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May 2025

Public perceptions of climate change and sustainability in Greece



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1.

Introduction

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung's social-ecological transformation survey (2023) provides invaluable insights into public attitudes to climate change and sustainability. Conducted in Greece, the study reveals citizens' hopes and concerns regarding environmental challenges and societal adjustments. This analysis explores key themes such as public anxiety about climate impacts, attitudes toward policies, motivators for action, perceptions of the energy and heat transition, and the attribution of responsibility for addressing these issues.

As Greece becomes increasingly more vulnerable to the climate crisis in Europe, citizens' perceptions are important in designing climate action. The country is experiencing more frequent and intense extreme weather events, including prolonged heatwaves, devastating wildfires and heavy rainfall. These climate-induced challenges exacerbate existing social and economic inequalities, contributing to a growing sense of insecurity. The Mediterranean region has been identified as a climate change hotspot, with rising temperatures and declining water availability posing significant threats to biodiversity, agriculture and urban resilience. In 2023 alone, wildfires consumed over 150,000 hectares of land, while record-breaking summer temperatures intensified public concern over climate adaptation and mitigation. These alarming developments provide the essential context for interpreting the survey findings, as they directly shape public perceptions and policy demands.



2. Methodology²

The survey was conducted between **22 May and 20 June 2023**, with a representative sample of **1,200 respondents** aged **18 to 69** across Greece. The study employed a **standardised online survey (CAWI method)** and used **quota sampling** to ensure diversity in gender, age, education and regional distribution. The data collection was carried out by **Sociotrend GmbH**, and the average interview duration was **25 minutes**.

Demographically, the sample included a **49 per cent male and 51 per cent female** distribution. The age group representation was:

- **18–29 years**: 19%
- **30–39 years**: 18%
- **40–49 years**: 23%
- **50–59 years**: 22%
- **60–69 years**: 18%

Income levels varied, with **32 per cent earning less than 1,000 euros (€) per month**, **40 per cent earning €1,000–2,000** and only **6 per cent earning above €4,000**.

Educational backgrounds were similarly diverse, **22 per cent having a low education level**, **47 per cent medium** and **31 per cent high**. The sample was also relatively balanced between **parents and guardians (49 per cent)** and **people with no children (51 per cent)**. These factors significantly influenced respondents' perspectives on environmental and climate policies. More information can be found on page 5 of the survey report.²



¹ Methodology and sample: <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/bruessel/20855.pdf>, p. 5

² <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/bruessel/20855.pdf>, p.5

3.

Analysis of the environmental study findings

3.1 Problem awareness³

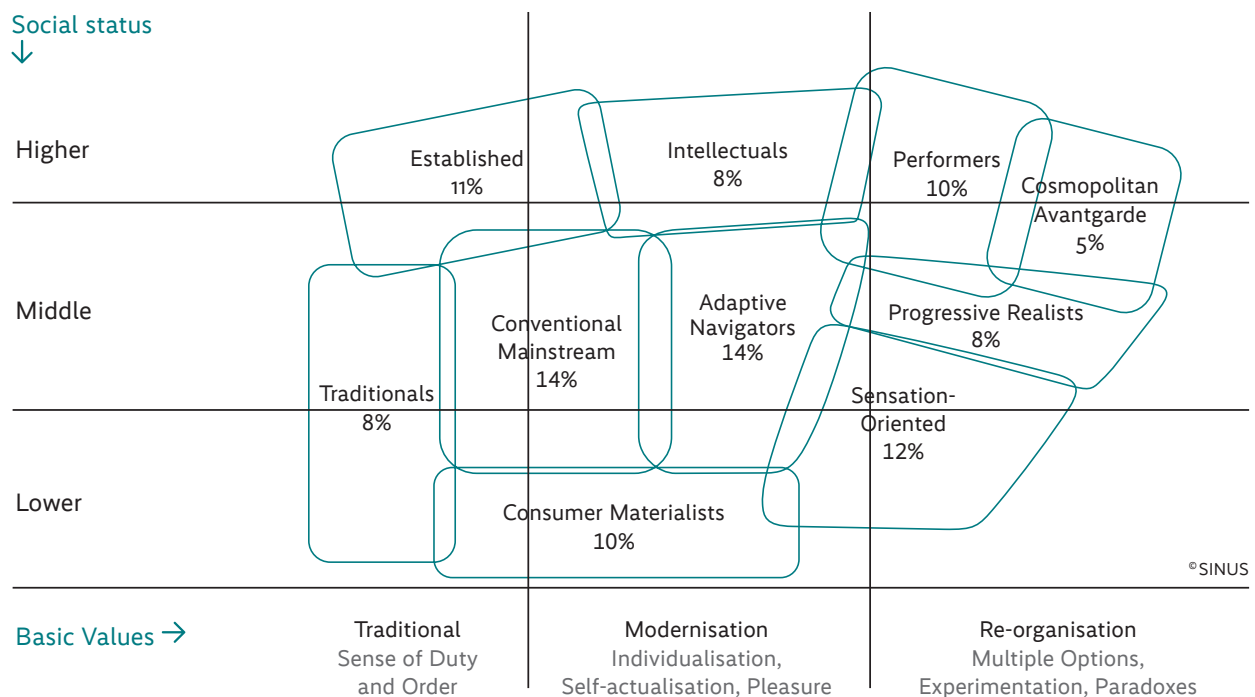
The survey reveals **mixed prioritisation of climate-related concerns within Greece**. While **69 per cent of respondents rate climate change as a highly important topic (scoring 8–10 on the relevance scale)**, other pressing societal issues, such as public health services (74 per cent) and education (53 per cent), often overshadow environmental concerns. **Climate change ranks second among environmental challenges after water pollution (63 per cent)**. Key areas of public concern include water quality, waste management and the state of the oceans, highlighting a connection between environmental health and daily life.

