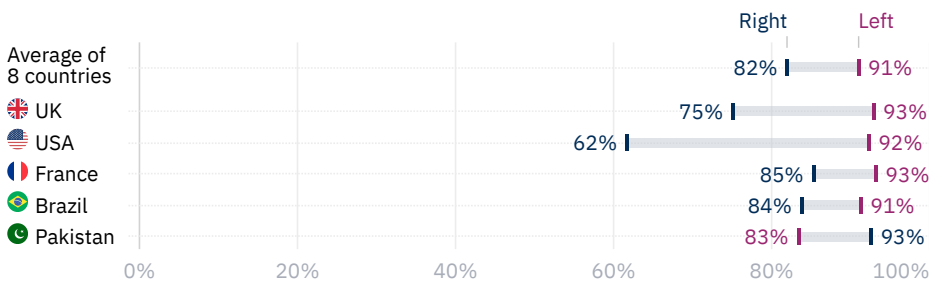
6. Climate Change, Politics, and Influence

Climate change is inherently intertwined with politics, as it revolves around resource allocation, regulatory decisions, and international agreements that shape our collective response to the crisis. At the same time, we know that the media play an important role as a primary source of climate-related information. Thus, regardless of stance on the issue of climate change, it is probable that politics and the media have played a role in shaping people's viewpoints (Murray 2021).

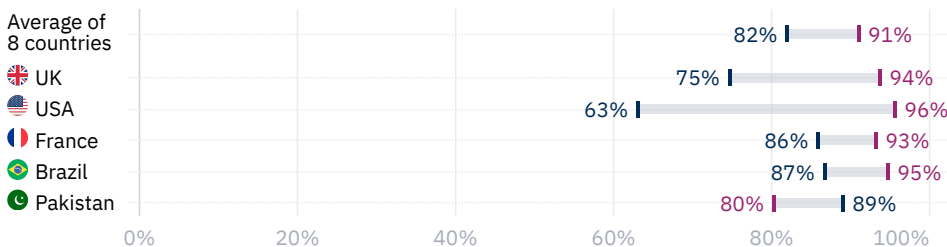
Figure 27. Proportion who are somewhat/very/extremely worried about the impact of climate change on each – by political leaning

A large majority of respondents on both the Left and the Right are at least somewhat worried about the impact of climate change – but there are also partisan differences

People all over the world



The planet



Q12A/B. To what extent are you worried, or not, about the impact of climate change on people all over the world/the planet? Base: Left/Right in Brazil = 225/199, France = 242/237, Pakistan = 120/204, UK = 182/105, USA = 193/186. Note: Germany, India, and Japan are not included because there are too few respondents from the Left/Right to produce reliable estimates.

To start, we examined variations in the levels of concern expressed by our respondents regarding the impacts of climate change, categorised by their political ideologies. As shown in Figure 27, a significant majority of our respondents, regardless of their political leanings, express worry about the impacts of climate change on both people and the planet. The most notable differences across the ideological spectrum are observed in the UK and the USA, consistent with the previous year's findings, indicating that climate change remains a divisive issue, particularly in these two countries.

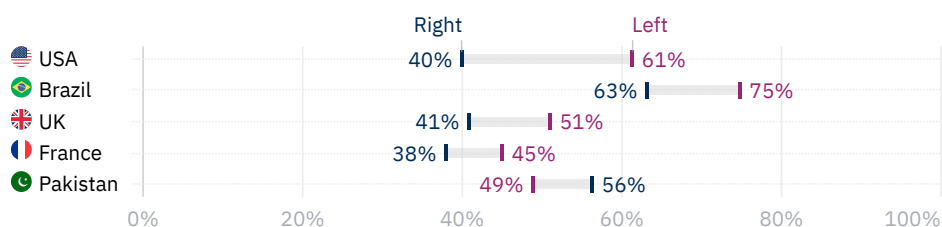
Figure 28. Proportion who are somewhat/very/extremely interested in each type of news
A large majority of respondents say they are at least somewhat interested in environment and climate news

	UK	USA	France	Germany	Japan	Brazil	India	Pakistan
Local	90%	91%	88%	92%	83%	93%	95%	88%
Political	75%	79%	69%	85%	75%	84%	88%	77%
Environment & climate	75%	75%	81%	78%	78%	92%	96%	85%
Arts, culture, & lifestyle	70%	75%	74%	65%	73%	86%	93%	88%
Business & economic	69%	74%	74%	74%	77%	87%	90%	81%
Sports	55%	60%	53%	56%	59%	74%	90%	76%
Entertainment	54%	57%	41%	43%	54%	64%	87%	81%

Q2. How interested, or not, are you in the following types of news? Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.

