

DESNZ Public Attitudes Tracker: Net Zero and Climate Change Winter 2024, UK

13 March 2025

Official Statistics

The DESNZ Public Attitudes Tracker is a nationally representative annual survey of adults (aged 16+) in the UK that tracks public awareness, attitudes and behaviours relating to the policies of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), such as energy and climate change.

This report provides a summary of the headline findings relating to **Net Zero and climate change** from the Winter 2024 wave of the Tracker, which ran from 7 November to 12 December 2024.

Notes for interpretation of findings

Differences between groups are only reported where they are statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval level.

The annual personal income referred to in the report is a self-reported measure.

The age-related findings are reported using six age groups (16-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65 and over). In some cases, findings across age groups have been combined to describe a general trend, e.g. 'between 78% and 88% of people aged 45 and above' refers to the range of percentages for the three age groups 45-54, 55-64 and 65+.

Two summary self-reported measures are used in this report:

- **'Awareness'** encompasses all respondents who said they had heard of a particular concept or technology, including those who said 'hardly anything but I've heard of this', 'a little', 'a fair amount' or 'a lot'.
- **'Knowledge'** encompasses those who said that they know 'a fair amount' or 'a lot' about a topic.

Awareness of Net Zero

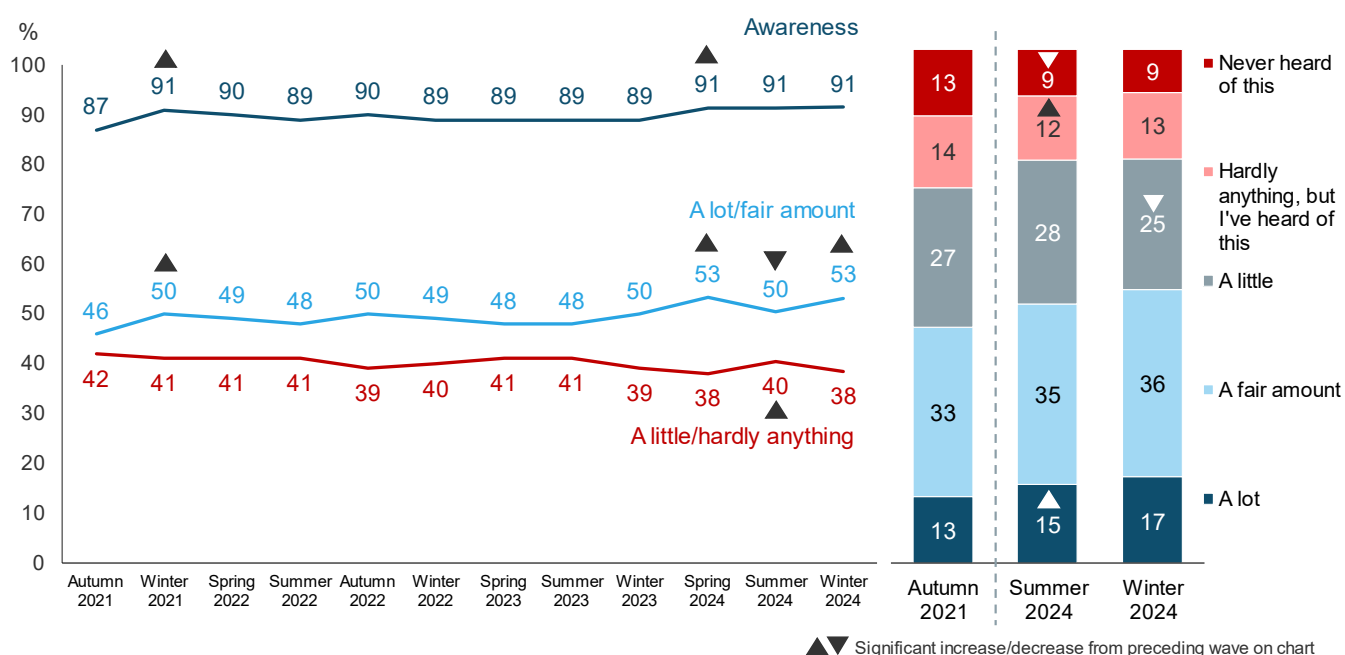
In June 2019, the government announced a target which will require the UK to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to Net Zero by 2050. Before asking level of awareness, respondents were provided with a brief description as follows: *'The UK government is aiming to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions to 'Net Zero' by 2050. This will involve significantly reducing emissions produced by our industries, transport, food, and homes. Any remaining emissions will be balanced by actions that reduce greenhouse gases already in the atmosphere, such as planting trees'*.