The Sinus-Meta-Milieus® analysis shows that **progressive realists and intellectuals are the most engaged groups**, emphasising climate justice and sustainability, while consumer materialists and sensation-oriented groups show the least concern. The **youth segment (18–29 years of age) exhibit strong climate awareness, possibly influenced by activist movements such as Fridays for Future**, whereas older respondents tend to prioritise economic and social stability over environmental reforms. In Greece, the student movement Fridays for Future, which has organised demonstrations demanding political action on climate change, has been one of the most historically successful in the country. The results of the study might have been influenced by the movement's actions in previous years.

The Sinus-Meta-Milieus® in Greece

18 - 69 year olds

Fig. 1



³ Findings: Problem awareness: <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/bruessel/20855.pdf>, p.13

From a policy perspective, these findings emphasise that **environmental reforms should integrate public health and resource management narratives** to resonate with broader societal priorities. Highlighting the intersection of climate and water issues, for instance, could elevate the urgency of climate action. Younger populations show stronger awareness of climate change than older groups, indicating an opportunity to foster environmental stewardship among young people while educating older generations on systemic risks such as agricultural decline. It is crucial to recognise that the cost of inaction will ultimately exceed the cost of implementing climate policies. The Bank of Greece projected that by the end of the twenty-first century, climate change could cost Greece approximately €2.2 billion annually⁴, the equivalent of about 1 per cent of the country's GDP at current values if no adaptation and mitigation measures take place. Furthermore, public services such as hospitals and fire stations are already overwhelmed, and without ambitious reforms, it will be impossible to meet the rising demands driven by the climate crisis. This underscores the need for swift and comprehensive action to ensure that society can handle the escalating impacts of climate change.

3.2 Consequences of climate change: anxiety scale⁵

The devastating fires in Evia (511,854 burned acres, summer 2021) and the floods in Thessaly (September 2023) serve as stark reminders of the urgent need for climate action. These events highlight a heightened public awareness of climate change's tangible effects, as the survey reveals that **72 per cent of respondents fear extreme weather events**. This dominant concern reflects the increasing visibility and immediacy of phenomena such as rainstorms and heatwaves. Additionally, **56 per cent worry about water shortages**, and **55 per cent cite forest fires and forest dieback** as significant fears, issues that directly impact livelihoods and ecosystems, intensifying the sense of urgency with regard to adaptive measures. On the other hand, **only 10 per cent of respondents expressed concern about declining agricultural yields**, suggesting potential gaps in public understanding of the long-term, systemic effects of climate change.

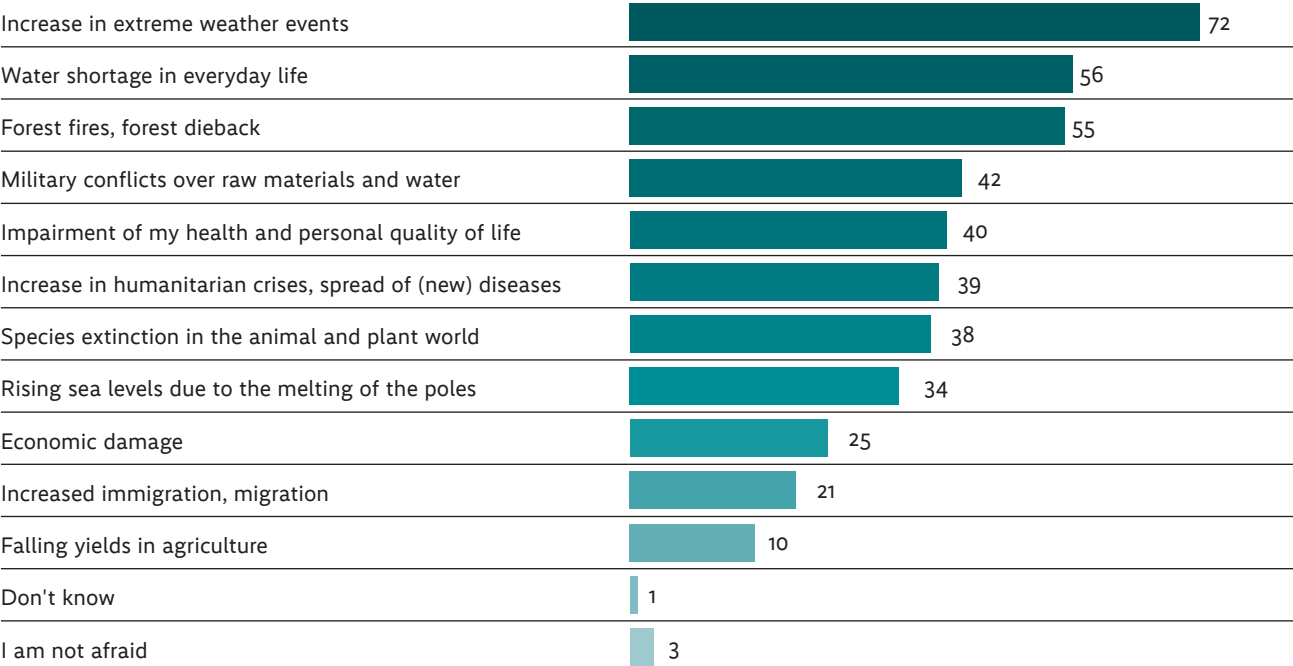
Public fears also extend to broader humanitarian implications, such as the **spread of disease (39 per cent)** and **military conflicts over resources (42 per cent)**, reflecting a deep-seated anxiety about societal disruptions.

