



Special Eurobarometer 416

ATTITUDES OF EUROPEAN CITIZENS TOWARDS THE ENVIRONMENT

SUMMARY

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This survey has been requested by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV) and co-ordinated by the Directorate-General for Communication.

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

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Special Eurobarometer 416 / Wave EB81.3 – TNS Opinion & Social

Special Eurobarometer 416

**Attitudes of European citizens towards the
environment**

Survey conducted by TNS Opinion & Social at the request of
the Directorate-General for Environment

Survey co-ordinated by the Directorate-General for
Communication (DG COMM "Strategy, Corporate
Communication Actions and Eurobarometer" Unit)

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INTRODUCTION

This Eurobarometer survey on the environment comes three years after the previous report on the subject, and there is no indication that Europeans' concern about environmental issues has diminished in that time.

The most acute concerns relate to pollution of both air and water, the amount of waste that is generated in the EU, and the depletion of natural resources. The impact on health of chemicals used in everyday life is also a source of serious concern. Meanwhile, problems such as species loss and deforestation – even in places far distant from Europe – continue to be big issues for many citizens of EU Member States.

The financial crisis, from which Europe appears to be slowly and partially emerging, did not reduce the focus of European citizens on environmental issues. In fact, using resources more efficiently for cost, as well as environmental, reasons has only become more important as a result.

To help address the environmental problems facing Europe and the world, the EU's Europe 2020 strategy contains critical environmental objectives, as well as a commitment to sustainability. In particular, the strategy's flagship initiative of engendering a resource-efficient Europe supports a shift towards a low-carbon, low-impact economy.

To inform this process, and assist the European Commission in delivering the environmental goals of Europe 2020, this survey examines citizens' impressions of the environment and environmental problems, and asks people how they think these issues might be addressed.

They were first asked whether the environment and its protection are important issues in general, and about the environmental problems which most impact their own lives.

The extent to which Europeans feel they themselves can help protect the environment is addressed next, as respondents were asked what kind of green measures they already take.

The amount and trustworthiness of information they receive about the environment is the next issue which the respondents addressed, before the focus turns to the perceived links between the environment and the economy.

The question of where responsibility should lie for repairing environmental damage and doing more to protect the environment is examined next, before the final section of the report looks at the types of actions which Europeans would like to see in order to promote environmental protection.

This survey was carried out by TNS Opinion & Social network in the 28 Member States of the European Union between the 26th of April and the 11th of May 2014. Some 27,998 respondents from different social and demographic groups were interviewed face-to-face at home in their mother tongue on behalf of the Directorate-General for Environment. The methodology used is that of Eurobarometer surveys as carried out by the Directorate-General for Communication (“Strategy, Corporate Communication Actions and Eurobarometer” Unit)¹. A technical note on the manner in which interviews were conducted by the Institutes within the TNS Opinion & Social network is appended as an annex to this report. Also included are the interview methods and confidence intervals².

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

ABBREVIATIONS			
BE	Belgium	LT	Lithuania
BG	Bulgaria	LU	Luxembourg
CZ	Czech Republic	HU	Hungary
DK	Denmark	MT	Malta
DE	Germany	NL	The Netherlands
EE	Estonia	AT	Austria
EL	Greece	PL	Poland
ES	Spain	PT	Portugal
FR	France	RO	Romania
HR	Croatia	SI	Slovenia
IE	Ireland	SK	Slovakia
IT	Italy	FI	Finland
CY	Republic of Cyprus*	SE	Sweden
LV	Latvia	UK	The United Kingdom
		EU28	European Union – 28 Member States

* Cyprus as a whole is one of the 28 European Union Member States. However, the ‘acquis communautaire’ has been suspended in the part of the country which is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus. For practical reasons, only the interviews carried out in the part of the country controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus are included in the ‘CY’ category and in the EU28 average.

* * * * *

We wish to thank all the people interviewed throughout the European Union who took the time to participate in this survey.

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

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

² The results tables are included in the annex. It should be noted that the total of the percentages in the tables of this report may exceed 100% when the respondent has the possibility of giving several answers to the question.

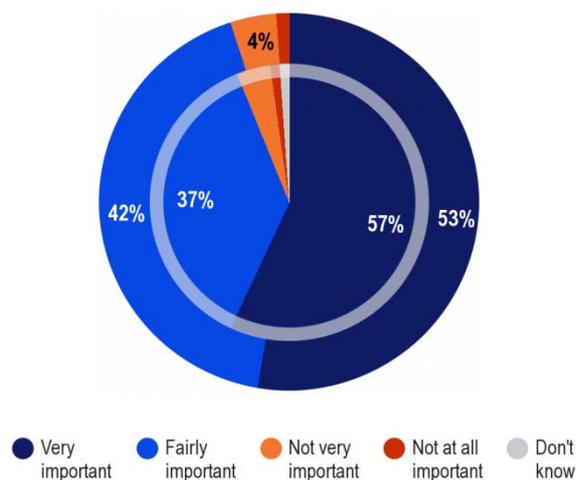
I. GENERAL ATTITUDES OF EUROPEANS TOWARDS THE ENVIRONMENT

1. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION REMAINS IMPORTANT FOR EUROPEANS

When asked to consider how important protecting the environment is to respondents personally, the view of Europeans continues to be overwhelmingly positive: 95% of citizens questioned consider that protecting the environment is important to them personally. Only 5% do not regard it as important.

There is a continuing broadly-felt and strong consensus on the importance of environmental protection in the European Union. Compared with the 2011 survey, there is a slight change of emphasis, in that 53% of Europeans (-4 percentage points since 2011) now believe that it is very important to them, and 42% (+5pp) believe it is fairly important.

QA1. How important is protecting the environment to you personally?



Inner pie : EB75.2 Apr/May 2011
Outer pie : EB81.3 Apr/May 2014

EU28

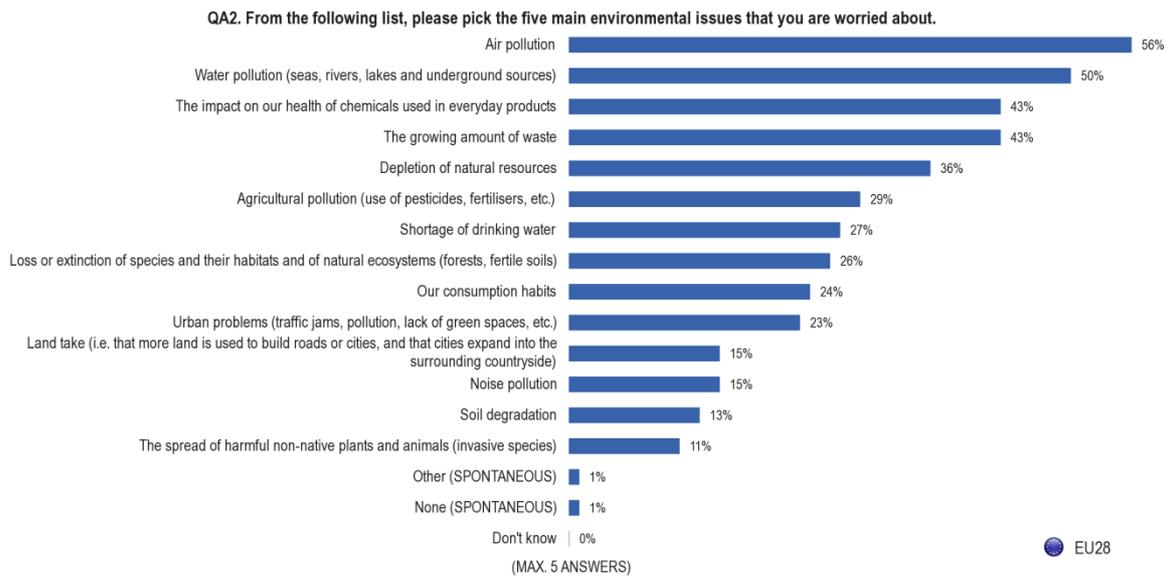
2. MAIN ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

When looking at the environmental issues which Europeans worry about the most³, the most common responses relate to pollution, waste generation and depletion of natural resources. Indeed, half or more of the respondents say that they are worried about air pollution (56%) and water pollution (50%). Over four out of ten people are worried about the impact on health of chemicals used in everyday products (43%) and about the growing amount of waste (43%), while more than a third are worried about the depletion of natural resources (36%).