Figure 1.1 displays both the longer term trends in overall awareness and knowledge (A lot/fair amount) of Net Zero (left hand side) and the detailed awareness and knowledge data for the most recent two waves alongside the baseline (right hand side).

Over the longer-term, following an increase in awareness and knowledge at the start of the tracking series between Autumn 2021 and Winter 2021, levels of awareness and knowledge have remained broadly stable.

Between Summer 2024 and Winter 2024, overall awareness of Net Zero remained stable at 91%. Knowledge of Net Zero was slightly higher in Winter 2024 compared with Summer 2024: 53% said they knew a lot or a fair amount, up from 50% in Summer 2024.

Figure 1.1: Awareness of the concept of 'Net Zero' (% based on all people), Autumn 2021 to Winter 2024



NZKNOW. The UK government is aiming to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions to 'Net Zero' by 2050. This will involve significantly reducing emissions produced by our industries, transport, food, and homes. Any remaining emissions will be balanced by actions that reduce greenhouse gases already in the atmosphere, such as planting trees. Before today, how much, if anything, did you know about the concept of 'Net Zero'?

Base: All wave respondents – Autumn 2021 (5,558), Winter 2021 (3,705), Spring 2022 (4,374), Summer 2022 (4,489), Autumn 2022 (4,158), Winter 2022 (3,572), Spring 2023 (4,405), Summer 2023 (3,998), Winter 2023 (3,741), Spring 2024 (4,085), Summer 2024 (3,640), Winter 2024 (3,214) (Asked each wave)

Note: On the left-hand chart, arrows denote a significant difference between one wave and the next. For the right-hand chart, significant differences are noted between Autumn 2021 and Summer 2024, and between Winter 2024 and Summer 2024.

Analysis by subgroups

Overall awareness of Net Zero was higher among the following subgroups:

- People in age groups 45 and over: between 94% and 96% compared with between 84% and 88% in age groups from 16 to 44.
- People with a degree: 95% compared with 88% of those with no qualifications.
- People living in Scotland (99%) and the South West (95%); in contrast the lowest levels were reported in the West Midlands (87%) and the North West (86%).

Self-reported knowledge of Net Zero (the percentage who said they knew a lot or a fair amount) followed a similar trend, and was higher among the following subgroups:

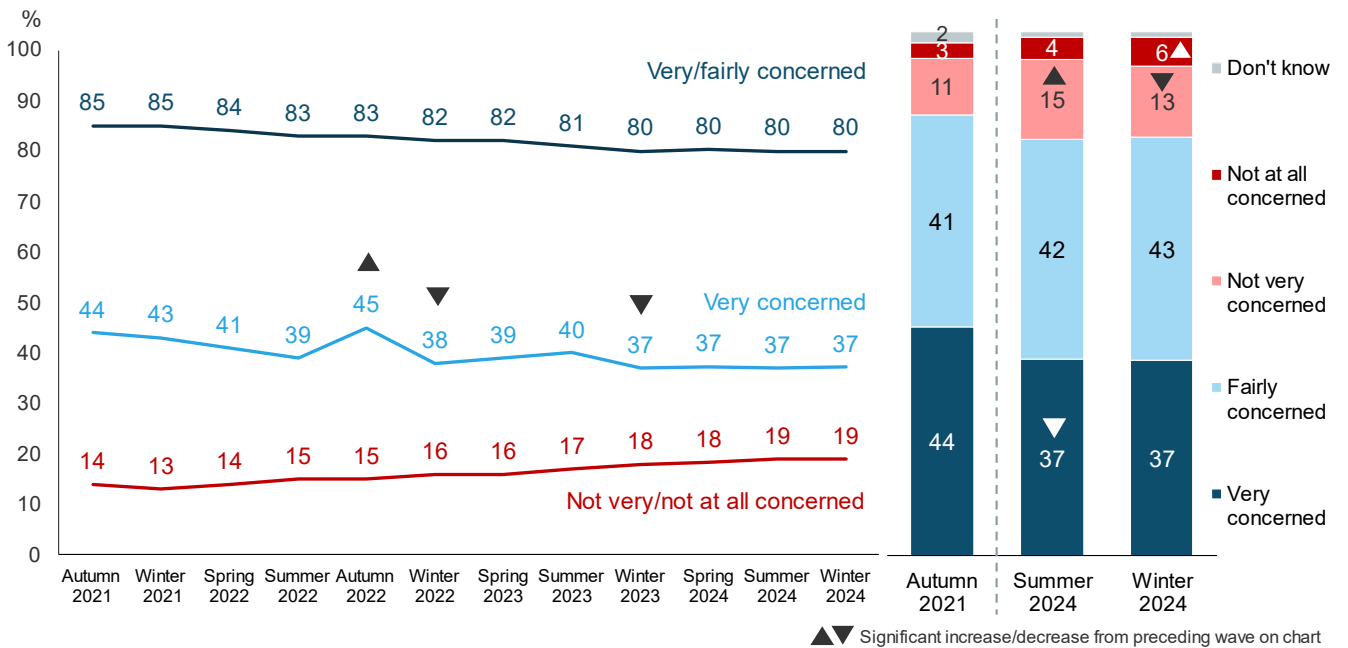
- People in age groups 45 and over: between 57% and 61% compared with between 47% and 48% of those aged in age groups from 16 to 44.
- People with a degree: 68% compared with 49% of those with another kind of qualification and 34% of those with no qualifications.
- People living in Yorkshire and the Humber (62%); in contrast, the lowest levels were reported in the West Midlands (46%), the North West (45%) and Northern Ireland (42%).