Fig. 2

Consequences of climate change - Anxiety scale

*When you think about the consequences of climate change, what scares you the most?
Please select up to 5 answer options from the following list.*

Consequences of climate change



Basis: 1,200 cases, total sample; figures in %.

⁴ <https://www.ekathimerini.com/economy/1227209/climate-change-cost-at-e2-bln-per-year/>
⁵ Consequences of Climate Change: Anxiety Scale: <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/bruessel/20855.pdf>, p. 31

These concerns vary demographically: younger populations prioritise extreme weather, while older groups express heightened fear of resource conflicts. These findings indicate that climate change is increasingly recognised as a pressing issue in Greece, with high levels of awareness regarding its immediate consequences. However, the lower concern for long-term systemic issues, such as agriculture, suggests that targeted training is necessary. Compared with the period when the survey was conducted (22 May to 20 June 2023), water adequacy is now an even more pressing issue, particularly on the islands, where public discourse on climate change has become more intense. Interestingly, the term ‘climate anxiety’ was introduced by mental health experts in the late 2000s and was formally discussed in a groundbreaking paper by Susan Clayton and colleagues in 2017 titled *Mental Health and Our Changing Climate*. This publication emphasised the emotional and psychological toll of climate change, including anxiety and distress caused by environmental degradation.

Looking at the demographic trends, younger groups align their fears with present-day weather phenomena, while older people worry more about geopolitical and resource-related issues. Tailoring climate change messages to these different demographics can improve outreach and increase policy acceptance, ensuring that both immediate concerns and long-term impacts are addressed effectively.

3.3 Climate and environmentally conscious behaviour: willingness to adapt⁶

The survey reveals both optimism and scepticism regarding environmental policies. On the positive side, **92 per cent of respondents acknowledge the necessity of lifestyle changes** to ensure sustainability. However, this willingness is tempered by personal and economic concerns: **78 per**

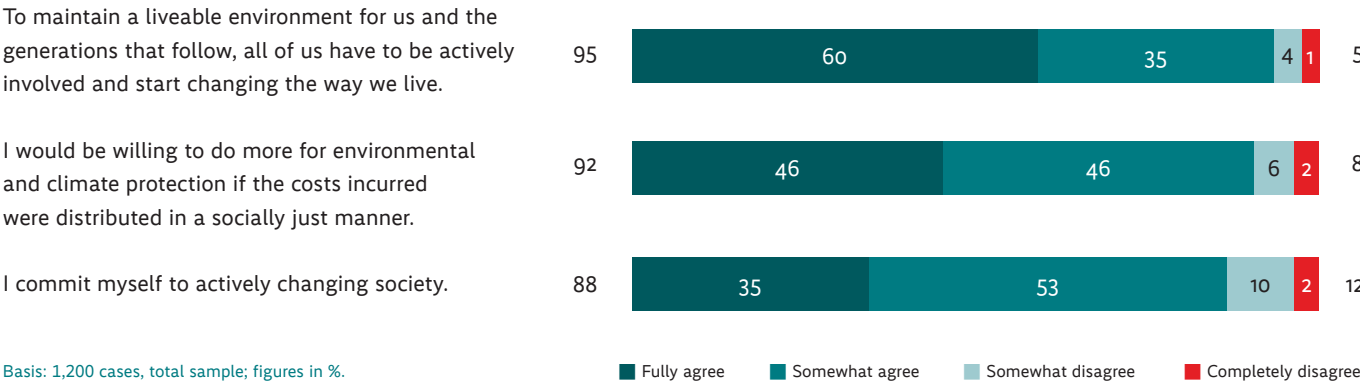
cent are hesitant to act if their standard of living is affected, and **67 per cent worry about the financial burden of transformative policies**. Social equity emerges as a pivotal theme, with **63 per cent perceiving environmental policies as disproportionately burdensome for low-income groups**. Meanwhile, **42 per cent express frustration at perceived overregulation**, and **60 per cent dislike being told how to live**. Despite these barriers, there is significant potential for collective action, with **72 per cent stating they are more likely to act if others participate**.