Given the significant percentage of people expressing concern about the impacts of climate change, we sought to gauge their interest in environmental and climate change news compared with other types of news. As Figure 28 illustrates, a large majority, ranging from 75% in the UK and the USA to 96% in India, expressed interest in environmental and climate-related news. Levels of public interest in environmental news closely aligns with their interest in other news genres, including political and local news. Furthermore, when comparing this year’s data with the 2022 data, we observed a consistent pattern in public interest in environmental and climate-related news.

Figure 29. Proportion that are interested in environment and climate news – by political leaning
In most countries respondents who self-identify with the political left are more likely to be interested in environment and climate news

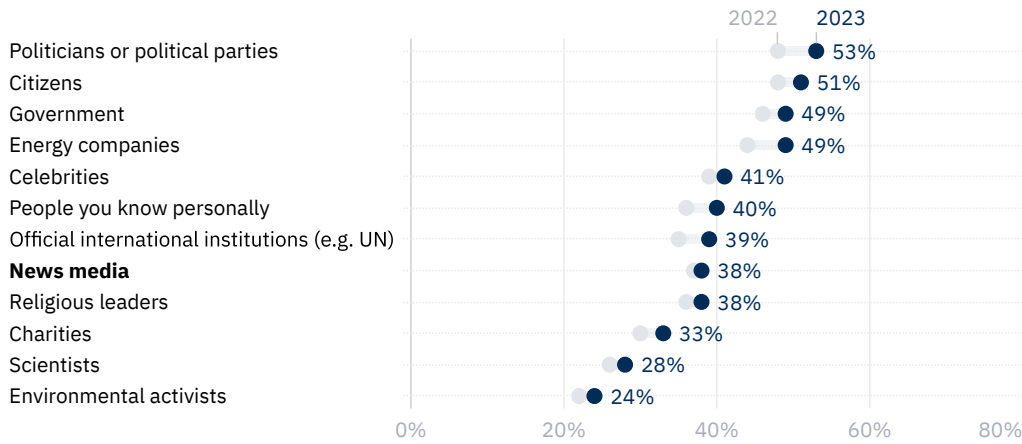


Q2. How interested, or not, are you in the following types of news? Base: Left/Right in Brazil = 225/199, France = 242/237, Pakistan = 120/204, UK = 182/105, USA = 193/186. Note: Germany, India, and Japan are not included because there are too few respondents from the Left/Right to produce reliable estimates.

While the average percentage of respondents interested in climate change news remains relatively stable over the two survey years, significant differences become apparent when we split the data by political ideologies, hinting at the influence of politics on public interest in the issue. Figure 29 illustrates that considerable differences exist in people’s interest in environment-related news between left- and right-leaning individuals across five countries. On average, there is an 8pp difference between left and right in these five countries, with 56% of people on the left expressing interest in climate news compared with 48% on the right.

Figure 30. Proportion that think each is doing too little to address climate change – average of eight countries

Respondents are more likely to think that politicians or political parties are doing too little to address climate change – and this has increased (+5pp) compared with 2022



Q26. Thinking now about all the ways climate change could be addressed, both through taking actions and through speaking about it. For each of the following groups, do you believe they are currently doing too little, too much, or about the right amount to address climate change? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

Evaluating public opinion on the actions being taken by key stakeholders to mitigate climate change, Figure 30 shows that more than half of our respondents believe that politicians and political parties are doing ‘too little’, an opinion that has increased by five percentage points from 2022 to 2023. For politicians and political parties, the increase points to growing concerns among the public that not enough is being done to tackle climate change. It also bears mentioning that more than one third (38%) of our respondents, similar to 2022, still believe that news media are doing ‘too little’, emphasising the audience’s ongoing expectations regarding reporting and sharing information about climate change.