Concern about climate change

Over the longer-term, levels of overall concern about climate change have decreased from 85% in Autumn 2021 to 80% in Winter 2024, with levels of concern levelling out since Winter 2023 (Figure 1.2).

Focussing on more recent waves, between Summer 2024 and Winter 2024, concern about climate change remained stable: at both waves 80% said they were very or fairly concerned, with 37% very concerned. In Winter 2024, 6% were not at all concerned, slightly higher than 4% in Summer 2024.

Figure 1.2: Concern about climate change (% based on all people), Autumn 2021 to Winter 2024



CLIMCONCERN. How concerned, if at all, are you about climate change, sometimes referred to as 'global warming'?

Base: All wave respondents – Autumn 2021 (5,557), Winter 2021 (3,701), Spring 2022 (4,375), Summer 2022 (4,490), Autumn 2022 (4,158), Winter 2022 (3,571), Spring 2023 (4,405), Summer 2023 (3,998), Winter 2023 (3,739), Spring 2024 (4,086), Summer 2024 (3,644), Winter 2024 (3,213) (Asked each wave)

Note: On the left-hand chart, arrows denote a significant difference between one wave and the next. For the right hand chart, significant differences are noted between Autumn 2021 and Summer 2024, and between Winter 2024 and Summer 2024.

Analysis by subgroups

The proportion reporting that they were very concerned about climate change was higher among the following subgroups:

- People in age groups 65 and over: 43% compared with between 32% and 35% in age groups from 16 to 44.
- People with a degree: 48% compared with 32% of those with another kind of qualification, and 30% of those with no qualifications.
- People living in Yorkshire and the Humber (46%), Wales (44%), London (42%) and the South East (42%); in contrast the lowest levels were reported in Scotland (28%) and the East Midlands (24%).

People were most likely to say that they were not very or not at all concerned about climate change in the North West (27%); in contrast people were least likely to show a lack of concern in London (14%) and Northern Ireland (14%).