These findings highlight that while the majority of respondents recognise the importance of environmental action, their support is contingent on policies that balance sustainability with personal and economic well-being. High approval ratings for reform projects are closely tied to policies that address equity and affordability. Instruments such as subsidies for green energy and progressive taxation could alleviate fears of disproportionate impacts, positioning the upcoming Social Climate Plan as a key tool in ensuring fairer reforms. The Social Climate Plan (SCP) was introduced as a mechanism for minimising the burden of reforms on the most vulnerable citizens, including the costs associated with the EU Emissions Trading System. Notably, global movements such as ‘Tax the Rich’ continue to grow, reflecting a growing sense of injustice around who is being held accountable for the impacts of climate change.

Respondents show support for collective efforts and socially just cost-sharing mechanisms, which should be central to climate strategies. Energy communities emerge as a potential vehicle for collective action, providing citizens with direct connections to fieldwork and fostering trust among members. If supported politically, energy communities can reshape how the public perceives

Attitudes towards climate and environmentally conscious behaviour

Below you can see some statements. How much do you agree with the following statements?



Basis: 1,200 cases, total sample; figures in %.

6 Findings: Climate and environmentally conscious behaviour & attitudes: <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/bruessel/20855.pdf>, p. 36

adaptability to climate measures, transforming the way people engage with environmental reforms. After all, humans are inherently social beings, often more willing to take action when they see others doing the same. This social mimicry can be a powerful tool in driving collective change, especially when policies encourage shared participation and collective responsibility.

Many Greeks, particularly in rural areas, feel the pressure of rising living costs and fear that climate policies will affect them disproportionately. However, communities that have already embraced collective action, such as local solar energy communities, show a positive shift. In these areas, citizens who participate in energy communities often feel empowered by their involvement in solutions that are both environmentally and economically beneficial. This suggests that, with the right support, Greece could pave the way for broader societal acceptance of climate reforms. Notably, more than 1,700⁷ energy communities were registered as of September 2024.

3.4 Motivators for climate-conscious behaviour⁸

Strong intrinsic motivators for environmental action are evident throughout the survey results. An **overwhelming 96 per cent of respondents link environmental protection to improved quality of life and health**, and **94 per cent view it as a civic duty**. Furthermore, **88 per cent feel personally responsible** for ensuring a sustainable future, demonstrating a moral alignment with environmental goals. Financial and social incentives also play a critical role in shaping behaviour. For instance, **92 per cent are more inclined to act if costs are distributed fairly**, and **88 per cent feel a sense of pride when purchasing eco-friendly products**. These sentiments highlight a clear pathway for mobilisation, suggesting that combining moral appeals with sustainable options that are accessible and affordable can drive meaningful change.

In terms of engagement, policies and campaigns should emphasise tangible benefits, such as health enhancements, improvements in living conditions and better local environmental quality. Aligning financial incentives with moral imperatives can enhance public participation, making the transition to a more sustainable future both appealing and achievable. Specifically, middle- and lower-income groups that emphasise the importance of affordability can be mobilised by highlighting the financial accessibility of green technologies.

In the context of Greece's urban areas, this could be seen for example in the growing demand for **sustainable public**

transport options. This is also supported by the findings of the study. With cities such as Athens facing pollution and traffic congestion, there is a clear push from citizens for more affordable, eco-friendly transport options. If electric buses and bike-sharing programmes become more accessible, the public's interest in using them will increase. Generally, combining moral responsibility with practical solutions can lead to more sustainable urban living. The need for a transport transformation can also provide an opportunity to create inclusive solutions for people with disabilities, caretakers of small children, low income groups and other vulnerable citizens. Of course, this approach should also be taken in the broader energy transition and climate mitigation.

3.5 Attitudes towards the energy/heat transition⁹

The energy and heat transition represent a focal point for public opinion. While **83 per cent of respondents recognise its potential to create jobs** and **88 per cent believe that consistent policies could enhance business competitiveness**, significant apprehensions remain. Notably, **60 per cent express concerns about economic risks** for energy-intensive industries, and **52 per cent doubt businesses' ability to meet strict climate mandates**. This duality reflects a pragmatic outlook: while people acknowledge the necessity and benefits of transitioning to renewable energy, they remain wary of short-term disruptions. Bridging this gap requires transparent communication about the transition's timeline, along with concrete evidence of economic opportunities.