³ QA2: It should be noted that the total of the percentages may exceed 100%, since the respondent had the possibility of giving several answers to the question.

In comparison, relatively few Europeans say that they are worried about noise pollution or land take (both 15%), soil degradation (13%), or the spread of harmful non-native species (11%).

For this question, the list and number of concerns presented to the respondents has been modified from the previous survey. For this reason, results are not strictly comparable. However, it can be noted that following the omission of man-made disasters and climate change from this question listing, the five principal concerns are still the same. In 2011, however, water pollution (41%) exceeded air pollution (36%) in overall European responses.



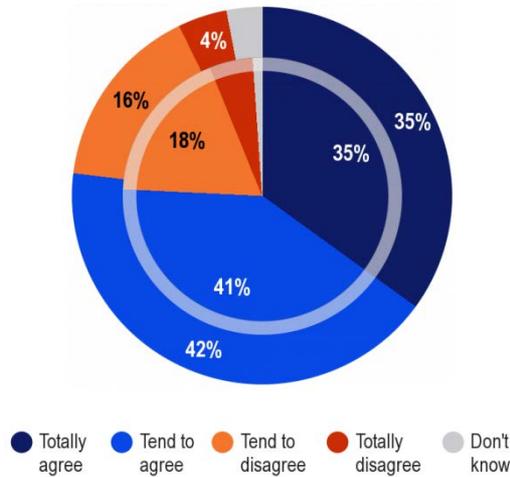
3. ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS HAVE A DIRECT EFFECT ON EUROPEANS' DAILY LIFE

Over three quarters of Europeans agree that environmental problems have a direct effect on their daily lives (77%). The result is much the same as in 2011, when 76% were in agreement. Of these, 35% totally agree that environmental problems have a direct effect on their daily lives, and 42% tend to agree.

Conversely, a fifth of respondents (20%, -3pp since 2011) do not agree that environmental problems have a direct effect on their daily lives. Of these, 16% tend to disagree, and 4% totally disagree.

QA13.3. Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

Environmental issues have a direct effect on your daily life



Inner pie : EB75.2 Apr/May 2011
Outer pie : EB81.3 Apr/May 2014

EU28

Cyprus (95%), Greece (93%), and Malta (90%) have the highest proportions of respondents who agree that environmental issues have a direct effect on their daily life. In contrast, the level of agreement is lowest among people in Denmark (56%), Austria, the Netherlands (both 66%), Belgium (67%), and Germany (68%).

There have been substantial changes at country level on this question since 2011. A higher proportion of respondents now agree that environmental issues have a direct effect on their daily life in Luxembourg (79%, +18pp), Sweden (75%, +15pp), Portugal (86%, +11pp), Slovenia (86%, +9pp) and the UK (78%, +9pp). Meanwhile, there were declines in several Member States, notably Romania (82%, -9pp), Ireland (79%, -7pp), Poland (73%, -6pp) and Austria (66%, -6pp).

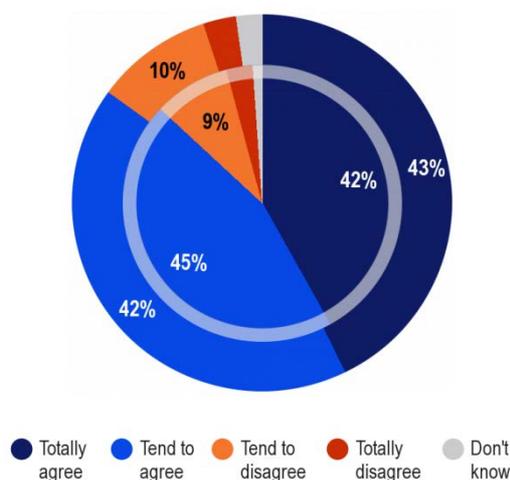
II. BEHAVIOUR AND PRIORITIES REGARDING THE ENVIRONMENT

1. EUROPEANS BELIEVE THAT THEY CAN PLAY A ROLE IN PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the statement "As an individual, you can play a role in protecting the environment in (your country)". Over eight out of ten Europeans (85%, -2pp compared to 2011) agree that they can play a role; of these, 43% totally agree with the statement, and 42% tend to agree. Just 13% disagree (+1pp), with 10% tending to disagree, and 3% totally disagreeing.

QA13.1. Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

As an individual, you can play a role in protecting the environment in (OUR COUNTRY)



Inner pie : EB75.2 Apr/May 2011

Outer pie : EB81.3 Apr/May 2014

EU28

At individual country level, 96% of respondents in Malta, Ireland and the Netherlands believe they can play a role in protecting the environment, as do 95% in Sweden. The lowest levels of agreement are in the Czech Republic (73%), Hungary and Finland (both 74%), Poland (75%), Estonia (76%), Latvia (77%), and Austria (79%).

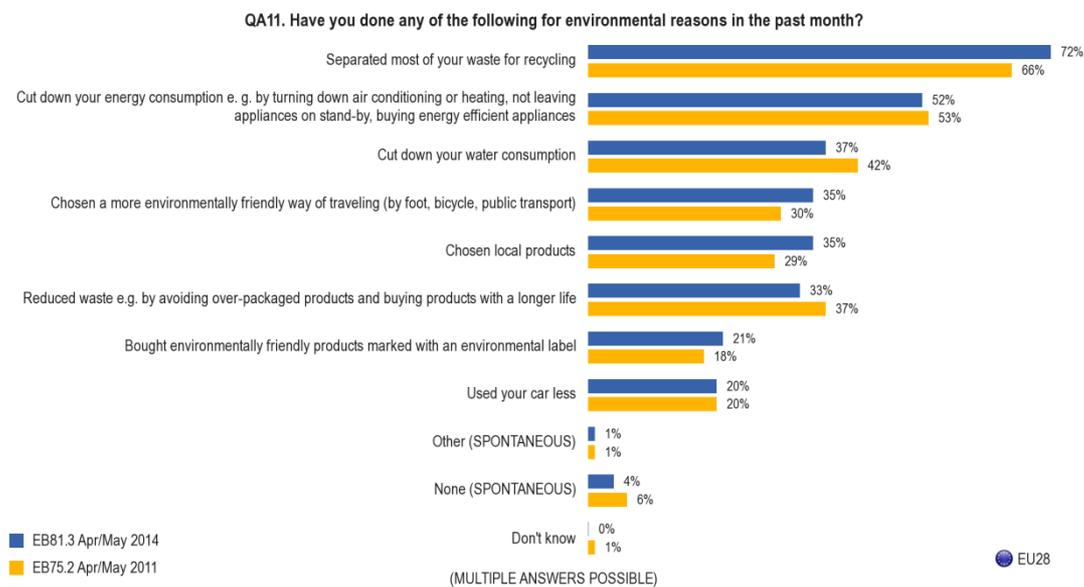
There have been some substantial changes at country level since 2011. Significantly more people now agree that they can play a role in protecting the environment in Slovenia (88%, +10pp) and Portugal (86%, +7pp). However, there have been noticeable falls in Hungary (74%, -8pp), Romania (82%, -7pp), Austria (79%, -6pp), and Poland (75%, -5pp).

2. MOST EUROPEANS TAKE ACTION TOWARDS PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Respondents were asked to describe the kind of environmental activities they had undertaken in the last month⁴. The findings are that Europeans continue to adopt environmentally-friendly actions and behaviour.

Separation of waste for recycling (72%, +6pp compared to 2011), cutting down energy consumption (52%, -1pp), and cutting down water consumption (37%, -5pp) were the three most common activities.

Roughly a third of respondents also chose a more environmentally-friendly way of travelling (35%, +5pp); chose local products (35%, +6pp); or reduced waste (33%, -4pp).