Figure 31. Proportion that think the news media’s coverage of climate change influences each
 In many cases a majority of respondents think that news media coverage of climate change influences institutions and public attitudes

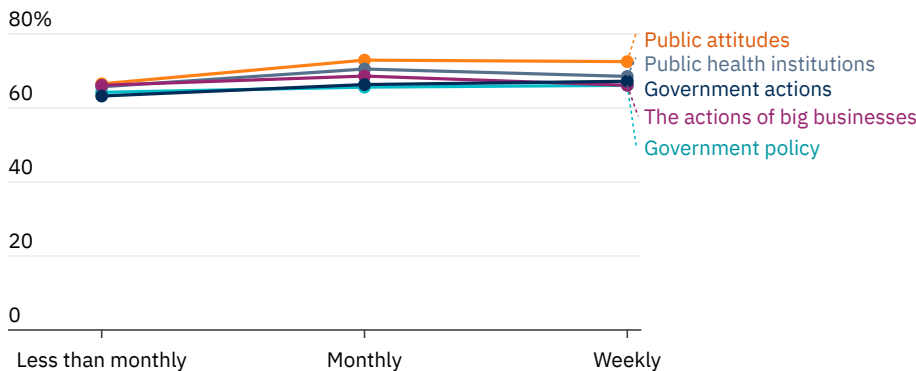


Q42. How much influence, if any, do you think the news media’s coverage of climate change has on each of the following? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

Among others, perhaps one reason for people’s expectations of news coverage about climate change stems from their subjective perception of the media’s influence. Figure 31 illustrates that the majority of our respondents, in many cases, agree that news media coverage of climate change influences institutions and public attitudes.

Figure 32. Proportion that think the news media’s coverage of climate change influences each – by climate news use

Averaging across eight countries, frequency of climate change news use has only a weak association with perceptions of influence over institutions and the public



Q42. How much influence, if any, do you think the news media’s coverage of climate change has on each of the following? *Base: Less than monthly/Monthly/Weekly climate change news use = 1926/1277/4556.*

Yet, when we segment the data based on the frequency of climate news consumption, we observe a weak association between people's perceptions of media influence and various entities. Our results, as shown in Figure 32, indicate that there are small yet statistically significant differences in beliefs about the influence of media coverage on public attitudes, public health institutions, and government actions between those who consume climate change news weekly and those who consume it less frequently. However, such differences do not exist between those who frequently consume news and those who do not with respect to the belief that media coverage influences government policies and actions of large corporations. Thus, our findings reveal a nuanced picture that while a wider audience acknowledges that media coverage of climate change has an impact, this is largely independent of the frequency of climate news consumption.

7. Climate Change and Solutions Journalism

Previous research has pointed out that the majority of the public rely heavily on news media as a primary source of information on climate change (Newman et al. 2020). However, despite its crucial role, some argue that traditional climate change journalism falls short in empowering audiences to advocate for collective and policy-driven solutions (Hackett et al. 2017). One potential reason for this shortfall could be the way climate change is typically covered in the media, often focusing on isolated incidents and over-emphasising disasters rather than solutions, while giving limited attention to concepts like ‘agency’, ‘hope’, and ‘efficacy’ (Hackett et al. 2017: 7). Consequently, some have proposed a different approach known as ‘solutions journalism’ (Thier and Lin 2022).