To obtain public support, policymakers should emphasise the long-term economic and employment benefits of the energy transition while addressing short-term fears through transitional assistance programmes. Framing the shift in terms of job creation and business competitiveness resonates strongly with respondents, making these tools vital for securing broad-based support.

In Greece, this is particularly relevant given the country's history with lignite dependency. The phasing out of coal plants in Western Macedonia, a region traditionally reliant on fossil fuel jobs, has sparked both economic anxiety and political tensions. Trade unions in the area have also expressed concerns about accelerated decarbonisation, which will cause employment insecurity for lignite workers. The respondents of the survey **fully agree (96 per cent) that fossil fuel workers should be helped to retrain for alternative jobs**.

Successful retraining programmes and renewable energy

⁷ The Green Tank, <https://rb.gy/4e573l>

⁸ Findings: Motivators for Climate-Conscious Behaviour: <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/bruessel/20855.pdf>, p. 38

⁹ Findings: Changing way of living and economies & Attitudes: <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/bruessel/20855.pdf>, p. 70

Attitudes towards the energy/heat transition

Fig. 4

In the conversion of the electricity and heat supply to renewable energy, such as solar, wind, etc....

...affected employees (e.g. in case of job loss) should be supported in retraining towards alternative jobs.



...private households that want to use renewable energy, e.g. solar power, solar heating or heat pumps, should be financially supported.



...affected employees (e.g. in case of job loss) should receive financial support such as compensation payments, severance pay, etc.



...the development of energy communities (community organised at local level to shape their energy supply more sustainably and independently) should be supported by the government.



...citizens should participate in public and political life (e.g. in citizens' forums, planning advisory boards) to help shape the community.



...affected regions and communities (e.g. coal mining, natural gas, oil regions) should receive financial support.



...new industries should be actively located in affected regions and communities (e.g. coal mining, natural gas, oil regions).



Basis: 1,200 cases, total sample; figures in %.

■ Fully agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Completely disagree

investments in the area show that, with the right policies, regions can adapt and even thrive in a green economy. One example is the Just Transition Centre of Vocational Excellence (JTCoVE¹⁰), established by several educational centres and the University of Western Macedonia. JTCoVE is dedicated to supporting the region's shift towards sustainability through excellence in vocational education, research and collaboration. It aims to facilitate a just transition by offering specialised training programmes aligned with emerging green industries. Similarly, the recently launched DEMANDS project¹¹ aims to upskill workers in the area to meet the emerging needs of the transition and innovation. Ensuring that these positive examples are widely communicated could help ease public concerns and reinforce trust in the transition process. Examples of retraining support include the following:

→ The European Investment Bank (EIB) has been actively supporting Greece's transition away from lignite-based

energy production, particularly in regions such as Western Macedonia. Their efforts include investments in renewable energy projects, reskilling programmes and urban development to improve living standards.

→ Additionally, the Cluster of Bioeconomy and Environment of Western Macedonia (CluBE) has broadened its activities to encompass renewable energy sources, hydrogen technologies and energy efficiency. CluBE collaborates closely with the University of Western Macedonia and other educational institutions to develop training programmes tailored to the region's evolving energy landscape, thereby fostering workforce reskilling and capacity building.¹²

→ Furthermore, the Association of Active Youths Florina (OENEF) is working to empower young people in Western Macedonia through educational, training and intercultural projects funded from the EU Emissions

¹⁰ <https://coveseed.eu/just-transition-centre-of-vocational-excellence-jtcove-established-in-western-macedonia-greece/>

¹¹ <https://demands-project.eu/>

¹² <https://amwaj-alliance.com/sustainable-innovation-in-greece-western-macedonia-a-day-with-clube/>

Trading System.¹³ These initiatives are aimed at developing soft skills and creativity among young people, preparing them for new opportunities in a transitioning economy.

Additionally, as climate change intensifies, Greece's demand for heating will decline, particularly in the southern regions and urban areas. Instead, the focus will shift toward cooling solutions, which will become increasingly important during the hotter summer months. Because cooling relies entirely on electricity, this shift underscores the importance of accelerating electrification efforts. Coupled with the expansion of renewable energy sources, this transition can help to reduce emissions and ensure a more sustainable energy future.