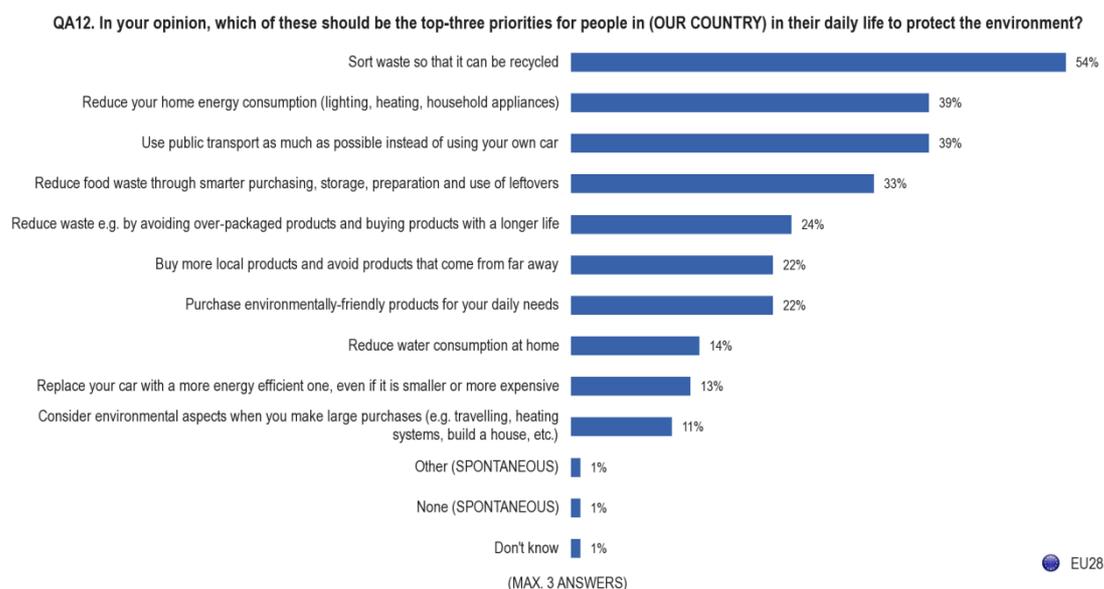
⁴ QA11: It should be noted that the total of the percentages may exceed 100%, since the respondent had the possibility of giving several answers to the question. The wording has been slightly modified since the last wave in 2011 on the two following elements: “Reduced waste e.g. by avoiding over-packaged products and buying products with a longer life” has replaced “Reduced the consumption of disposable items (plastic bags, certain kinds of packaging, etc.)” and “Cut down your water consumption” has replaced “Cut down your water consumption (e.g. not leaving water running when washing the dishes or taking a shower, etc.)”

3. EUROPEANS BELIEVE THAT SORTING WASTE, REDUCING THEIR OWN ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND USING PUBLIC TRANSPORT SHOULD BE TOP PRIORITIES FOR CITIZENS IN TERMS OF PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

A majority of Europeans (54%) say that the sorting of waste for recycling should be a top-three priority in the daily lives of people in their country to protect the environment⁵. The second and third most important priorities are the reduction of home energy consumption (39%), and using public transport (also 39%).

A third of respondents mention reducing food waste (33%), while less than a quarter identify reducing packaging waste (24%), purchasing more local products (22%) and environmentally-friendly products (22%) as priorities.

Relatively few respondents mention reducing home water consumption (14%), replacing their car with a more energy-efficient model (13%), or considering environmental aspects of large purchases (11%).



The sorting of waste so that it can be recycled is the top answer in all but four Member States. The exceptions are: Cyprus, where reducing home energy consumption is the top answer (61%); Spain and Sweden, where using public transport is seen as the main priority (59% and 56%, respectively); and the UK, where reducing food waste is the number-one priority (45%).

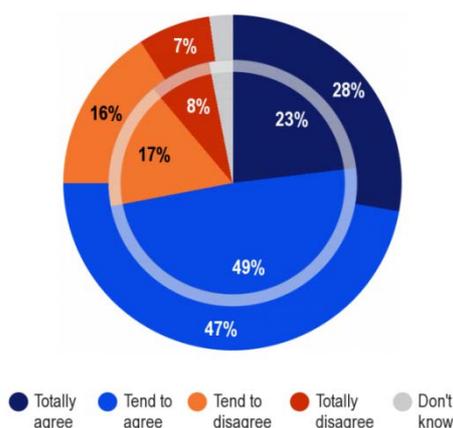
⁵ QA12: It should be noted that the total of the percentages may exceed 100%, since the respondent had the possibility of giving several answers to the question. Also the list and number of priorities presented to respondents has been modified compared to the previous 2011 survey. For this reason, results are not strictly comparable. However, it can be noted that the top three choices are the same, though percentages have changed.

4. A LARGE MAJORITY OF EUROPEANS ARE PREPARED TO PAY MORE FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

Respondents were then asked whether they would be willing to buy environmentally-friendly products, even if it costs a little more to do so. Three quarters of respondents (75%, +3pp compared to 2011) agree that they would be willing to do this; of these, 28% agree totally with the statement, and 47% tend to agree. Over a fifth of respondents (23%, -2pp) would not be willing to do this, with 16% tending to disagree, and 7% totally disagreeing.

In all Member States, more than 60% of respondents are willing to pay more for environmentally-friendly products. The largest increases in the proportion of respondents prepared to pay a little more occurred in Slovakia (76%, +14pp), Spain (73%, +13pp), Latvia (78%, +10pp) and Romania (75%, +10pp). Only Italy (67%, -8pp) has recorded a substantial fall on this question since 2011.

QA10. Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statement: You are willing to buy environmentally friendly products even if they cost a little bit more.



Inner pie : EB75.2 Apr/May 2011
Outer pie : EB81.3 Apr/May 2014

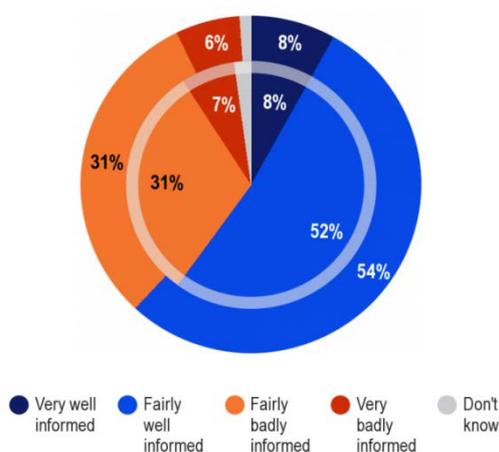
EU28

III. INFORMATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IS INCREASINGLY AVAILABLE IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. MORE EUROPEANS FEEL WELL-INFORMED ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT IN GENERAL

Respondents were then asked whether they feel well, or badly, informed about environmental issues. Over six out of ten respondents (62%) say they feel well-informed about these issues, an increase on the 60% who said this in 2011. Conversely, 37% feel badly informed (-1pp), of which 31% feel fairly badly informed and 6% very badly informed.

QA3. In general, do you consider that you are very well, fairly well, fairly badly or very badly informed about environmental issues?



Inner pie : EB75.2 Apr/May 2011
Outer pie : EB81.3 Apr/May 2014

EU28

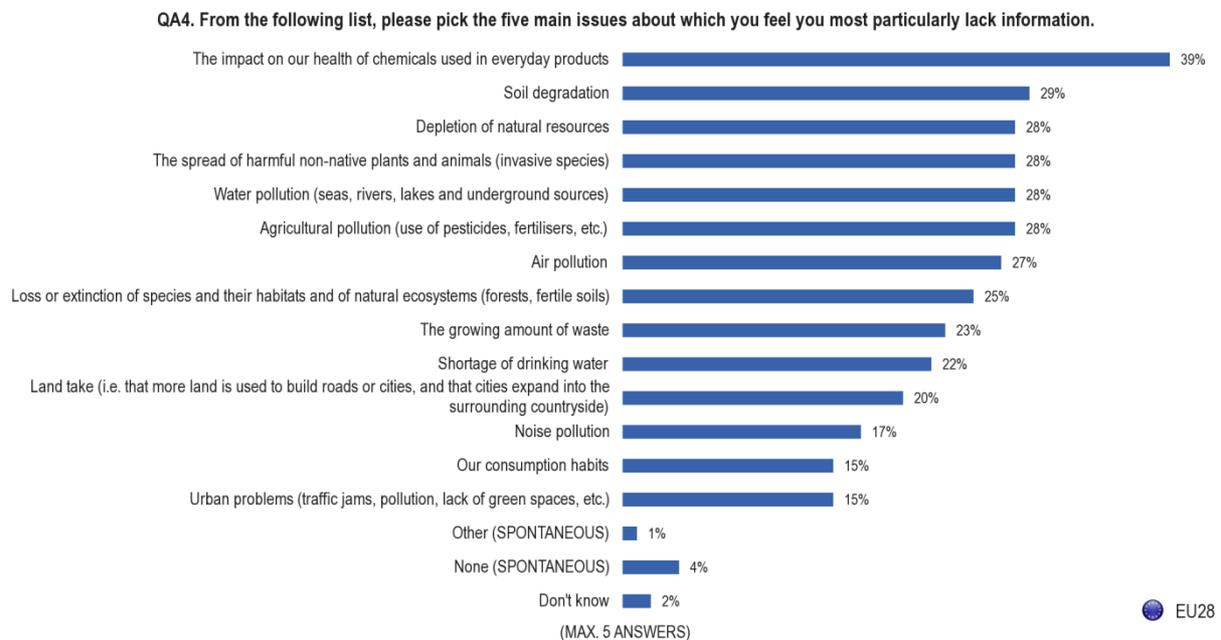
In all but one Member State (the Czech Republic, with 48%), a majority of people say that they feel well-informed about environmental issues. Moreover, in most countries, there has been an increase since 2011, with the biggest increases happening in Portugal (65%, +19pp), Hungary (69%, +14pp), Romania (58%, +11pp), Slovenia (82%, +11pp), and Finland (83%, +11pp). However, there were declines in three Member States: the Netherlands (57%, -8pp), the UK (70%, -6pp) and Italy (52%, -3pp).