Information on tackling climate change

Sources of information

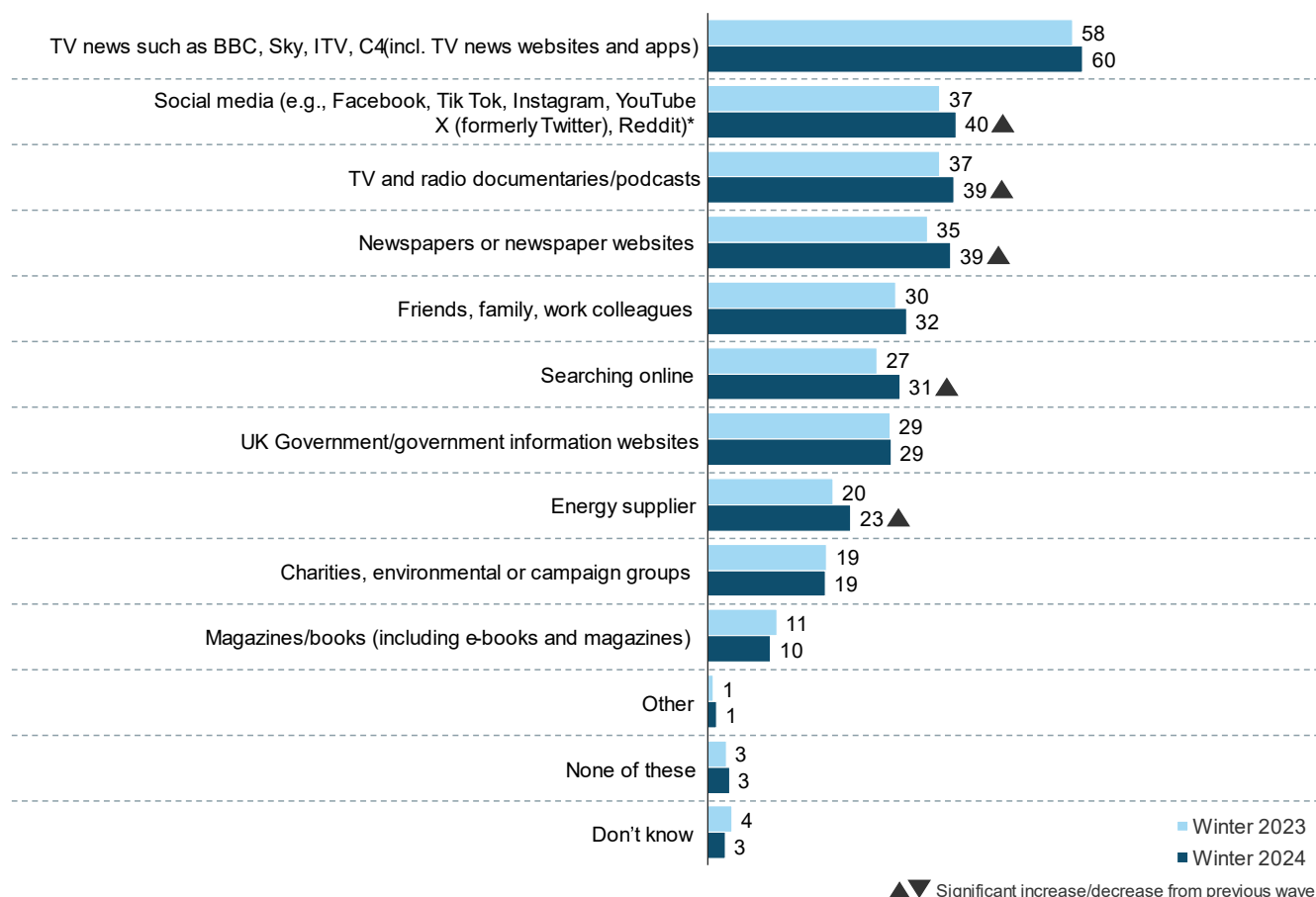
In Winter 2024, based on a list presented to respondents¹, TV news was the most commonly reported source of climate change information (60%), similar to Winter 2023 (Figure 1.3).

Around four in ten people reported getting information on climate change from social media (40%, up from 37% in Winter 2023), newspapers (39%, up from 37%), and TV and radio documentaries and podcasts (39%, up from 37%).

Other sources mentioned by at least one in five included searching online (31%, up from 27%), energy suppliers (23% up from 20%) and government websites (29%, no change).

¹ The list was slightly amended in Winter 2024, with the examples of social media given expanded to include YouTube

Figure 1.3: Sources of information on actions people can take to tackle climate change (% based on all people), Winter 2023, Winter 2024



CCHEARD. Looking at the following sources, from which, if any, of these do you hear or read about actions you can take to tackle climate change? This might include making choices about travel, product purchases, or how to save energy at home. **change to social media examples in Winter 2024*

Base: All wave respondents – Winter 2023: (3,732), Winter 2024 (3,214)

Analysis by subgroups

By age:

- Mainstream media sources such as TV, radio and newspapers were more likely to be chosen as a source of climate change information by older people compared with younger people, particularly those aged 16 to 24. For example: between 45% and 47% of people aged 55 and over used TV and radio documentaries and podcasts, compared with 23% of those aged 16 to 24.
- Older people aged 65 or over were much less likely than all other age groups to search online (20% compared with between 31% and 37%) and were also less likely to obtain information from charities, environmental and campaign groups (15% compared with between 23% and 25% of those in age groups from 16 to 34).
- Younger people aged 16 to 24 were more likely to select social media (70%) compared to all other age groups (between 13% and 59%, with likelihood decreasing as age band increases).