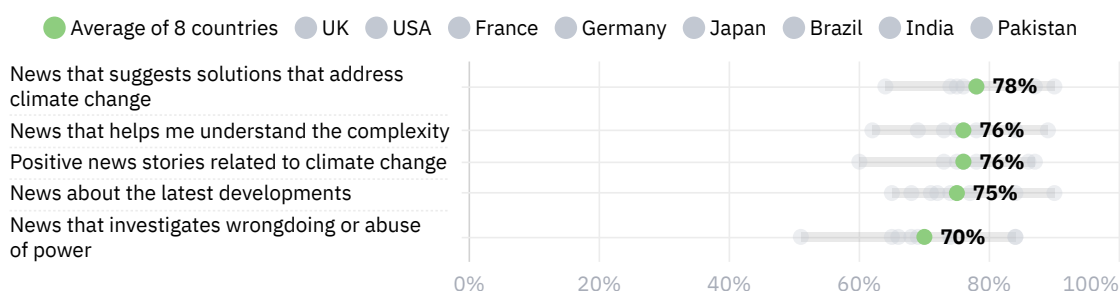
Solutions journalism delves into stories where individuals, organisations, and communities are actively striving to find solutions (Curry and Hammonds 2014). Essentially, it constitutes reporting on responses to societal challenges, encompassing a focus on the response and its evolution, evidence of response effectiveness, insights into the response’s applicability or adaptability to other contexts, and acknowledgement of the response’s limitations (Thier and Lin 2022).

To gain a deeper understanding of public perceptions of this form of journalism, we asked respondents a series of questions, including their preferences for news types and the characteristics they value in climate change coverage. As Figure 33 illustrates, a large majority of our respondents across the eight countries express interest in all types of climate change news coverage, with only small average variations between different types. However, a slightly larger proportion do express interest in ‘news that suggests solutions that address climate change’ compared to ‘news that investigates wrongdoing or abuses of power’.

Figure 33. Proportion that say they are interested in each type of climate change news coverage

A majority of respondents say they are interested in all types of climate change news coverage, with only small differences on average between different types

See website for individual country data



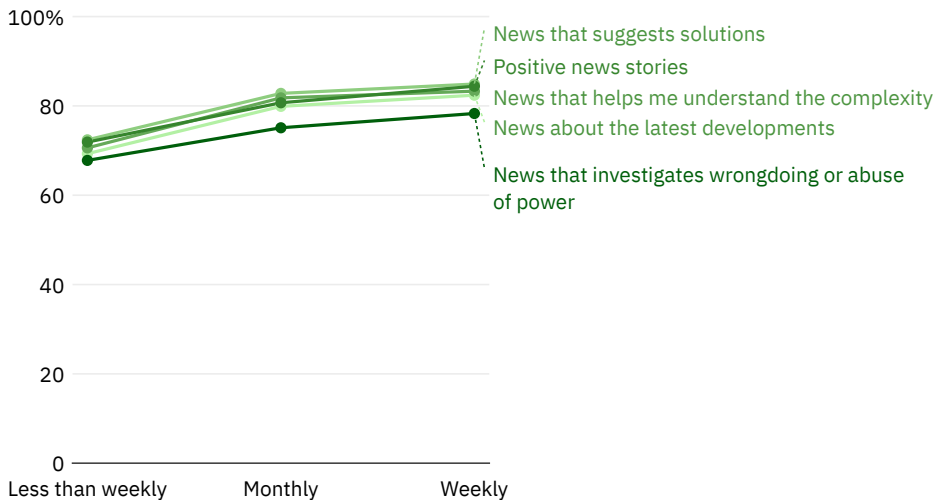
Q40. Thinking about news coverage of climate change, how interested, or not, are you in each of the following types of news coverage? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

In Figure 34, we show that weekly climate news users are slightly more interested in all types of climate change coverage compared with those using climate news less than monthly. This pattern persists across all countries. Furthermore, we classified the climate news preferences of our survey participants based on their age groups and political affiliations. However, we did not

observe any significant differences in preferences between younger and older respondents or between those with different political affiliations.

Figure 34. Proportion that say they are interested in each type of climate change news coverage – by climate change news use

Averaging across eight countries, weekly climate change news users say they are slightly more interested in all types of climate news coverage



Q40. Thinking about news coverage of climate change, how interested, or not, are you in each of the following types of news coverage? Base: Less than monthly/Monthly/Weekly climate change news use across eight countries = 1926/1277/4556.