2. EUROPEAN CITIZENS LACK INFORMATION ABOUT SOME SPECIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Respondents were then given a list of 14 environmental issues, and asked to pick the main five about which they particularly lack information.⁶ Four out of ten respondents say that they lack information about the health impact of chemicals used in everyday products (39%).

Roughly three out of ten people mention soil degradation (29%), the depletion of natural resources (28%), the spread of harmful non-native plants and animals (28%), water pollution (28%), agricultural pollution (28%), and air pollution (27%).

More than a fifth of respondents also identify as being among the five main issues the loss or extinction of species (25%), the growing amount of waste (23%), shortages of drinking water (22%), and land take (20%).



⁶ QA4: It should be noted that the total of the percentages may exceed 100%, since the respondent had the possibility of giving several answers to the question. For this question, the list and number of issues presented to the respondents has been modified compared to the previous survey. For this reason, results are not strictly comparable. However, it can be noted that the results are very similar to those obtained in 2011.

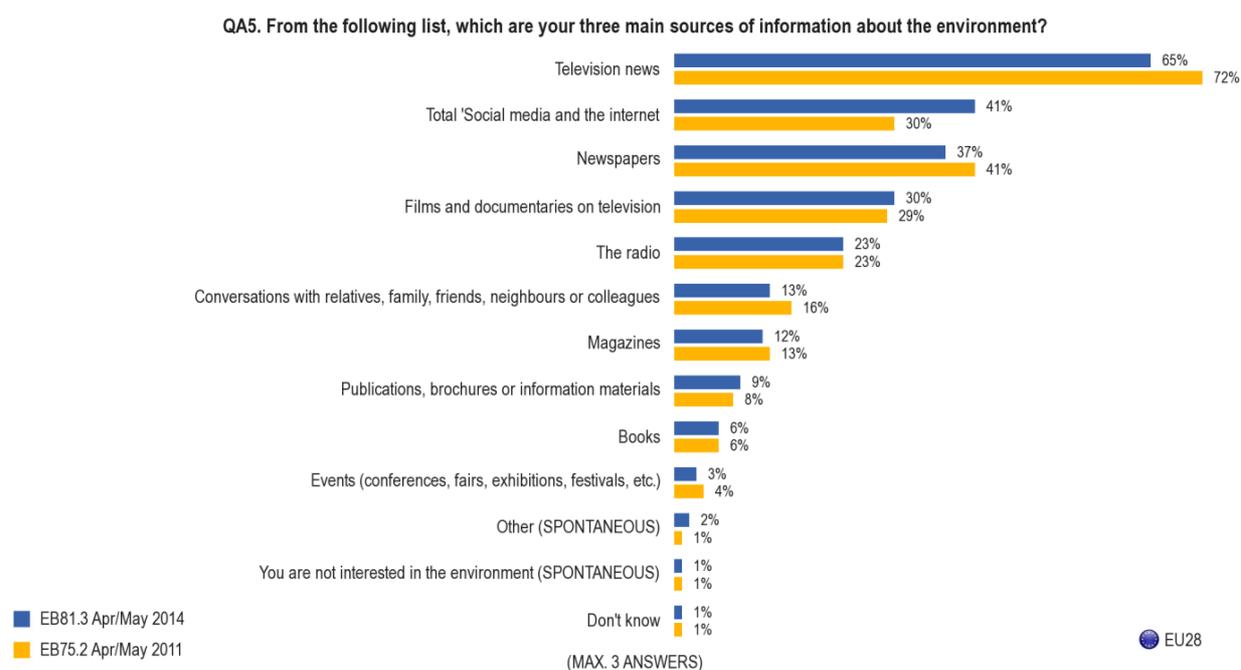
3. USED AND TRUSTED SOURCES OF INFORMATION

3.1. Television news remains the main source of information for most Europeans

Next, respondents were asked to identify their three main sources of information about the environment.⁷ Television news remains the main source of information about the environment, although its use has declined substantially since 2011: 65% of respondents mention this, down from 72% previously.

Social media and the internet is the second most important information source: 41% of people get their environmental information this way, up from 30% in 2011. This combines the results for "the Internet" (35%) and "social media" (11%). Since these were treated as one single item in the previous wave of the survey, they are analysed together here to enable trend analysis.

Over three out of ten people cite newspapers (37%, -4pp), and films and documentaries on television (30%, +1pp) as one of their main information sources, while over a fifth also mention the radio (23%, stable).



All Member States have recorded an increase in the proportion of respondents who get their information via social media and the internet since 2011. In many cases, the increases were substantial, such as in Greece (47%, +22pp), Cyprus (43%, +17pp), Austria (41%, +16pp), the Czech Republic (49%, +15pp), Ireland (43%, +15pp), and Portugal (31%, +15pp).

⁷ QA5: It should be noted that the total of the percentages may exceed 100%, since the respondent had the possibility of giving several answers to the question.

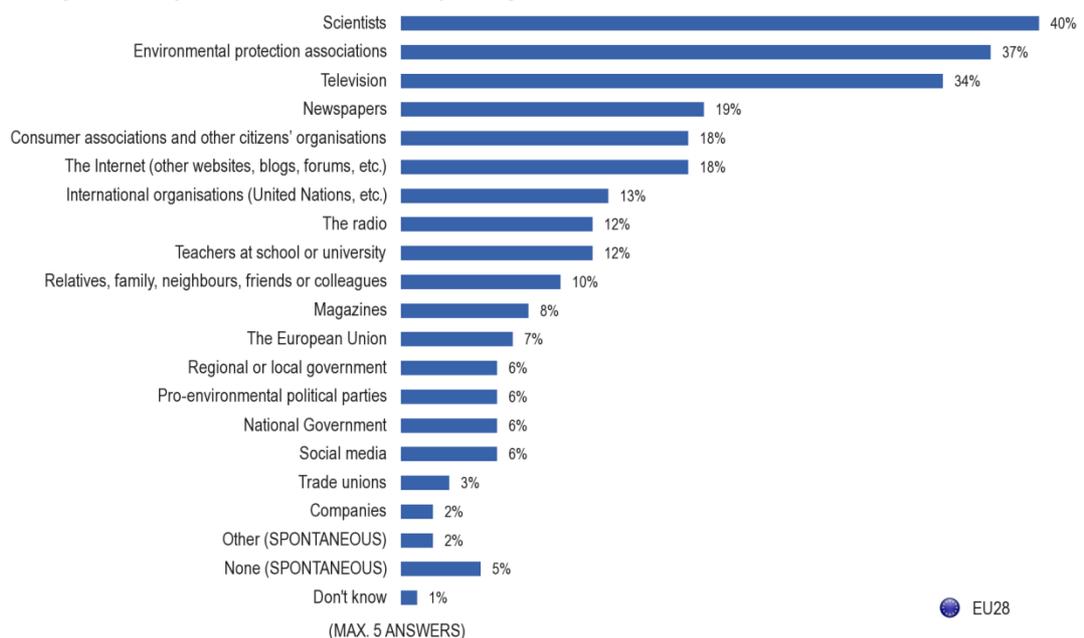
The increases in the proportion of Europeans who use social media and the internet has been matched in most individual countries by a decline in the proportion of people who accessed information via television. At least 50% of people in all Member States still mention the TV as their main information source, with results ranging from 83% in Portugal and 80% in Bulgaria, to 50% in Luxembourg and 55% in France, Austria and Poland. Yet there were declines in almost all countries compared to 2011, with the largest falls being recorded in Greece (61%, -20pp), Luxembourg (50%, -12pp), Spain (67%, -12pp), Bulgaria (80%, -11pp), Austria (55%, -10pp) and Poland (55%, -10pp).