By education:

- People with a degree were more likely than those without any qualifications to report receiving information about climate change from all sources, with the exception of TV.
- This difference was particularly notable for searching online (37% compared with 17%), government websites (36% compared with 16%) and charities, environmental and campaign groups (26% compared with 8%).

By geography:

- TV news was reported most often by those living in Yorkshire and the Humber (70%) and least often in the North West (52%).
- Social media was chosen more often by those living in Northern Ireland (48%) and Yorkshire and the Humber (47%) and least often in Scotland (30%).
- People living in London, the South East and South West were most likely to report using newspapers, friends and family, and charities, environmental and campaign groups. For example, mentions of charities, environmental and campaign groups was most common in London (23%), the South East (22%) and the South West (21%) and least common in the North East (8%).

By self-reported knowledge about Net Zero:

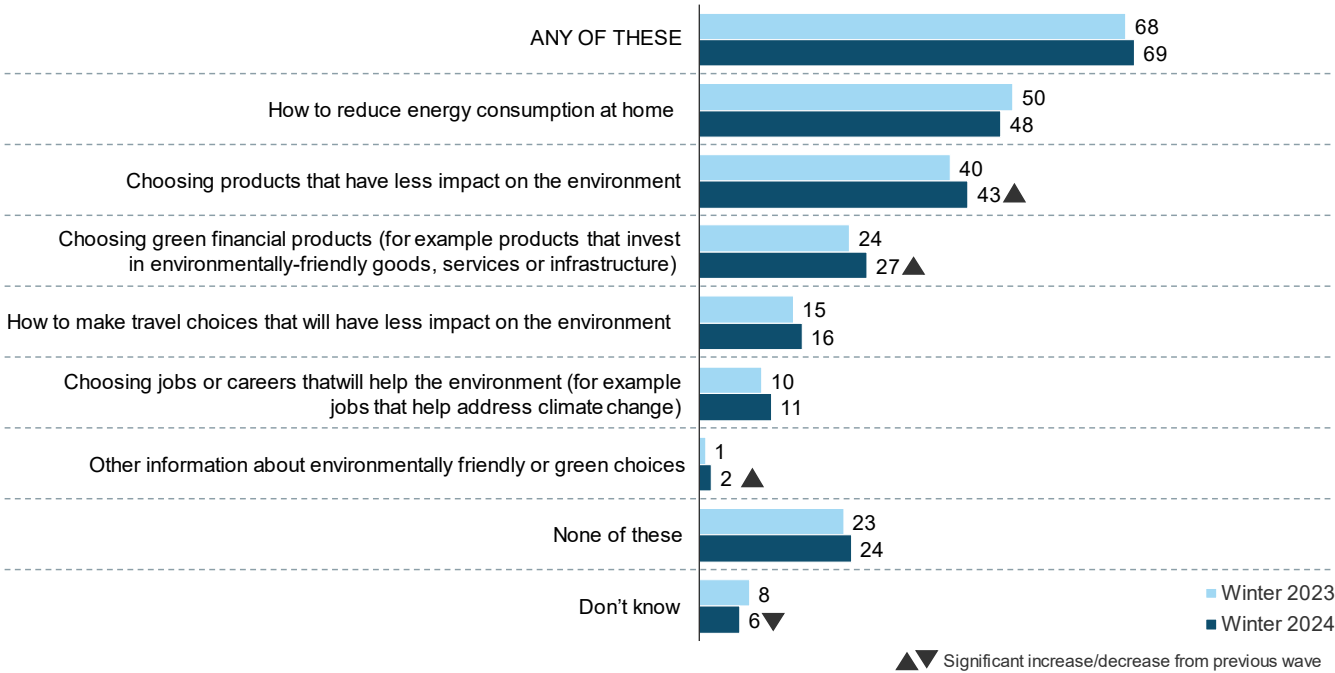
- People who said they knew a lot or a fair amount about Net Zero were more likely to select all sources of information (excluding social media) compared with those who were not aware of Net Zero.
- This difference was most notable for charities, environmental or campaign groups (27% of those who knew at least a fair amount about Net Zero compared with 7% of those unaware); government websites (36% compared with 17%); and TV and radio documentaries and podcasts (48% compared with 20%).