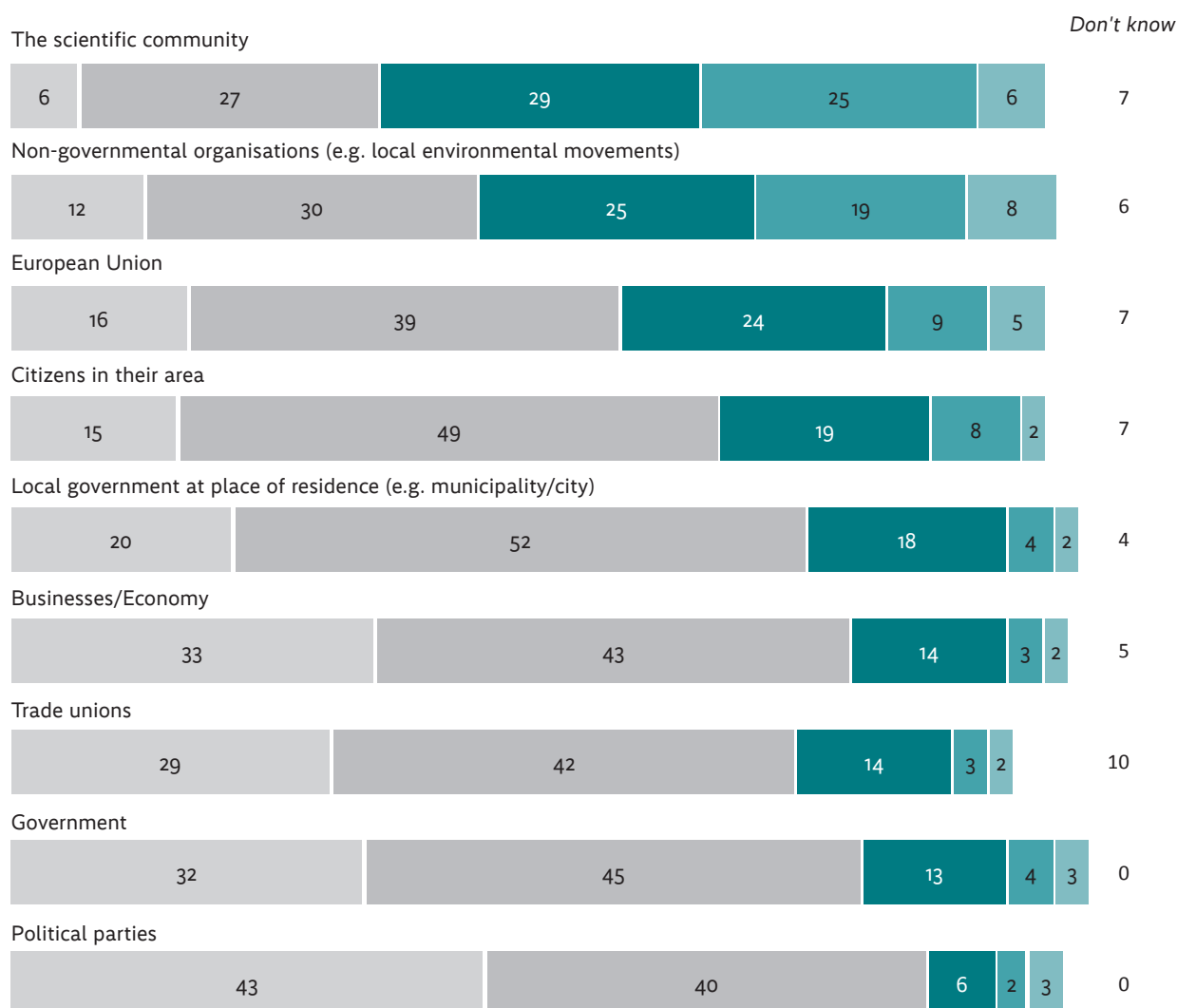
3.6 Attribution of responsibility¹⁴

A shared sense of accountability emerges clearly in the survey. **Some 93 per cent of respondents hold industrialised nations accountable** for leading climate action, acknowledging their historical contributions to global warming. Additionally, **91 per cent emphasise the role of businesses in adopting sustainable practices**, while **88 per cent call for consistent government policies**. At the same time, individual responsibility remains a key theme, with **88 per cent feeling personally accountable for environmental conservation**. This distribution of responsibility across governments, businesses and individuals underscores the need for coordinated, multi-level strategies. However, while people acknowledge the importance of systemic change, they also recognise their own role in addressing the crisis.

Attribution of responsibility

Fig. 5

In the conversion of the electricity and heat supply to renewable energy, such as solar, wind, etc....



Basis: 1,200 cases, total sample; figures in %.

Way too little Too little Just right Way too much Too much

¹³ <https://etextra.org/transforming-coal-into-social-justice-in-greece-through-the-eu-emissions-trading-system/>

¹⁴ Attribution of Responsibility: <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/bruessel/20855.pdf>, p. 77

To create effective reform agendas, coordination between all stakeholders is essential. Policies should align international agreements with national initiatives while offering incentives for businesses and individuals alike. Striking a balance between systemic changes and personal engagement is key, as both are necessary to drive meaningful progress. **Social democratic milieus tend to emphasise government and business accountability**, which presents opportunities for advocacy that promotes collaborative action. Historically, scepticism about the effectiveness of climate policies has been strongest in centrist to left-wing political groups, a trend reflected in these findings. Demographic differences also shape attitudes: progressive and cosmopolitan groups put greater emphasis on government and corporate responsibility, whereas traditional and lower-income groups prioritise fairness and equitable solutions that do not place an undue burden on individuals.