3.2. Scientists, television and NGOs are the most trusted sources of information

Having discussed their main sources of environmental information, the respondents were then asked to say which sources they trust the most.⁸ Over three out of ten respondents say they trust scientists (40%), environmental protection associations (37%), and television (34%). Just under a fifth mention they trust newspapers (19%), consumer associations (18%), and the internet (18%).

Over a tenth of Europeans also express trust in international organisations (13%), the radio (12%), teachers (12%), and relatives or friends (10%).

QA6. From the following list, who do you trust most when it comes to providing reliable information about environmental issues?



Trust in the environmental information provided by scientists is highest in Sweden (69%), Greece (64%), Denmark (63%) and the Netherlands (60%), and lowest in Romania (28%), Bulgaria (28%) and Poland (29%).

⁸ QA6: It should be noted that the total of the percentages may exceed 100%, since the respondent had the possibility of giving several answers to the question. For this question, the list and number of sources of information presented to the respondents has been modified compared to the previous survey. For this reason, results are not strictly comparable. However, it can be noted that the results are very similar to those obtained in 2011.

In three countries, over half of the respondents express trust in the information provided by environmental protection agencies: Sweden (60%), Austria (56%) and Germany (55%). Yet less than a quarter of people trust them in Romania (22%), Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and the UK (all 23%).

In three countries, over half of the respondents express trust in the environmental information they see on TV: Romania (61%), Portugal (60%) and Bulgaria (56%). In contrast, only a quarter of people trust information from this source in Croatia, Denmark, Luxembourg and Spain (all 25%).

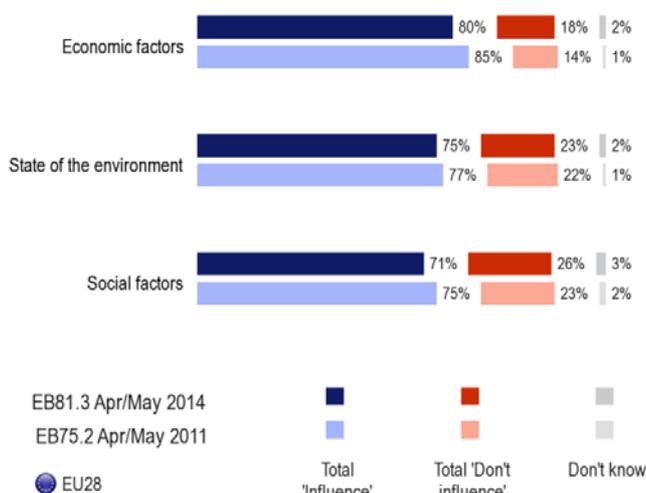
IV. FOR MOST EUROPEANS, ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES HAVE A DIRECT IMPACT ON THEIR DAILY LIFE AND ON THE ECONOMY

1. THE ECONOMY AND THE ENVIRONMENT ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO EUROPEANS' QUALITY OF LIFE

Respondents were asked the extent to which three different factors, including the state of the environment, influence their quality of life. Eight out of ten people (80%, -5pp compared to 2011) say that economic factors influence their quality of life. Less than a fifth (18%, +4pp) say that these factors do not influence them.

Three quarters of respondents (75%, -2pp) think the state of the environment influences their quality of life. Just under a quarter of people (23%, +1pp) do not agree with this. Over seven out of ten people (71%, -4pp) think that social factors influence their quality of life, whereas just over a quarter (26%, +3pp) do not.

QA8. In your opinion, to what extent do the following factors influence your quality of life?



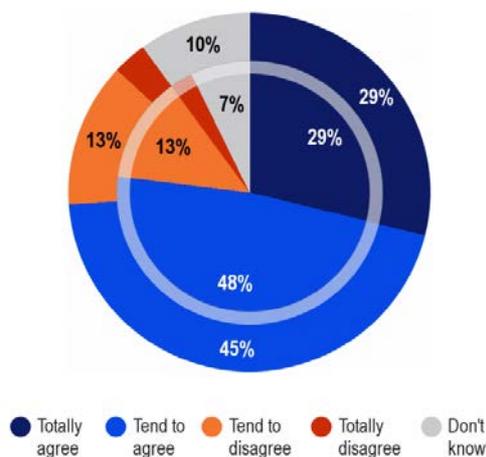
2. A LARGE MAJORITY BELIEVE THAT PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT CAN BOOST ECONOMIC GROWTH

After considering which factors have an impact on their own quality of life, respondents were then asked whether the protection of the environment can boost economic growth in the EU.

A strong majority of people (74%, -3pp compared to 2011) agree that the protection of the environment can boost economic growth. Of these, 29% totally agree, and 45% tend to agree. Just 16% (stable) do not agree with this statement, with 13% tending to disagree and 3% totally disagreeing. A tenth (10%, +3pp) say they don't know.

QA9.1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

The protection of the environment can boost economic growth in the EU



Inner pie : EB75.2 Apr/May 2011

Outer pie : EB81.3 Apr/May 2014

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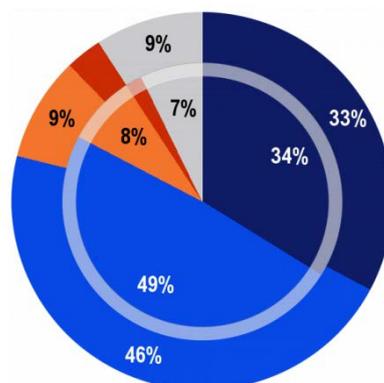
3. A LARGE MAJORITY OF EUROPEANS THINK THAT USING NATURAL RESOURCES EFFICIENTLY CAN BOOST ECONOMIC GROWTH

Next, respondents were asked whether the efficient use of natural resources can boost economic growth in the EU.

A sizable majority of people (79%, -4pp compared to 2011) agree that the efficient use of natural resources can boost economic growth. Of these, 33% totally agree and 46% tend to agree. Conversely, 12% of respondents (+2pp) do not agree with the statement, with 9% tending to disagree and 3% totally disagreeing. Just under a tenth of people (9%, +2pp) say they don't know.

QA9.2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

The efficient use of natural resources can boost economic growth in the EU



● Totally agree
 ● Tend to agree
 ● Tend to disagree
 ● Totally disagree
 ● Don't know

Inner pie : EB75.2 Apr/May 2011

Outer pie : EB81.3 Apr/May 2014

 EU28

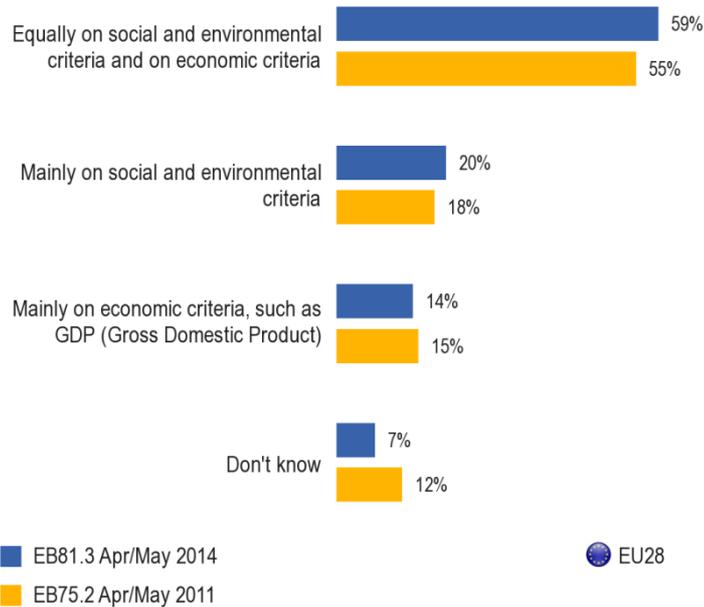
There has been a decrease in almost all countries since 2011 in the proportion of respondents who agree that the efficient use of natural resources can boost economic growth. The largest declines occurred in Austria (71%, -11pp), Bulgaria (82%, -9pp) and the UK (75%, -9pp), while Finland (65%), Austria, Estonia and Germany (all 71%) have the lowest overall levels of agreement.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL FACTORS ARE AS IMPORTANT FOR MEASURING NATIONAL PROGRESS AS ECONOMIC FACTORS

Lastly in this section, respondents were asked which criteria should be used to measure progress in their country⁹. A majority of respondents (59%, +4pp compared to 2011) say that equal emphasis should be placed on social and environmental criteria and on economic criteria. More people (20%, +2pp) favour mainly social and environmental criteria than mainly economic criteria such as GDP (14%, -1pp).