Information needs

In Winter 2024, when presented with a list of topics relating to actions to tackle climate change, 69% of people said they would like more information on at least one of these topics, with 24% not interested in any of them, similar to Winter 2023 findings (Figure 1.4).

People were most likely to want information on how to reduce energy consumption at home (48%) and choosing products with less impact on the environment (43%, up from 40% in Winter 2023). Around a quarter wanted to know more about green financial products (27%, up from 24%) with lower proportions wanting information on low impact travel choices (16%) or jobs associated with helping the environment (11%).

Figure 1.4: Topics relating to actions to reduce climate change that people would like more information about (% based on all people), Winter 2023, Winter 2024



CCINFO. Which, if any, of the following would you like to have more information on? Please select any that apply.
Base: All wave respondents – Winter 2023: (3,724), Winter 2024 (3,208)

Analysis by subgroups

By age:

- Younger people were more likely than older people to identify information needs in three areas: green travel choices, green financial products and careers that will help the environment. For example, 35% of those in age groups 16 to 34 wanted more information on green financial products compared with 25% in age groups 35 to 44 and 55 to 64, and 20% of those aged 65 and over.
- People aged 65 and over were more likely to say they were not interested in knowing more about any topic (28%) compared with those in age groups from 16 to 34 (between 19% and 21%).

By education:

- People with a degree or another kind of qualification were more likely to want to know more about all topics than those with no qualifications.
- This difference was most notable for choosing products that have an impact on the environment (52% of people with a degree compared with 25% of those with no qualifications) and choosing green financial products (36% compared with 13%).

By geography:

- People living in the East Midlands were most likely to say they were not interested in knowing more about any of the topics (36%). In contrast, this was lowest in London (18%) and Northern Ireland (16%).
- Interest in information on reducing energy consumption in the home was most common in the West Midlands (58%) and Northern Ireland (58%) and least common in the East Midlands (34%).
- Interest in information about most topics was relatively lower in the North East:
 - Choosing greener products: 30%, compared with Yorkshire and the Humber (56%) and Northern Ireland (52%).
 - Choosing green financial products: 17%, compared with the South East and South West (both 31%).
 - Choosing jobs that help the environment: 4% compared with the North West (18%) and West Midlands (16%).
 - Making greener travel choices: both in the North East and East of England (12%), compared with the West Midlands (22%) and London (21%).

By self-reported knowledge about Net Zero:

- Those who said they knew at least a fair amount about Net Zero were more likely than those saying they knew either a little or nothing at all to express interest in most topics.
- This difference was most notable for information on green financial products: 35% of those reporting knowledge of Net Zero compared with 17% of those who were not aware of Net Zero.