Successful strategies must bridge these perspectives by pairing large-scale reforms with accessible solutions for individuals. For instance, providing incentives for businesses to adopt greener practices should go hand in hand with practical support for citizens, such as financial aid for energy-efficient home upgrades and renewable energy technologies. The survey's insights into lifestyle and economic shifts suggest that while people are open to change they are most likely to embrace it when financial support is available.

In Greece, this is particularly relevant given the public reaction to rising energy costs. The surge in electricity prices in recent years has made consumers more aware of energy efficiency but has also fuelled resentment towards policies perceived as unfairly shifting the burden onto households, which was not the case a few years ago. A more effective approach would be to ensure that businesses – especially major polluters – shoulder a fair share of the transition costs while making sustainable choices more accessible and financially viable for the average citizen. Addressing these concerns transparently in public forums could strengthen trust in climate policies and foster greater collective engagement.

3.7 Communication strategies and media use¹⁵

The study identifies significant variation in how different groups engage with information. Younger, urban populations rely primarily on digital platforms, while older demographics continue to trust traditional media sources. Notably, **83 per cent of respondents prefer concise, actionable information** over complex technical jargon, underscoring the need for clear and accessible

communication. To reach diverse audiences effectively, communication strategies should blend digital campaigns with community outreach, ensuring inclusivity across different age groups and social backgrounds. Visual content, such as infographics and videos, can help to simplify complex climate topics and increase engagement.

Preferences also vary across social and ideological groups. Avant-garde and progressive audiences favour interactive and participatory formats, such as online discussions and dynamic social media campaigns, while more conventional groups respond better to structured, authority-driven messaging. These insights suggest that tailoring communication styles to different audiences is key to fostering climate awareness and action.

In Greece, where local and interpersonal networks play a crucial role in shaping public opinion, community-based engagement remains a powerful tool. Women, often at the forefront of household decision-making and community initiatives, can serve as vital agents of change in sustainability efforts. Both the literature and the findings of the present study confirm that women also tend to be more environmentally conscious and willing to act. Targeted efforts that empower them – through financial incentives, education and leadership roles in local environmental projects – could significantly enhance the effectiveness of climate policies. Given Greece's strong tradition of grassroots movements, initiatives that blend digital tools with face-to-face engagement could maximise impact, ensuring that environmental awareness translates into concrete action.

3.8 Assessment of measures in nature, environmental and climate protection¹⁶

The survey results reveal broad support for measures aimed at enhancing environmental and climate protection in various sectors. With regard to **mobility, 98 per cent favour expanding public transport networks**, with 70 per cent supporting lower fares. **Charging stations for electric vehicles receive 88 per cent** approval, while incentives for electric cars are backed by 85 per cent. More **controversial measures, such as airline ticket taxes (57 per cent) and car tolls (35 per cent)**, are received less enthusiastically. These findings suggest a preference for accessible and affordable sustainable transport solutions.

In **energy, cooperative membership (91 per cent)** and mandatory solar installations for public and new private buildings (88 per cent) enjoy broad support. **Wind energy expansion is favoured by 79 per cent**, reflecting a clear commitment to renewable energy sources. Similarly, **business and innovation** policies receive strong backing,

¹⁵ Communication expectations: <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/bruessel/20855.pdf>, p. 193

¹⁶ Findings: Changing way of living and economies - Assessment: <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/bruessel/20855.pdf>, p. 69

with 95 per cent supporting climate-friendly product development and labelling. Reducing harmful subsidies (76 per cent) and making polluting products more expensive (70 per cent) also gain traction, signalling public readiness for systemic economic changes.

Education emerges as a priority: **96 per cent support improved environmental curricula and 92 per cent endorse training for workers in transitioning industries.** **Housing policies** also receive strong approval, with **96 per cent backing subsidies for renewable energy adoption and building renovations for energy efficiency.** Support for cost-efficient heating systems (95 per cent) and appliance regulations (92 per cent) further emphasise the public's commitment to sustainable living.

In Greece, where energy costs and climate conditions are at the forefront of public concerns, these findings align with national efforts to expand renewable energy and modernise infrastructure. While financial incentives for sustainability are widely embraced, policies that directly

increase consumer costs face greater resistance. Tailored approaches – such as targeted subsidies, educational campaigns and gradual policy shifts – could ensure long-term climate action without economic strain.

A striking finding is that 79 per cent of respondents support the expansion of wind energy. This is particularly noteworthy given the seemingly growing anti-wind movements, suggesting that public opposition is not directed at the technology itself but rather at how these projects are implemented. The fact that 91 per cent of respondents favour membership of cooperatives further reinforces this idea, indicating that if wind energy projects are community-driven rather than dominated by large corporations, or if local residents are meaningfully included in decision-making processes, opposition is likely to diminish. This highlights the importance of transparency, fair distribution of benefits and public consultation in renewable energy development to ensure both social acceptance and long-term sustainability.

Fig. 6

Assessment of measures in nature, environmental and climate protection

There are various proposals to advance climate and environmental protection. To what extent do you support the following measures?