⁹ This question was slightly modified since the last wave in 2011. (Then, the question was as follows: "Thinking about ways of evaluating progress in (OUR COUNTRY), which of the following ways do you think is the best way to do this?" Possible responses: National progress should be evaluated based mostly on economic criteria, such as GDP (Growth Domestic Product); National progress should be evaluated based equally on social and environmental and economic criteria; National progress should be evaluated based mostly on social and environmental criteria).

QA7. On which of the following criteria do you think the measurement of progress in (OUR COUNTRY) should be based?



In all Member States, with one exception, half or more of respondents think that, when measuring progress, equal emphasis should be placed on social and environmental criteria and on economic criteria. Finland and Germany (both 69%) have the highest proportions of respondents who take this view. Bulgaria is the exception, with 48%, followed by Hungary (50%).

V. EUROPEANS STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE AT ALL LEVELS TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

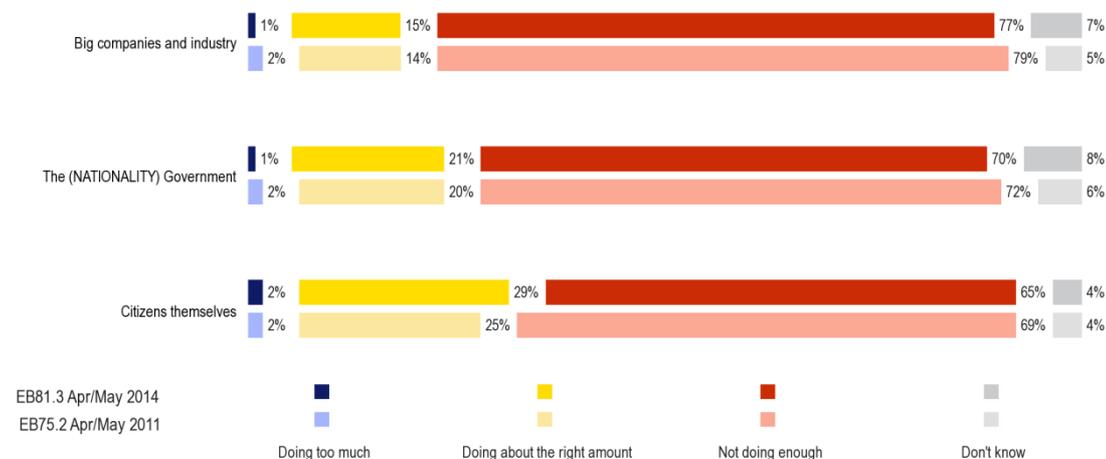
1. FOR A LARGE MAJORITY, CORPORATIONS AND INDUSTRY, NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND CITIZENS ARE NOT DOING ENOUGH TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

A substantial majority of people (77%, -2pp compared to 2011) feel that big companies and industry are not doing enough to protect the environment. Only a tiny minority (1%, -1pp) thinks they are doing too much, while 15% (+1pp) say they are doing about the right amount.

Seven out of ten people (70%, -2pp) think that their national government is not doing enough to protect the environment. Again, only a tiny minority (1%, -1pp) thinks that it is doing too much, while just over a fifth (21%, +1pp) say that their government is doing about the right amount.

Roughly two-thirds of respondents (65%, -4pp) believe that citizens themselves are not doing enough to protect the environment. Just 2% of people (stable) think that they are doing too much, while nearly three out of ten (29%, +4pp) say that citizens themselves are doing about the right amount.

QA16. In your opinion, is each of the following currently doing too much, doing about the right amount, or not doing enough to protect the environment?



EB81.3 Apr/May 2014
EB75.2 Apr/May 2011

■ Doing too much ■ Doing about the right amount ■ Not doing enough ■ Don't know

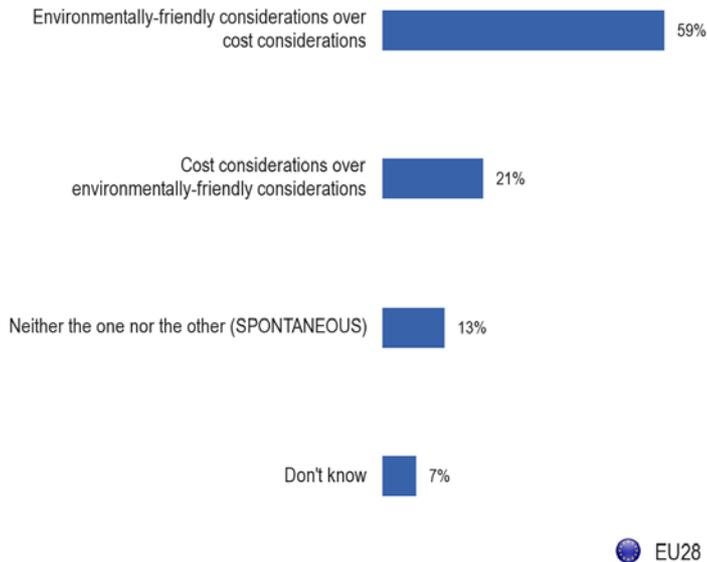
EU28

1.1. A majority of Europeans believe that national governments' spending should favour environmentally-friendly considerations over cost considerations

When given two statements relating to the spending and investment of public authorities, nearly six out of ten respondents (59%) agree that, in their country, public authorities should favour environmentally-friendly considerations over cost considerations. Conversely, around a fifth (21%) feel that cost considerations should be favoured over

environmental considerations. 13% of people say spontaneously that neither should be given special priority.

QA14. Thinking about the spending and investment of public authorities in (OUR COUNTRY), which of the following two statements comes closest to your view? Public authorities should favour...



The level of support for this approach varies substantially across Member States, from 78% in Slovenia and 76% in Cyprus, to 36% in Poland and 44% in Romania. Portugal (31%), Belgium (30%) and Poland (30%) have the most respondents who think that cost considerations should be favoured above environmentally-friendly considerations. The Netherlands (21%) has the highest proportion of people who say spontaneously that neither should be given special priority, followed by Poland (18%).

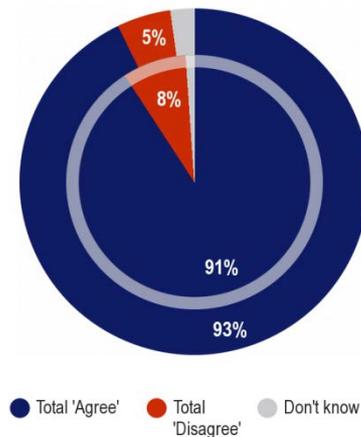
1.2. Europeans believe that big polluters should be responsible for 'making good' for damage

Seven out of ten respondents (70%) totally agree that big polluters should be mainly responsible for making good the environmental damage they cause, while 23% tend to agree – making for 93% agreement overall. Just 5% of respondents do not think that big polluters should be mainly responsible. For this question, the wording has been modified compared to the previous survey in 2011. While the results are not strictly comparable, it is worth noting that in 2011, 91% of respondents agreed that “the big polluters should be mainly responsible for protecting the environment”.

At individual country level, overall agreement that big polluters should be mainly responsible for making good the environmental damage they cause ranges from 98% in both Croatia and Slovenia, to 89% in Hungary.

QA13.2. Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

The big polluters should be mainly responsible for making good the environmental damage they cause



Inner pie : EB75.2 Apr/May 2011
Outer pie : EB81.3 Apr/May 2014

EU28

2. TO A LESSER EXTENT, THE EUROPEAN UNION AS WELL AS REGIONAL AND LOCAL INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ALSO DO MORE TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

The focus now shifts to the question of whether certain institutions are doing enough to protect the environment.