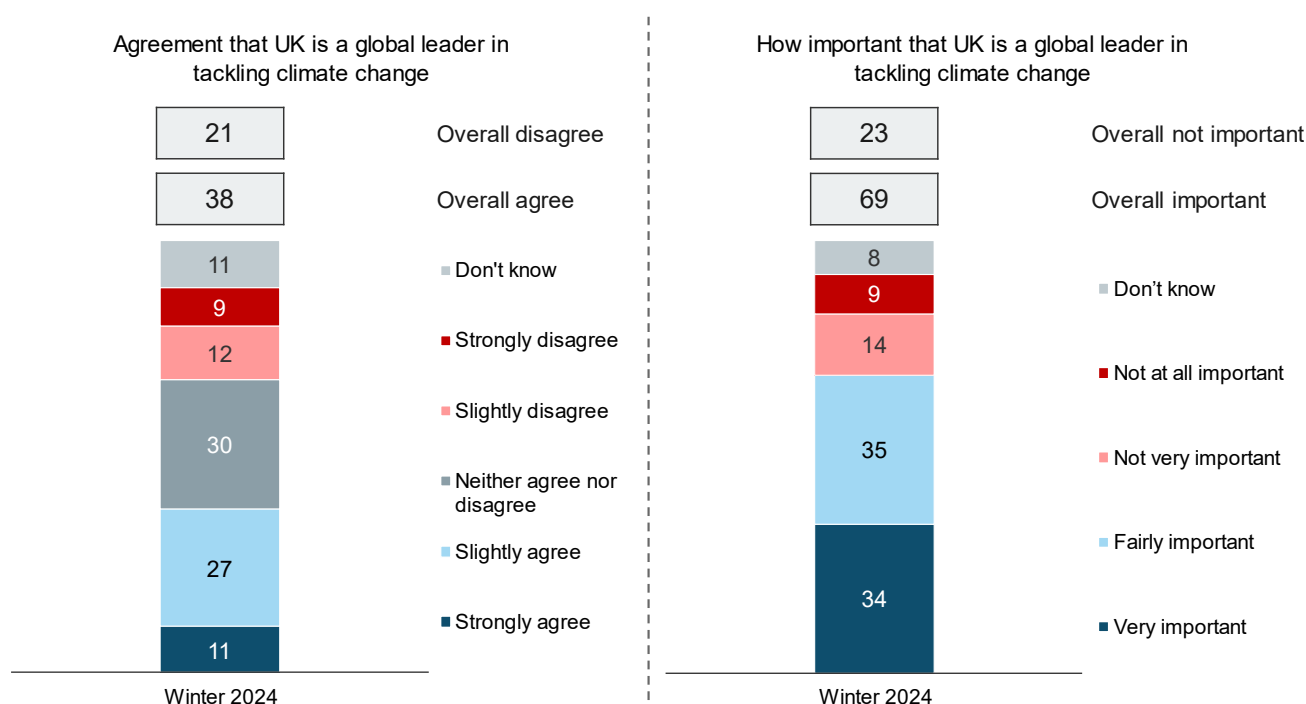
Climate change leadership

Two new questions were introduced in Winter 2024 to measure perceptions on the role of the UK as a global leader in tackling climate change (Figure 1.5).

Overall, 38% of people agreed (strongly or slightly) that the UK is a global leader in tackling climate, while 21% disagreed that the UK is a global leader in this area. A substantial proportion did not provide an opinion either way (30%).

When asked how important it is that the UK is a global leader in tackling climate change, 69% said that it was important (very or fairly important), while 23% said it was not important.

Figure 1.5: Attitudes towards the UK as a global leader on tackling climate change (% based on all people), Winter 2024



ICFKNOW. How much do you agree or disagree that the UK is a global leader in tackling climate change?
 ICFIMPORT. How important or unimportant do you feel it is that the UK is a global leader on tackling climate change?

Base: All wave respondents: Agreement/Importance – Winter 2024 (3,212/3,212)

Analysis by subgroups

Agreement (strongly or slightly) that the UK is a global leader in tackling climate change was higher among the following subgroups:

- People in age groups 55 and over: between 42% and 43% compared with 31% of those aged 16 to 24.
- People with a degree: 42% compared with 31% of those with no qualifications.
- People who said they knew at least a fair amount about Net Zero: 45% compared with 31% of those who knew at most a little and 29% of those unaware of Net Zero.

By geography, agreement that the UK is a global leader in tackling climate change was lower in Scotland (31%), and in the East Midlands (25%) compared with those living in the West Midlands (43%) and Yorkshire and the Humber (42%).

The perceived importance (very or fairly important) of the UK being a global leader in tackling climate change was higher among the following subgroups:

- People aged 16 to 24: 75% compared with those in age groups 55 and over (66%).
- Those with a degree: 77% compared with 65% of those with no qualifications.
- People who said they knew at least a fair amount about Net Zero: 73% compared with 65% of those who know at most a little and 59% of those unaware of Net Zero.

Further findings on Net Zero and climate change

In previous waves, questions were included on other topics relating to Net Zero and climate change. The latest findings relating to these topics can be found as follows:

- Attitudes towards Net Zero, see Summer 2024 report on Net Zero and climate change - section on '[Attitudes towards Net Zero](#)'.
- Attitudes towards climate change, see Summer 2024 report on Net Zero and climate change - section on '[Attitudes towards climate change](#)'.
- Self-reported behaviours that could help to tackle climate change and which behaviours are thought to have the biggest impact on tackling climate change, see Summer 2024 report on Net Zero and climate change - section on '[Behaviours to tackle climate change](#)'.
- Which behaviours are thought to have the biggest impact on tackling climate change, see Summer 2024 report on Net Zero and climate change - section on '[Behaviours thought to have the biggest impact on tackling climate change](#)'.
- Level of trust in information sources on climate change, see Summer 2024 report on Net Zero and climate change - section on '[Information on tackling climate change](#)'.



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