ENERGY

Membership in a cooperative/energy community



Compulsory solar energy for public buildings and new private buildings



Construction of more wind turbines



TECHNOLOGY/INNOVATIONS/BUSINESSES

Promote the development of climate-friendly products and technologies more strongly



Labelling of climate-friendly products



Reduce subsidies that are harmful to the climate



Making climate-damaging products more expensive



Basis: 1,200 cases, total sample; figures in %.

■ I completely reject it ■ I would rather reject it ■ I would rather agree ■ I completely agree

4. Conclusion

The results of this survey highlight a broad public commitment to addressing climate change but also underscore the complexities of fostering widespread engagement. There is support for climate action across diverse demographics, but tailored strategies are necessary to meet the specific needs and concerns of each group. For instance, while progressive milieus might respond well to appeals for global justice and business innovation, more conventional groups may require assurances of economic stability and affordability. Furthermore, marginalised groups, including women and lower-income populations, often feel the impacts of climate change more acutely and have distinct needs when it comes to policy engagement. Women, for instance, frequently take the lead in household decision-making and local community actions. Empowering them through targeted campaigns, education and leadership roles can not only enhance the effectiveness of climate policies but also ensure that these policies are equitable and inclusive.

Policy implementation must balance immediate actions with longer-term systemic changes. Transparent communication and participatory approaches can ensure that all stakeholders feel included in the process. By incorporating mechanisms for equitable cost-sharing and highlighting tangible local benefits, policymakers can address the economic apprehensions that pose significant barriers to reform. This includes considering the additional burdens placed on marginalised groups, and ensuring that climate strategies do not exacerbate existing inequalities.

Finally, the emphasis on shared responsibility across individuals, businesses and governments represents a strong foundation for collaborative climate strategies, as well as trade unions that represent citizens and workers. A focus on fairness, accountability and co-benefits can drive meaningful progress while fostering trust and cooperation at both national and international levels. By ensuring that women and marginalised communities are central to these efforts, we can create more resilient climate policies that lift up all segments of society. With Greece at the forefront of climate challenges in Europe, these insights can serve as a model for designing inclusive, actionable solutions that address the climate crisis effectively.



5.

Fact sheet

Comprehensive insights from the environmental study

Complementary to the brief analysis of the insights of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung's social-ecological transformation survey, we present **a list of significant results**. It mainly covers the topics addressed in the analysis, including: problem awareness; consequences of climate change; anxiety scale; attitudes towards policies; willingness to adapt; motivators for climate-conscious behaviour; attitudes to the energy/heat transition; attribution of responsibility; and communication strategies and media use.

Problem awareness

- **69%** consider climate change a highly important topic.
- Top environmental concerns:
 - water pollution and quality (**63%**).
 - climate change (**51%**).
 - state of the oceans and waste management (**50%**).

Barriers to climate-conscious behaviour

- **78%** resist lifestyle changes that lower their standard of living.
- **59%** lack financial resources to engage in climate action.
- Poor infrastructure (**78%**) prevents sustainable choices, such as reducing car use.

Motivators for action

- **96%** link environmental protection to improved health and quality of life.
- **94%** see it as a moral duty.
- **88%** feel personally responsible for conserving the environment.

Attitudes toward policies

- **92%** support socially just reforms.
- **72%** express a willingness to act collectively.

- Economic concerns:
 - **60%** fear harm to energy-intensive industries.
 - **52%** question business readiness for reforms.

Communication preferences

- **83%** prefer clear, actionable information.
- Younger and urban groups favour digital outreach; older demographics rely on traditional media.

Energy and economic transition

- **88%** believe that green policies can boost business competitiveness.
- **83%** see job creation potential in renewable energy transitions.
- **52%** express concerns about corporate ability to meet strict mandates.

Attribution of responsibility

- **93%** hold industrialised nations accountable for leading climate efforts.
- **91%** emphasise the role of businesses.
- **88%** advocate for robust government action while acknowledging individual responsibility.

Assessment of measures in nature, environmental and climate protection

- **96%** support state subsidies for private households if they use renewable energy.
- **95%** approve of financial support for cost-efficient heating systems (such as heat pumps).

Key takeaway: Effective climate strategies require equity-focused policies, clear communication and collaborative efforts across societal levels. Combining moral incentives with practical solutions can mobilise public support for sustainable reforms.

About the author

Sandy Fameliari is project manager at Electra Energy. Her field of expertise includes inclusive climate and energy solutions and mobilisation.

Public perceptions of climate change and sustainability in Greece

The survey on people's perceptions of climate change in Greece shows strong public support for climate action, but effectively engaging everyone is complex. While support spans all demographic groups, strategies need to be tailored to different groups. Policies should balance urgent action with long-term change, using transparent and inclusive approaches. Collaboration between individuals, businesses, governments and trade unions is essential, with fairness, accountability and shared benefits key to building trust and driving progress globally.

Further information on this topic can be found here:

➤ fes.de