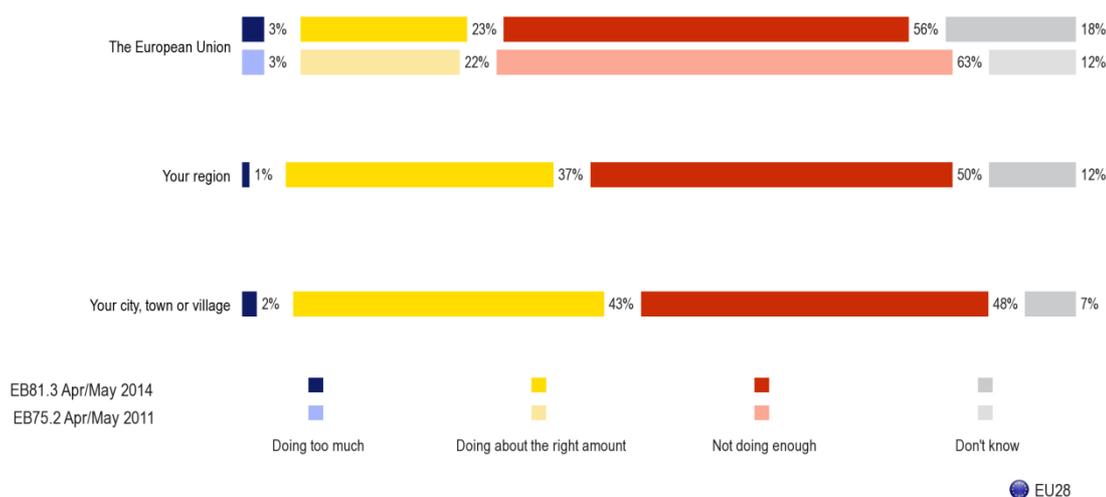
A majority of people think that the European Union (56%, -7pp compared to 2011) is not doing enough. 3% (unchanged) think it is doing too much, while nearly a quarter (23%, +1pp) say that it is doing about the right amount. 18% of respondents (+6pp) say they don't know whether the EU is doing enough.

Half of respondents (50%) think that their region is not doing enough to protect the environment. Only 1% of people think their region is doing too much, while over a third (37%) think that it is doing about the right amount. 12% of respondents say they don't know.

Just under half of Europeans (48%) think that their city, town or village is not doing enough to protect the environment. 2% of people think they are doing too much, while 43% think that they are doing about the right amount. Just 7% of respondents say they don't know.

These last two items were not evaluated in the previous wave of the survey.

QA16. In your opinion, is each of the following currently doing too much, doing about the right amount, or not doing enough to protect the environment?



The Member States in which respondents are most likely to think that the European Union is doing about the right amount to protect the environment are Malta (49%), Hungary (48%), Poland (47%), Cyprus (42%) and Lithuania (40%). Elsewhere, a majority of people feel that the EU is not doing enough, with Sweden (76%), Austria (70%), Germany (67%) and Spain (67%) having the most respondents who take this view.

3. EUROPEANS' VIEWS ON THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS OF DEALING WITH ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

Lastly in this chapter, respondents were asked to identify the most effective ways of tackling environmental problems.¹⁰

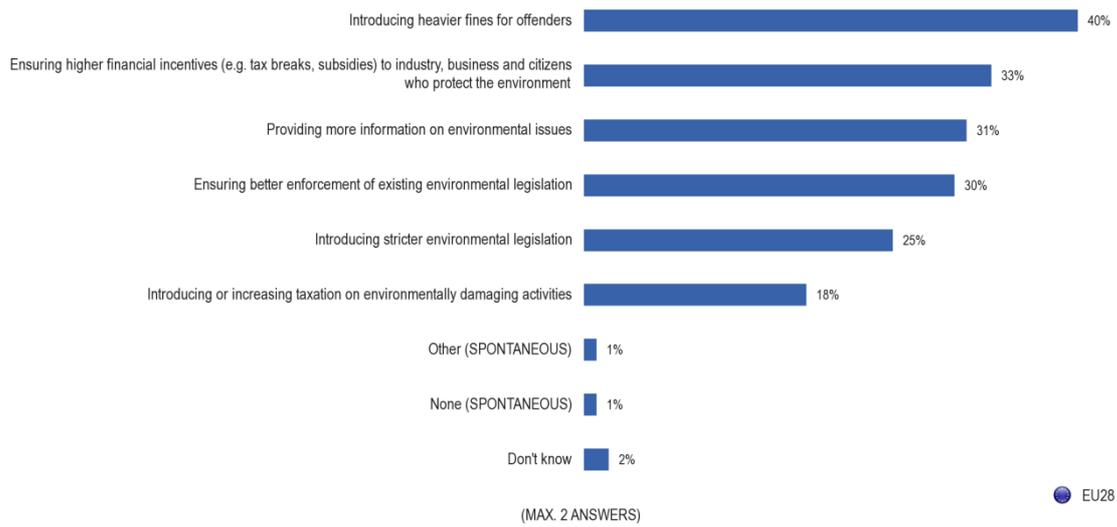
Four out of ten people (40%) think that introducing heavier fines for offenders would be the most effective approach, while at least three out of ten people mention ensuring higher financial incentives for protecting the environment (33%), providing more information on environmental issues (31%), and ensuring better enforcement of existing legislation (30%).

A quarter of respondents (25%) think that introducing stricter environmental legislation would be effective, while 18% are in favour of the introduction or increasing of taxation on environmentally damaging activities.

For this question, the list and number of possible ways presented to the respondents has been modified compared to the previous survey and the results are thus not strictly comparable. However, it can be noted that "introducing heavier fines for offenders" was also seen as the most effective approach in 2011, when 36% of respondents mentioned it.

¹⁰ QA17: It should be noted that the total of the percentages may exceed 100%, since the respondent had the possibility of giving several answers to the question.

QA17. In your opinion, which of the following would be the most effective way(s) of tackling environmental problems?

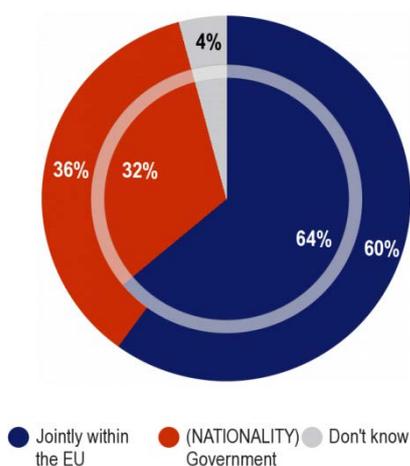


VI. EUROPEANS FAVOUR ACTION AT EU LEVEL TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

1. A MAJORITY OF EUROPEANS THINK THAT DECISIONS CONCERNING THE ENVIRONMENT SHOULD BE MADE NOT ONLY AT NATIONAL LEVEL BUT JOINTLY WITHIN THE EU

Six out of ten respondents (60%, -4pp compared with 2011) think that environmental decisions should be taken jointly between national governments and the EU. Around one third (36%, +4pp) believe that only the national government should take such decisions.

QA15. When it comes to protecting the environment, do you think that decisions should be made by the (NATIONALITY) Government or made jointly within the EU?



Inner pie : EB75.2 April 2011
Outer pie : EB81.3 April/May 2014

EU28

2. EUROPEANS' VIEWS ON MEASURES RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL LAW IN THE EU

Lastly, respondents were asked to agree or disagree with four statements relating to environmental law in the EU.

Over three quarters of respondents (77%, -4pp compared to 2011) agree that European environmental legislation is necessary for protecting the environment in their country. Of these, 36% (-2pp) totally agree, and 41% (-2pp) tend to agree. 16% (+3pp) do not agree, of which 11% tend to disagree and 5% totally disagree.