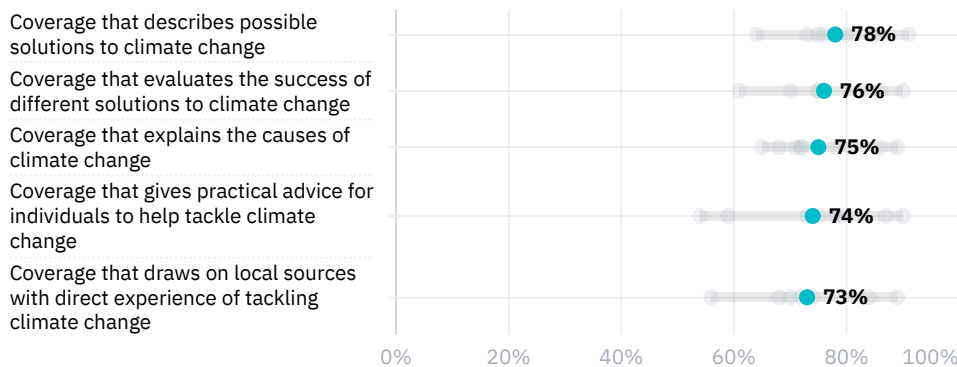
Next, we sought to capture nuances in climate change coverage related to solutions journalism. As shown in Figure 35, the majority of our respondents express interest in various types of solutions-based climate change news coverage, with only minor average differences between the types. Overall, people’s opinions remain consistent, indicating the limits of how deeply people think about solutions-oriented climate news coverage.

Figure 35. Proportion that are interested in each type of ‘solutions’ climate change coverage

A majority of respondents say they are interested in all types of ‘solutions’ climate change news coverage, with only small differences on average between different types

See website for individual country data

- Average of 8 countries
- UK
- USA
- France
- Germany
- Japan
- Brazil
- India
- Pakistan



Q41. How interested, or not, are you in news coverage of climate change that does each of the following? Base: Total sample in all countries ≈ 1000.

Conclusions

This study extends our prior research published in 2022, focusing on how individuals in a diverse sample of nations consume climate change news, their perceptions of different sources of climate information, and the intersection between climate news use and their opinions on relevant climate-related issues. Our work offers fresh insights based on data collected in 2023 while providing a valuable point of reference from the previous year.

Our research reveals that, akin to 2022, over half of the respondents encounter climate change news on a weekly basis. Notably, this proportion has increased in Germany, Brazil, Japan, India, and the UK compared with the previous year. While this increase is promising, it may be attributed to a combination of factors, including heightened climate-related media coverage, a growing public interest in the subject, or an increase in the frequency of climate-related events that are being reported by the media, making people believe that they are coming across such news more frequently.

Age and political affiliation continue to prove influential, as older age groups, due to their regular news consumption habits, and those with left-leaning political inclinations are more likely to frequently encounter climate change news. Similar to last year, this finding suggests that news media continue to struggle to make inroads among younger generations.

In general, trust in various sources of climate change information, including news media, remains consistent, with some country-specific variations. Additionally, scientists, environmental activists, and international institutions are not only highly trusted climate information sources, but they tend to have greater visibility in news media. As a result, the news media ensure the public is exposed to reliable and credible information on climate change. It is particularly important because concerns about climate change misinformation remain high but stable across the two survey years in all countries.

The inadequate or slow policy response to climate change has led to an increase in direct action protests, particularly in the UK, France, the USA, and Germany. Our findings indicate that there is minority support for these protests, with older individuals and those with right-wing political leanings being more likely to express opposition. Furthermore, public opinion on whether news media and governments fairly report or discuss direct action protests is evenly split, and in the UK and Germany, this view is partly influenced by support for the protests.

Climate change is intrinsically linked to human health and well-being. Our examination of public opinion on this association reveals a North–South divide, with individuals from Global North countries expressing a belief that climate change is less likely to have significant health effects, while the opposite holds true for Global South countries. This divide may be partly attributed to the more pronounced and visible impacts in Southern countries and their weaker healthcare infrastructure, often exposed during extreme weather events. Regarding the effects on specific groups, our findings indicate that people agree that climate change disproportionately affects poorer nations and individuals, but think men and women, younger and older are affected equally.

Probing people's preferences across different types of climate change does not reveal much variation. For journalists, however, it is noteworthy that people across all countries have relatively high interest in climate change news that incorporates solutions in its coverage.

In conclusion, this report underscores the positive link between climate change news consumption and informed public opinions, reaffirming the crucial role of news media in shaping attitudes towards climate change.

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