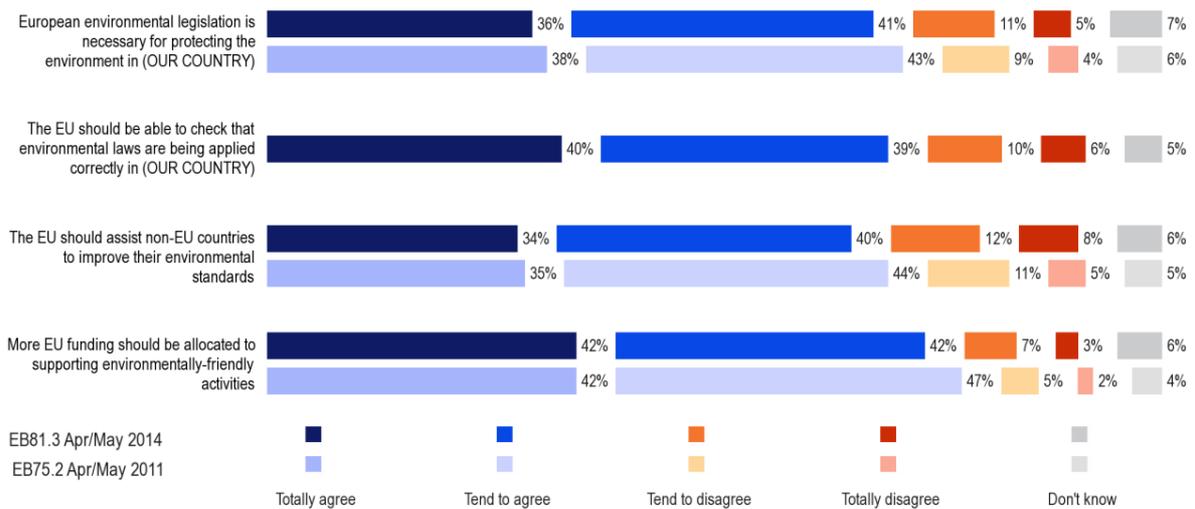
Nearly eight out of ten respondents (79%, no comparison possible) agree that the EU should be able to check that environmental laws are being applied correctly in their country. Of these, 40% totally agree, and 39% tend to agree. 16% do not agree, of which 10% tend to disagree and 6% totally disagree.

Just under three quarters of respondents (74%, -5pp compared to 2011) say that the EU should assist non-EU countries to improve their environmental standards.

Of these, 34% (-1pp) totally agree, and 40% (-4pp) tend to agree. A fifth of respondents (20%, +4pp) do not agree, of which 12% tend to disagree and 8% totally disagree.

Over eight out of ten respondents (84%, -5pp compared to 2011) believe that more EU funding should be allocated to supporting environmentally-friendly activities. Of these, 42% (stable) totally agree, and 42% (-5pp) tend to agree. A tenth of respondents (10%, +3pp) do not agree.

QA18. Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.



EB81.3 Apr/May 2014
EB75.2 Apr/May 2011

Legend: Totally agree, Tend to agree, Tend to disagree, Totally disagree, Don't know



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

SPECIAL EUROBAROMETER 416
Attitudes of European citizens towards the environment
TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Between the 26th April and the 11th of May 2014, TNS opinion & social, a consortium created between TNS political & social, TNS UK and TNS opinion, carried out the wave 81.3 of the EUROBAROMETER survey, on request of the EUROPEAN COMMISSION, Directorate-General for Communication, “Strategy, Corporate Communication Actions and Eurobarometer” unit.

The SPECIAL EUROBAROMETER 416 is part of the wave 81.3 and covers the population of the respective nationalities of the 28 European Union Member States, resident in each of the Member States and aged 15 years and over.

The basic sample design applied in all states is a multi-stage, random (probability) one. In each country, a number of sampling points was drawn with probability proportional to population size (for a total coverage of the country) and to population density.

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

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

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

Statistical Margins due to the sampling process (at the 95% level of confidence)											
<i>various sample sizes are in rows</i>						<i>various observed results are in columns</i>					
	5%	10%	15%	20%	25%	30%	35%	40%	45%	50%	
	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	55%	50%	
N=50	6,0	8,3	9,9	11,1	12,0	12,7	13,2	13,6	13,8	13,9	N=50
N=500	1,9	2,6	3,1	3,5	3,8	4,0	4,2	4,3	4,4	4,4	N=500
N=1000	1,4	1,9	2,2	2,5	2,7	2,8	3,0	3,0	3,1	3,1	N=1000
N=1500	1,1	1,5	1,8	2,0	2,2	2,3	2,4	2,5	2,5	2,5	N=1500
N=2000	1,0	1,3	1,6	1,8	1,9	2,0	2,1	2,1	2,2	2,2	N=2000
N=3000	0,8	1,1	1,3	1,4	1,5	1,6	1,7	1,8	1,8	1,8	N=3000
N=4000	0,7	0,9	1,1	1,2	1,3	1,4	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	N=4000
N=5000	0,6	0,8	1,0	1,1	1,2	1,3	1,3	1,4	1,4	1,4	N=5000
N=6000	0,6	0,8	0,9	1,0	1,1	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,3	1,3	N=6000
N=7000	0,5	0,7	0,8	0,9	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,2	1,2	N=7000
N=7500	0,5	0,7	0,8	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,1	N=7500
N=8000	0,5	0,7	0,8	0,9	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,1	N=8000
N=9000	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,8	0,9	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	N=9000
N=10000	0,4	0,6	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,9	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,0	N=10000
N=11000	0,4	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,9	N=11000
N=12000	0,4	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,9	N=12000
N=13000	0,4	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,9	0,9	N=13000
N=14000	0,4	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	N=14000
N=15000	0,3	0,5	0,6	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	N=15000
	5%	10%	15%	20%	25%	30%	35%	40%	45%	50%	
	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	55%	50%	

ABBR.	COUNTRIES	INSTITUTES	N° INTERVIEWS	DATES		POPULATION 15+	PROPORTION EU28
					FIELDWORK		
BE	Belgium	TNS Dimarso	1.007	26/04/14	6/05/14	9.263.570	2,18%
BG	Bulgaria	TNS BBSS	1.066	26/04/14	5/05/14	6.294.563	1,48%
CZ	Czech Rep.	TNS Aisa	1.056	26/04/14	5/05/14	8.955.829	2,11%
DK	Denmark	TNS Gallup DK	1.007	26/04/14	9/05/14	4.625.032	1,09%
DE	Germany	TNS Infratest	1.546	26/04/14	6/05/14	71.283.580	16,79%
EE	Estonia	TNS Emor	1.043	26/04/14	5/05/14	1.113.355	0,26%
IE	Ireland	Behaviour & Attitudes	1.005	26/04/14	6/05/14	3.586.829	0,84%
EL	Greece	TNS ICAP	1.008	26/04/14	5/05/14	8.791.499	2,07%
ES	Spain	TNS Spain	1.039	26/04/14	6/05/14	39.506.853	9,31%
FR	France	TNS Sofres	1.027	26/04/14	5/05/14	51.668.700	12,17%
HR	Croatia	HENDAL	1.012	26/04/14	5/05/14	3.625.601	0,85%
IT	Italy	TNS Italia	1.007	26/04/14	6/05/14	51.336.889	12,09%
CY	Rep. Of Cyprus	CYMAR	500	26/04/14	5/05/14	724.084	0,17%
LV	Latvia	TNS Latvia	1.002	26/04/14	6/05/14	1.731.509	0,41%
LT	Lithuania	TNS LT	1.013	26/04/14	5/05/14	2.535.329	0,60%
LU	Luxembourg	TNS ILReS	504	26/04/14	7/05/14	445.806	0,11%
HU	Hungary	TNS Hoffmann	1.085	26/04/14	7/05/14	8.477.933	2,00%
MT	Malta	MISCO	501	26/04/14	6/05/14	360.045	0,08%
NL	Netherlands	TNS NIPO	1.032	26/04/14	6/05/14	13.901.653	3,27%
AT	Austria	ipr Umfrageforschung	1.000	26/04/14	11/05/14	7.232.497	1,70%
PL	Poland	TNS Polska	1.001	26/04/14	6/05/14	32.736.685	7,71%
PT	Portugal	TNS Portugal	1.008	26/04/14	6/05/14	8.512.269	2,01%
RO	Romania	TNS CSOP	1.062	26/04/14	6/05/14	16.880.465	3,98%
SI	Slovenia	RM PLUS	1.063	26/04/14	7/05/14	1.760.726	0,41%
SK	Slovakia	TNS Slovakia	1.057	26/04/14	7/05/14	4.580.260	1,08%
FI	Finland	TNS Gallup Oy	1.016	26/04/14	6/05/14	4.511.446	1,06%
SE	Sweden	TNS Sifo	1.025	26/04/14	11/05/14	7.944.034	1,87%
UK	United Kingdom	TNS UK	1.306	26/04/14	8/05/14	52.104.731	12,27%
TOTAL EU28			27.998	26/04/14	11/05/14	424.491.772	100%*

* It should be noted that the total percentage shown in this table may exceed 100% due to rounding